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Cover illustration: A shepherd girl. Isla del Sol – Sun Island, Bolivia.

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Editorial

By Birgitta Svensson

Although *Ethnologia Scandinavia* has a Nordic base, its empirical field extends far beyond that. The world has become global, and Nordic ethnologists do research not just at home but just as often in other parts of the world. This year Line Alice Ytrehus describes how gender relations look different depending on the context in which they occur. Gender relations differ in various parts of the world, and gender relations cannot be understood without taking other categories of social differentiation into account, such as ethnicity/indigeneity and social class. Among the Aymaras in Bolivia, Ytrehus finds a strong correlation between indigenous peoples and poverty. The current indigenous mobilization, with its vigorous efforts to change structural discrimination, makes Bolivia an interesting research case. She outlines a theoretical framework where a combination of the intersectional perspective and a capability approach contributes to an understanding of how the ethnic mobilization among this indigenous people in the Bolivian Andes relates to gender equality. The interpretation of gender equality as gender equity among the Aymaras, based on the conception of women and men as fundamentally different (*chacha-warmi*), opposed and complementary, is not logically compatible with the Western conception of gender equality as sameness and equal outcome. However it promotes development and gender equity adapted to the cultural context and on their own terms, to an extent that the gender equality agenda cannot offer.

In another part of the world, the southeast coast of India, Frida Hastrup examines a series of encounters between Danes and tropical nature by comparing a Danish pastor sent out to Denmark's trading colony of Trankebar in the 1830s with a landscaping project, also funded by Danish money, currently undertaken by heritage advocates in the village of Tharangambadi, the local Tamil name of the place which was translated into Trankebar by the Danish colonial envoys. She also compares a third project in nature-making. By creating a single field out of different nature-making endeavours, she argues for a kind of lateral cultural analysis; whether undertaken by pastors, heritage workers, ethnographers or others, she shows that classifications of nature are ongoing productive processes that imply complexly situated styles of knowledge-making. Classifications of nature are simultaneously made and undermined.

Another way to consider the global world is to study the meaning of migration. What happens when people migrate between different countries and bring objects from one country to another? With the ambition of getting at the individual level of experience and the everyday dynamics of sense-making, Maja Povrzanović Frykman and Michael Humbracht, in their article about objects in migrants' transnational lives, try to reach an understanding of the significance of objects by stressing that in transnational contexts they should not be seen as generators of feelings or cultural meanings, but above all as animators of material practices that occur on a habitual basis and establish continuities in social spaces. Their findings show that "here" and "there" are flexible and fluid categories that tend to be conflated when certain objects are used and certain material practices enacted. It is

also through objects, especially those made by or inherited from significant others, that intimacy, and the related sense of normalcy, can explain the non-existence of nostalgia and alienation that are part and parcel of a different analytical construction, that of migrants as displaced persons.

Tine Damsholt, in her article about the palpability of bodies in a *hamam* in Istanbul, combines a material-discursive perspective with gender analysis, showing that gender can be materialized with unusual clarity when one least expects it. She shows how the *hamam* resisted becoming conference space, finding that the presence of bodies disturbed and undermined the stable configuring of gender and academics that they had previously performed in the conference's other, more traditional, material surroundings. Instead they acquired a tourist cut of themselves and felt that what they were doing as Westerners visiting a *hamam* in Istanbul thus became dimmed. She describes this as a matter of "situated undress", which gave very specific situated experiences and insights, and which shaped a certain stabilization of gender. The increased importance of gender was due to a sexualization of the female participants. Damsholt explains how she made herself as a subject into an object for her research by turning the significance of gender among them into an articulated phenomenon and an object of cultural analysis. She thus shows, in the same way as Ytrehus, how important the context is for an understanding of gender.

Material surroundings are also in focus when Britta Geschwind takes us to museum shops. Here context is important, but also gender, along with politics, history, and change. She even thinks that the shops could be viewed as the essences of the museum. The focus in her research is on the shop in the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm (SHM). The tensions between culture and commerce, education and pleasure, sense and sensibility, have a long continuity within museum institutions, and this has been a constant balancing act since their blooming in the nineteenth century. The shop shows the ideological shifts within the museum as a changed perspective on the relation to museum visitors, switching from terms like "education" and "mediation" to "learning" and "communication", and with an increasing focus on the experience-oriented museum, using words like "customer orientation". A previously sharp boundary between different public spaces and functions has become blurred.

Gender and consumer culture as well as ideological and democratic shifts are likewise the topic of Pia Olsson's article about how teenage schoolboys in Helsinki relate to material culture. Even though the boys do not actively question the consumer society, they do feel fatigue with trends and keeping up with the most recent models. Their material world was contradictory in the way the ideals clashed with reality. Olsson even thinks that the distinctions made through the material culture had become such a close part of their social life that it was difficult to recognize and verbalize it in the conversations they had. The boys saw that their relationship to material culture had changed through the years towards a more critical and perhaps more democratic outlook compared with the earlier years, though it is shown that their

positioning is affected by the social surroundings and the need to position oneself in the world of values based on the material culture.

Just like Geschwind, Lars-Eric Jönsson emphasizes the link between politics, history, and change. He states that all history has a link and is influenced by its own time, whether it originates in an academic environment or, as in his case, in a health-policy context. By exploring how history has been used in health policy documents, Jönsson shows how investigators and politicians used the past to argue for changes in psychiatry. He even declares that possibilities of change went through a historicizing process since they were given legitimacy and meaning through the relationship to the historian's own lifetime. He stresses the great importance of differences in the history of psychiatry. These differences became a method to argue for change. In sum, his article points out that to historicize means to define and conceptualize but also to set something in motion.

One theme unites this year's first article about the Aymara gender perception in Bolivia with Francophile history in Réunion: the significance of the cultural context. Karine Aasgaard Jansen argues that Anglophile historical and ethnographic approaches to post-colonial studies of decolonization tend to focus on processes of segregation from the mother country, and political ideas and movements of autonomy. She seeks to show how the French construction of overseas departments challenges such perspectives. They were actually decolonized through inclusion in the French Republic. The article is an important contribution to an understanding of processes of othering in a post-colonial situation in that it reverses the customary perspectives and makes unexpected theoretical combinations. Jansen shows how the use of Irigaray as a supplement to traditional post-colonial criticism of otherness broadens our perspectives. Otherness has played changing roles, and has had various impacts, on Réunionese identity and citizenship formations at different historical and political moments. Jansen does not talk of a post-colony or a neo-colony, stressing instead that the island can be taken to represent both categorizations simultaneously. With Irigaray she shows how subjectivity must be articulated and understood inter-subjectively, i.e. in the space between the categories of otherness and sameness. Recognition of difference can then be understood as a foundation for equality.

After eight years as editor it is time for me to hand over this stimulating task to someone else. Lars-Eric Jönsson, Lund, who has been member of the editorial board for some years, will be the editor of *Ethnologia Scandinavia* from 2014 onwards. Convinced that we shall see a renewal of the journal, I wish him good luck.

Identity, Intersectionality and Capabilities

Indigenous Identity Mobilization and Conceptualizations of Gender Equity in the Bolivian Andes

By Line Alice Ytrehus

Introduction

Gender equality is a core aim and measure of contemporary international development policies to enhance social change and poverty eradication. "Gender equality" is considered a universal concept (cf. UNUDHR 1948; CEDAW 1979[1]). It is frequently defined in terms of lack of gender disparity by sector (cf. e.g. World Bank Reports), thus implying that the development aim is not only equal rights, but *equal outcomes*. However, is gender equality really a universal concept? Ever since the 1960s, the women's movements as well as the UN itself have been preoccupied with the cleavage between the legal rights and women's ability to exercise these rights and how women can be integrated into development interventions (Jain and Chako 2008:9; Steeves 2002, Wilkins 1999). Could it possibly also be different ways to conceptualize "gender equality"?

Assuming that the concept of gender equality does not necessarily signify the same thing everywhere, I set out to explore how gender equality is understood among the Aymaras,[2] an indigenous group in the Bolivian Andes. Gender relations cannot be understood without taking other categories of social differentiation into account, such as ethnicity/indigeneity and social class.[3] In Bolivia there is a strong correlation between indigenous peoples and poverty. Both women and indigenous peoples are vulnerable to poverty, and indigenous women even more (Eversole *et al*. 2005:3ff, Dijkstra *et al*. 2007). Along with the concern for women's unprivileged situation, there has been an international concern for indigenous peoples (cf. ILO 169 1989, UNDRIPS 2007). For Scandinavian development aid, gender equality is therefore an important aim, and indigenous peoples such as the Aymaras are target groups.

In this article I will explore *the identity mobilization among the Aymaras in Bolivia and their conceptualization of gender equality*. Based on ethnographic field work I discuss how gender equality is culturally interpreted in the Aymara movement and in Bolivia's new constitution approved by a majority referendum in January 2009. The article also attempts to exemplify how the intersectional perspective and capability approach can contribute to our understanding. The strong current indigenous mobilization which aims to change structural discrimination makes Bolivia an interesting research case.

The analysis is informed by annual fieldwork trips to Bolivia 2005–2013 and a more extensive and multisited spells of fieldwork in Bolivia for five months in 2009.[4] During this longer fieldwork I did participant observation in Bolivian NGOs working with indigenous poor. I visited various development projects in the department of La Paz, in the jungle, the valleys, and the highlands, including the cities La Paz, El Alto and Achacachi (approx. 3,600–4,100 m above sea level). In this article I pay particular attention to one of the two NGOs I studied the most, an Aymara women's organization. This women's organization started as a self-help group for empowerment among Aymara women by four of them, about twenty years ago. The NGO teaches indigenous rights and political participation through training courses and workshops for indigenous rural communities and the urban poor (usually both men and women)

in Aymara and Spanish. The founders are more or less autodidacts, e.g. the director, here called Rosa Aruni Condori, has four years of formal education, while most of the employees have higher education, two of them thanks to grants from the NGO.[5] The NGO has at present nine employees, including three men. It also includes affiliated male and female Aymara leaders from the indigenous social movement and the largest peasant organization (Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, CSUTCB). This women's organization seems to me to be a privileged site for an outsider to study Aymara interpretations of gender equality, not only because they work for empowerment among Aymara women, but because they do this from within the indigenous movement, they verbalize traditional norms and values more explicitly than normally done as they try to revitalize and teach indigenous traditions, and because they depend on international funding for their gender equality projects and thus try to comply with international development policies.

My first contact with the organization was in 2007, already having some acquaintance with Aymara culture. At that time the organization had a male interim leader because of a dispute between the founders, but the women were soon back in charge. When I returned in 2009, I participated in the everyday working life, discussions and conversations in the organization for six weeks and did nine qualitative in-depth interviews with leaders, employees and affiliated of the organization.[6] All interviews and conversations were in Spanish.[7] As an outsider and "white" researcher there are many pitfalls, and much depend on my ascribed identity. My greatest fears were to be perceived as a *q'ara* – an Aymara derogative term for the uncivilized, brutish and exploitative "whites", literally meaning white or naked, or almost as bad to my research, to be associated with the donor. The first times I tried to present myself as an independent researcher from a Norwegian university college in Northern Europe. However, as "researcher" did often not make much sense to them, I soon presented myself as a teacher (for students from my homeland who want to work with development cooperation) and a learner of indigenous culture.[8] As a teacher and learner I was accepted and it seemed to make all my ignorant questions seem understandable. I tried hard to be humble and decent among the meek,[9] and to do and to eat as they did. Even though it is impossible for me to conform to their cultural codes, my efforts seemed to be appreciated, and as a middle-aged, privileged and "white" woman, it might have been particularly visible and unexpected.

First I will discuss the ethno-political context of Bolivia. Secondly I'll outline a theoretical framework and argue that a combination of Intersectional Theory and Human Development and Capability Approach can contribute to the analysis. Then I'll analyse briefly how Aymara women are marginalized and to what extent their rights were expanded through the new constitution. My main focus here is, in other words, on the public sphere, on the cultural dimensions of economy and politics, and not on the intimate sphere. At the end I will examine the Aymara ideal of gender relations and discuss how it differs from conventional Western ways to ideal-

ize gender equality.[10] The basic idea is that to understand the conceptualization of gender equality, it is necessary to study both the status quo of everyday practices and the norms and values people are aiming at.

Ethno-politics and the Intersections of Gender, Ethnicity and Class in Bolivia

Despite the fact that Bolivia is a country rich in natural resources, the vast majority of its people have not benefited from this wealth and remain poor and malnourished (Ziegler 2008:2; INE 2009). In the last decade there have been massive mobilizations among the indigenous poor for social change. Several presidents were expelled through social protests, strikes and blockades until the first indigenous president in Bolivia, Evo Morales, was elected in 2006 with an unprecedented absolute majority. Evo Morales is now leading the government in his second term as president, and indigenous groups are revitalizing their social institutions and traditions. The making of a new Bolivian constitution (2006–2009) is a main symbol of change and "decolonialization" of Bolivian society for Morales' government. The aim of writing a new constitution was to put an end to earlier exclusion along gender and ethnic lines of differentiation, and to include indigenous traditions, values and symbols in the Bolivian national identity and constitution. This led to intense and polarized levels of ethno-political mobilizations for and against the constitutional proposals and gave rise to several outbursts of violence and lost lives. The constitution, controversial, but approved by a majority referendum in January 2009, can be taken to reflect basic values in Andean tradition. Critical voices say that the Aymara nationalist movement, to which Evo Morales himself is ethnically associated, had a privileged power of definition.

The election victory was generally celebrated among the poor and the indigenous throughout the continent, but it was shocking for others (Good 2006:412). The indigenous movement had entered into the republic's central organs of power. The government's party, *Movimiento al Socialismo* (Movement for Socialism, MAS), is not a conventional political party but rather a social political movement, comprising a loose alliance of indigenous movements and organizations, including Aymara nationalists (Kataristas) and different trade unions dominated by people of indigenous origin, such as the peasants' trade union, the miners, the domestic servants and the *cocaleros*, or coca-peasants. Morales also has some support among the urban middle class fed up with the corruption and incompetent administration of earlier governments. He has in other words managed to appeal to very different social categories and interests. However, in contrast to the ruling elites from which South American presidents and parliament candidates normally are recruited, Morales and many of the new leaders are women and men without an academic education. Although more than 60% of the population identified themselves as belonging to one of the indigenous groups in the previous census (INE 2001), the shares of persons with indigenous identity vary according to politics of identity and historical circumstances, and not least on how the question is posed, e.g. whether it is understood as a question about maternal

Two Aymara women in the rural Andes welcoming me and my Norwegian students.

language or a question about cultural identity, and depending on which response categories are offered.[11]

There is a widespread understanding among Bolivia's poor that the indigenous peoples are exploited people, and Bolivia an exploited country that needs to be decolonized. Parts of the mobilization are based on an essentialist and racial rhetoric (Chachaki 2007:6). The recent political polarization has increased the interethnic tensions. Even today the notions of "Indians" as inferiors are expressed quite frankly in conversations as well as in mass media (Ytrehus and Ågotnes 2006; Canessa 2007). *Indio* is in itself a colonial concept referring to the whole variety of ethnic groups in the "New World" and the term is often felt – and used – as an insult.

Intersectionality and Postcolonial Gender Research

Intersectionality is a perspective derived from postcolonial feminism. The concept was coined by the African-American Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw and forms part of a postcolonial research discourse that criticizes Western gender research for ignoring non-Western women, poor women, minority women and their experiences, resources and needs, and for having a one-eyed focus on middle-class women's problems with their careers, housework, husbands and leisure (Crenshaw 1991). As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak points out:

> Women's experience is so diverse and gender categories and roles so deeply structured by other systems of social differentiation, it is untenable to treat "gender" as an autonomous category for

analysis or to presume a unitary "women's" standpoint (Spivak 1998).

The intersectional theory sets out to examine how various social and cultural categories such as ethnicity/race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, age and generation shape a person's experiences, and emphasizes that these categories of identity are interwoven and interact contributing to structures of marginalization, oppression, and systematic social inequality. Hence, racism, sexism and other modes of marginalization within society do not act independently of one another. On the contrary, modes of social differentiation interrelate, creating a system of marginalization and inferiorization that reflects the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination (Crenshaw 1991; Knudsen 2008). Thus the intersectionalism poses questions to deconstruct hegemonic understandings and enable the study of exclusionary mechanisms and systems of differentiation in terms of power, knowledge and resources.

The Capability Approach and its Links with Intersectionality

The Human Development and Capability Approach was first proposed by the Indian economist and Nobel Prize laureate Amartya Sen in the 1970s in his research on poverty and welfare economics.[12] He argued that poverty is a lack of freedom to lead the life that one has reason to value. Thus well-being and development cannot be properly measured only in terms of economics. In collaboration with the US philosopher Martha Nussbaum and other scholars,[13] Sen developed a framework of theories to examine people's freedom of opportunity to live a life in dignity, to identify the obstacles that impede people from pursuing their values and to measure development and well-being on the one hand, and injustices and poverty on the other (cf. Sen 1999, 2009; Walker and Unterhalter 2007; Nussbaum 2011). Accordingly, "The issue of gender inequality is ultimately one of disparate freedoms" (Sen 1992:125 in Robeyns 2003:62). Development is defined as a process which expands people's possible choices, or people's capability to lead the lives they value (Sen 1999, 2009; Nussbaum 2011).

Although the capability approach and the intersectional perspective were developed in different disciplinary contexts, there are links between them. The first examines freedoms of agency and opportunity, while the second examines social orders of oppression and domination. Both perspectives are relational and multidimensional, focusing on the intersections of categories of identity such as gender, ethnicity and class. Both intersectional theory and the capability approach presuppose and encompass pluralism. Both can be used in ways sensitive to complex cultural contexts adaptable to the globalized and multicultural world in which we live. Both are theoretical approaches rather than complete theoretical frameworks. In sum, my argument is that combined they could give a deeper understanding of the complex mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion.

A Capability Approach to Gender Relations

Sen defines *capability* as "a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being; [it] represents the alternative combinations of things a person is

able to do or to be" (Sen 1993:30). He distinguishes between the three core concepts: *capability* – the freedom of opportunity, *agency* referring to a person's ability to pursue and realize goals that she values and has reason to value, and the *achieved functionings* referring to what people actually choose to be and to do. An agent is "someone who acts and brings about change" (Sen 1999:19). The opposite of a person with agency is someone who is forced, oppressed or passive. To speak with the intersectional theorists, then, agency is not simply a synonym for resistance to relations of male domination, but rather "the capacity for action that historically specific relations of subordination enable and create" (Mahmood 2001 in Bedi 2006:57).

One of Sen's illustrative examples is the difference between a person fasting and a person starving. In terms of nutrition or health, the achieved functionings, or outcome, could be the same, but the fasting person may choose to interrupt the fasting when he or she wishes, while the person who is starving because of poverty might not have the capability to choose to eat (cf. Sen 2009:237). Therefore, it is necessary to look for capabilities – the substantive freedoms, and not only the achieved functionings. Let us suppose that the person starving is a pregnant and anaemic woman. In this case, her access to food resources coupled with the person's own characteristics (health needs, knowledge about nutrition and cooking, etc.), create a disadvantage and restricted agency to choose what and when to eat. Her malnourishment has severe implications for her capabilities to lead the life she values, e.g. to give birth to a healthy child, to learn something or to organize in an interest group to speak out for herself. Consider that she could choose to allocate her scarce resources either to pay the rent to keep her shelter or to buy food. The capability approach argues that the focus of study should be on multidimensional aspects, i.e. the alternative *combinations* of things a person is able to do or to be, and thus independently of which of the two options she chooses (Sen 2009:233). Furthermore, utility can be distorted by personality or *adaptive preferences*; functionings can be enjoyed in a prison or stifled environment; and resources such as the gift of a bag of beans can be almost useless if she cannot store it or cook it, or if she does not have access to an adequate water supply, so *capability* represents the most accurate space in which to investigate and advance the various forms of human well-being.[14]

Inequality of What? Cultural Identities, Economic Capabilities and Marginalization of Indigenous Women in Bolivia

What do we mean by gender equality? Equality of what? The conventional approach assesses a person's advantage in terms of his/her income, wealth or resources. The income or resource perspective does not take account of women's responsibilities or real opportunities and disadvantages, nor the subjective values or meanings they pursue. Utilitarianism or a pure phenomenological perspective would assess differences in well-being by focusing on individual happiness or pleasure. These approaches put too much emphasis on the subjective aspects of well-being, pleasures and frustrations,

The city of La Paz, Bolivia. There are few urban men wearing the colourful woven clothes with traditional patterns. In contrast, the urban Aymara women have their own fashion with ethnic markers, e.g. a pleated skirt, shoes with heels and a bowler hat (to the left).

thus on adaptive preferences that may conform to hegemonic systems of order. The capability approach rather asks; what are Aymara women free to be and to do?

Many Aymara women contribute significantly to the household economy. Most are self-employed as peasants, artisans or in small trades, or engaged as domestic servants. These ways of income generation are a part of Bolivia's huge informal economy. Work divisions according to gender, ethnic belonging and class are clearly visible. Even in the cities, Andean women, in particular, are easily distinguishable by their pleated skirts (*polleras*) and long plaits. These Quechua and Aymara women can be traced back to their local or regional belonging by their outfit, for instance by the length of their skirt, its pattern and colours (Ytrehus and Ågotnes 2006:155). In the market places and streets Aymara women seem to be everywhere with their small businesses selling things like food and clothes and often bringing along their children of pre-school age. The sellers are abundant, the prices are low and the markets saturated.

Although the informal market can be partly regulated by trade associations or local authorities (Ødegaard 2010:176 ff.), the disadvantage is no public health insur-

ance or security net. In the big cities there are plenty of micro-finance enterprises supporting women's micro-activities, both private and public, and some of these also offer health insurance, health information and other services. However, although there are success stories, most of the micro-credit clients gain very low profits (Andersen and Mueriel 2007). The question thus is whether this majority of indigenous women in the informal economy are an outcome of values pursued by the women, and not due to a restricted agency.

An Aymara woman from El Alto told me with pain in her voice during an informal conversation that she had to lock her children in their home to keep them safe when they were small, during her long working hours as a domestic servant in a house in southern La Paz at least one and a half hour's bus ride away. Her husband looked for work on a day-to-day basis and could be away for the whole day, too. Women usually take on the full responsibility for small children and the domestic tasks. Thus their capability to move about freely is limited. Unemployment and sub-employment rates are high, and the demand for unskilled labour is low (Andersen and Mueriel 2007). Bringing along small children would make a person practically unemployable. It is no wonder then that self-employment is perceived as a better option for many Aymara mothers. It also illustrates the point that the choices that a person makes are dependent upon the particular socio-historical structures in which she lives, rather than upon a "free" choice. Choices are socially conditioned (cf. Deneulin 2007:117, 120). The economic activities thus contributed to expanding the women's capabilities to earn an income while looking after their children. Motherhood and responsibility for meals may also account for the preference for lower but more secure income. The assumption of the restricted agency of the indigenous women is also supported by students' interviews with micro-credit clients in which I participated as an interpreter. The many micro-credit institutions' preferential support for poor women is at least an advancement in contrast with the point made by Ester Boserup in the 1970s that women's historically productive role in agriculture was harmed by colonial and postcolonial aid policies favouring men in the new cash economies (Steeves 2002:520).[15] This makes part of the double developmental aim of international donors of mainstreaming a gender perspective into ordinary development and sector-oriented programmes on the one hand, and promoting unprivileged women's economic activities through particular women's projects on the other. However, the vocational training and financial projects offered to indigenous women by local and international NGOs often maintain and promote the existing gender divisions and indigenous women's achieved functionings in the informal economy, typically offering them courses in small scale farming, artisan textile work and cooking.

Many of the Aymara small traders make part in the recent migration from the rural areas to escape poverty in the highlands. Migration to the cities increases the family's access to income but also increases risks because in the city their survival depends on income generation, while the family may previously have sus-

tained themselves on subsistence farming. The assessments of differences in resources such as income also do not take account of these differences in countable and non-countable resources, nor the risks and the impact risks have on the choices people make.

Indigenous men and women do not start from the same point of departure, and they encounter different role expectations and exclusionary mechanisms in the labour market. The men tend to look for employment, which may be less secure, but better paid (Andersen and Mueriel 2007). Even in the formal sector, indigenous people who often have lower education tend to be employed in day labour or with short contracts. Thus, the urban Aymara men adapt to "Western" urban styles of clothing to a much higher extent than their wives, sisters and daughters. There are few urban Aymara men wearing the colourful woven clothes with traditional patterns. In contrast, relatively well-to-do urban Aymara women have their own fashion with ethnic markers, e.g. a pleated skirt of expensive textiles such as brocade, shoes with heels and a bowler hat. While trying to assimilate often is perceived as the best strategy for indigenous men to be employable and to reduce the risks of ethnic discrimination, the ethnic markers of Andean women do not seem to hamper their trade in the informal markets. This illustrates how clothes and hairstyle not only demarcate the borders between genders and indigenous and "white/mestizo", but also between rural and urban, poor and rich, and between segregated job markets.

According to Paul Alexis Montellano Barriga, a researcher from the University San Francisco Xavier in Sucre,[16] the ethnic discrimination works along three dimensions: skin colour and other visible physical "Indian" features, an "Indian" surname, and not mastering Spanish fluently. A person can choose to avoid some of these identification marks, and in many cases education and upward social mobility imply a transformation of visual identity markers from indigenous to "mestizo". On the other hand, Western clothes and styles can be – and often are, interpreted as a rejection of indigenous belonging (Ytrehus and Ågotnes 2006:156). When I asked Aymara women directly which kind of discrimination is the most disturbing, the discrimination against them as women or as indigenous people, all except one, even in the women's organization, answered that the *ethnic* discrimination is worst and usually without any hesitation. The exception was Sofía Quispe Apaza, one of the founders of the women's organization. Her point was that the Aymara women are victims of a double oppression, and both are equally important to combat. Some of her comembers however, called her a feminist, and said she was too Western.[17] The informants generally meant that feminism is a Western ideology and just as harmful as male chauvinism (*el machismo*) because these ideologies "generate conflicts" and can "split couples" and families. However, they also thought that contemporary Bolivia is a male chauvinist society.

The problems of poverty in Bolivia are gendered and ethnified. Needs, values and preferences vary according to intersections of gender, class and ethnicity, and different disadvantages in the capability to achieve those valuables. Poverty is due to a complex net of exclusionary mechan-

isms that cannot be solved based on measures towards the individuals only, nor within the economic sphere alone.

Expanding the Indigenous and Women's Capabilities through a New Constitution

To understand what a person is able to be and to do, it is necessary to study the legal rights and the structures of inequality and distribution of power.

The first Bolivian constitution was written in 1824 by Simon Bolivar, a national hero in several Latin-American states because of his significant role in the fight for independence from the Spanish crown and colonial government. The constitution was based on democratic principles and leaned heavily on the ideas of the French Revolution. However, it also contained measures to maintain centralized power and privileges for the traditional elites, in practice curbing indigenous agency. For example, the indigenous were excluded from education and from military service, and they were neither eligible nor allowed to vote because they were illiterate. The political and economic elite represented the descendants of the colonizers, and they maintained their European cultural heritage, the colonial language, inter-ethnic relations and social institutions, such as the Catholic Church, the education system, the university, the political and juridical system, the military and the haciendas (large, private ranches) (Klein 2003; Good 2006).

It was not until the revolution of 1952 that Bolivia's indigenous peoples achieved equal rights of citizenship with universal suffrage.[18] The Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) seized power supported by armed indigenous miners and peasants.[19] Serfdom became legally abolished, and MNR carried out a land reform in the highlands, allowing peasants and former serfs entitlements to the land they worked. The indigenous peoples of the Andes, such as the Aymaras, organized in trade unions and were categorized as "farmers" (*campesinos*) and succumbed under a Marxist conception of class, while the term "indigenous" was used only about the most isolated minorities in the Amazonas (Albó 2002:74 f.). However, the policy regarding the indigenous populations was assimilation, not cultural recognition. Universal education was a crucial tool to "Bolivianize" and "civilize the Indians". MNR invested in rural schools, but Spanish was the language of instruction and the only official language until 1994. Rural indigenous children started school hardly understanding a single word from the teacher, and many dropped out of school without basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic (Howard-Malverde and Canessa 1995: 233). Even though there have been several revisions of the constitution over the years, these advances did not put the indigenous population on equal terms with citizens. Thus the new constitution became a key symbol of the project of "decolonizing" the Bolivian state and eradicating social injustices.

When MAS came into power, they proposed changing the name of the republic, putting Aymara symbols in the flag, and incorporating the Andean languages Quechua and Aymara in the national anthem (cf. *La Razón*, 26 February 2006). The opposition was provoked, but the constitutional assembly led by MAS changed the

A woman selling tomatoes in the peasants' market in Tarija, Bolivia.

name of the state to "the multinational state of Bolivia", and the Aymara flag, "la Wiphala", was acknowledged as a national symbol. There were also heated political discussions about the principles of representation in the new constitutional assembly and the decision-making process. While the opposition[20] favoured the "Western" idea of one citizen, one vote, MAS proposed special quotas for indigenous *ayllus*, a local political and social unit of indigenous communities.[21] Accordingly, indigenous communities and citizen associations became eligible in addition to political parties (CPE 2009 §11, 26). MAS also opted for equal representation of gender (CPE 2009 §278).

The Aymara communities and citizen associations traditionally have a different way of decision making. They emphasize what John Stuart Mill denoted as "democracy as government by discussion", rather than "democracy by representation" (Sen 2009:xiii). The community participants represent their households and each voice and argument counts. They discuss to arrive at a consensus, and without a common consensus, there is no decision. Many Aymaras look with scepticism upon political parties because, as some explained it, "their function is to divide people".[22] They believe that the political parties have split the indigenous movement, and thus impede the struggles for

common interests. Consequently, communities may set out to decide collectively on which party to vote for national elections. Several also pointed out that MAS is different – "it is not a political party but a social movement."

The new Bolivian constitution explicitly includes indigenous values. The constitution's §8 states the principles, values and aims on which it is based, starting with a traditional saying in Aymara with Spanish in brackets: "Do not be lazy, don't be a liar, and never be a thief." It then goes on to list several indigenous concepts in different languages with Spanish in brackets: *suma qamaña* (well-being), *ñandereko* (harmonious life), *teko kavi* (good life), *ivi maraei* (earth without evil), and *qhapaj ñan* (a noble way or life) (CPE 2009, §8). These concepts are not easy to translate because there are no Spanish or English equivalents. For instance, the traditional Aymara concept *suma qamaña* (well-being) means living in equilibrium and harmony with the social environment including the community, nature and the ancestral spirits. The meanings of these indigenous concepts may also vary geographically because they have been developed and used in oral tradition, and they only acquired a fixed standard of written content and form about a generation ago, e.g. Aymara in 1984.

Furthermore, §8 presents a list of values in Spanish:

> Unity, equality, inclusion, dignity, freedom, solidarity, reciprocity, respect, complementarity, harmony, transparency, equilibrium, equal opportunities, social and gender equity in participation, common well-being, responsibility, social justice, distribution and redistribution of products and social goods to live well.
> (CPE 2009, §8).

Some of the values presented are in accordance with traditional indigenous Andean values and worldview: balance, harmony, unity, reciprocity and complementarity, but the international human rights regime is also embraced: dignity, equality, freedom and solidarity etc. For instance, the constitution declares that "All inhabitants have the right to rights under the same conditions" (§26, 64, 147), and §14 "forbids all discrimination based on sex, colour, age, sexual orientation, origin" etc. (CPE 2009).

Bolivia has generally ratified the majority of the UN conventions, and Bolivia was actually one of the first states to ratify the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 (UNDRIPS). The Bolivian constitution gives indigenous communities rights to autonomy and self-government in internal and local affairs, rights to self-determination and to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, and rights to customary law (e.g. CPE 2009 §2 and §119). In effect, the right to consultation in the earlier Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (ILO No. 169), had minor bearings on the indigenous right to land and self-determination, leaving it up to the official authorities and multinational companies whether they would listen to the consultations. Even today the legal autonomy granted to the indigenous communities is still not always respected by government officials and politicians (cf. e.g. the TIPNIS conflict). However, the indigenous peoples of Bolivia have achieved a new self-confidence. Thirty-six languages are listed as languages of indigenous peoples and nations,

and are together with the African-Bolivians given collective rights to maintain, protect and develop their cultural heritage and social institutions (CPE 2009 §5, §30, 98 ff.). As a general category the constitution uses "peasant indigenous original peoples" (*pueblos indigenes originarios campesinos*) to characterize the indigenous peoples in an inclusive way. Different persons and indigenous groups may prefer to identify as either peasants, indigenous or original peoples. This indicates how the categories have been politicized over time (cf. Albó 2002).

One would assume that disadvantaged women's capabilities to participate in formal decision-making and to assume leadership are important to enable them to exercise their rights and to strengthen their opportunities and agency to pursue a dignified life. According to Rosa, Sofia and others, Aymara women were very active participants in the social movements and riots, for example in October 2003 and May–June 2005 (cf. also Arnold & Spedding 2005; Crabtree 2005), leading to the abolition and flight of president "Goni", Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada Sánchez Bustamante, to the US, and later to the presidency of Evo Morales. In previous Bolivian laws, female participation in political life was a modest objective. For instance political parties were supposed to have one-third women on their lists. According to Rosa, women were often appointed as substitutes or in the last third part, and thus did usually not acquire political positions. As an indication of trends, the proportion of women holding seats in Parliament more than doubled from 7% in 1995 to 19% in 2005. While the proportion of women in Parliament declined slightly to 17% in 2006, the current government has appointed indigenous women to ministerial posts (OECD 2008: 10). In the new constitution from 2009, women and men hold 50% each on political lists and they must alternate (CPE 2009 §26, §147). However, the argument for equal quotas is not because women and men share the same humanity, but rather that they are different and therefore their presence should be in parity.

It is still tough to be an indigenous woman politician in Bolivia. Women are often ignored, and must also endure harassment. Thus, in a training course for women politicians by the women's organization in which I participated, an important topic of discussion was the dilemma that women politicians must endure, overcoming the risk of being sexually harassed, ignored, ridiculed or rejected. These risks are particularly high in informal settings where decisions are prepared and alliances made, as there often is an abundance of alcohol consumption. If a politician opted to stay away from these kinds of meetings to protect her dignity as a woman, her political agency would be severely hampered. Nobody is capable of making it as a politician without support and alliances. It was emphasized how important it is for an indigenous woman to participate, but never to drink alcohol with her political comrades because it makes her even more vulnerable.[23]

The Bolivian constitution could be considered to be quite a political achievement when it proclaims that "all persons, in particular women, have the right not to suffer from physical, sexual or psychological violence: in the family as well as in the society", and declaring the state obliga-

tions that "The authorities should prevent, eliminate and sanction generational and gender violence" (CPE 2009 §15; II). This takes a clear stand to protect women against intrafamiliar violence, and also illustrates a shift from regulating the power of state authorities, to proclaiming citizen rights and state obligations and responsibilities.[24]

Interestingly, the constitution consistently uses "equality" to characterize the rights of "peasant indigenous peoples", and a different term, "equity" or "parity", to characterize gender. While equality can be taken to mean similarity and sameness, equity can include differences. Equity draws attention to those who have unequal opportunities due to various disadvantages and may require preferential treatment or affirmative action. However, the idea of gender equity seems to be consistent with the Aymara worldview and its emphasis on equilibrium, parity, harmony, dualism and complementarity. It fits with the traditional and revitalized Aymara conceptualization of *chacha-warmi* (man-woman).

The Conceptualization of *Chacha-warmi*: An Alternative Way to Gender Equality?

Chacha-warmi is a conceptualization of the ideal gender relation among the Aymaras explained to me in interviews in the Aymara women"s organization. *Chacha-warmi* (man-woman) is a compound of the words "man" and "woman" and is based on a dualistic and complementary perspective on gender relations (cf. also Harris 2000:164f;[25] Bernabé 2000). According to Aymara tradition, both the human and the spiritual world are dual and complementary, feminine and masculine, and the human world and the spiritual world reflect each other. In rituals and other symbolic contexts, the Aymaras always use two or pairs to acquire equity. This is a necessary prerequisite for equity, balance and harmony. Thus two is a culturally lucky number, while one gives bad luck.[26] A *chacha* is not an independent man, but a husband, a married man, and a *warmi* is a married woman. Only a married person is assumed to be a complete person, called a *jaqui* in Aymara (cf. also Bernabé 2000).

Aymara peasants are often seen in couples working side by side. Men and women have individual inheritances of land but they cultivate in mutual interdependence as symbolized in the rituals. Women and men have different responsibilities, particularly in rituals and ritual work in agriculture such as cultivating Mother Earth (*Pachamama*). For instance, the man opens Mother Earth with his plough and the woman sows and treads the seeds into the furrows. "If a man sows, a poor harvest is to be expected," a male Aymara peasant told me, explaining: "A woman is needed to sow because it is women that produce life." The rituals connected with sowing and harvesting are still highly prioritized and migrants to the cities often make a great effort to return to the countryside to participate.

According to Sofia the female is more sacred because of her productive and life-giving functions. The masculine forces are in contrast often symbolized by destructivity, aggressivity, death and the bad. For instance the burning sun and the disturbing ancestral spirits that live in the mountains are masculine, while the earth,

the water (which is scarce in the Andes) and the moon are female (Sofia, 2009).

Rosa comments in her interview that near the cities, the men nowadays with the influence of urban, western culture, feel ashamed to do women's work, leaving it to the women. Thus the local rural communities have lost their gender complementarity and equity. She tells me about her father in her childhood carrying firewood and water from outside, and her mother preparing the food. Her mother did not get up from the hearth until she had finished, while her father went in and out, fetching firewood, and looking after the fire, boiling the water etc. Her father carried her on his back, while nowadays men do not want to carry their offspring. Traditionally, the women had to weave the masculine poncho, and the men had to weave the *pollera* – the woman's skirt. However, foreign NGOs have given training courses to teach women to make their own skirts, and thus contributed to dissolving this reciprocal gift-giving tradition (Rosa, 2009).

The ideal of complementarity is also exemplified from their historical heroines, in particular Bartolina Sisa, who led an Aymara uprising against the Spanish colonizers together with her husband Tupac Katari in 1781, and continued leading the indigenous troops for several months after her husband was captured and imprisoned.[27] Pictures of Bartolina Sisa and Tupac Katari decorated the front table together with the Aymara flag when the women's organization had celebrations and ceremonial events, and the women's organization of the largest peasant union in Bolivia (CSUTCB) is named after her.[28] An important aspect of complementarity, according to Rosa, is that if a man is unable to do his part of the work, for instance, if he migrates to the city to work, his wife does his part, and if she is occupied, he does her part and works her property.

Chacha-warmi implies that married couples (not singles) should assume leadership and manage the development of a local community (Bernabé 2000; ch. 2, Arnold & Spedding 2005). Some communities elect their leaders while some take turns by household. According to the women's organization, women and men are supposed to be respected at the same level, and their work equally valorized:

> It is not an election of a man and his wife follows, it has to be two. When I took up the post in 2003 in my Ayllu, then they elected the two of us [husband and wife], the two of us were responsible, at the same level, and my husband and I worked at the same level (Rosa, 2009).

In practice, however, the man is usually the leader while his wife has more symbolic functions in rituals and preparing food, e.g. to "pay" for communal work organized by her husband. According to Quisbert, Callisaya and Velasco, the *chacha-warmi* is only observable in communal celebrations (2006:51). Also in the women's organization they admit that it is difficult for a woman to assume leadership or act as leader, and according to informants it rarely happens, or only if it is a widow. When the turn comes to a widow, or if the husband dies during their leadership, the widow would often ask a son or other male family member to take over the leadership, or pass on the position. The interviewees in the Aymara women's organization argue that the traditional gender equity is destroyed due to the impact of

Husband and wife, a *chacha-warmi*. The stick on the man's back symbolizes that he is a community leader.

colonialism, Westernization and syndicalism, and that women need training to regain their position. It is her training that makes her "equal to equal" with her husband. Rosa goes on to explain:

> I did not have to be in the kitchen to prepare his food and only be, let's say, his company, no, things change, don't they? Thus, I see it as very important to give women training. A woman with training will speak, will give her opinion, will say; OK, let us do it like this. […] She will behave as equal to equal with the man, right. *Then* one respects the rights of women (Rosa, 2009).

Also in the case of *chacha-warmi* there is an apparent gap between the ideal or ideology and everyday practice. Several of the professionals in the NGOs emphasized that indigenous women often have a low self-esteem, they are marginalized both in the community decision making and in the society at large. Many indigenous women have little or no formal education. They excuse themselves, explaining that they are politically uninformed and therefore cannot be in charge. Two Aymara peasant women I talked with while participating in a workshop used the expression that they "have been sleeping", but thanks to social training by the Women's organization they had "woken

up" and started to speak for themselves.[29] As they explained it, they did not only expand their capabilities to make choices for their own future, but also to participate in collective decision making.

The Aymara women's organization argues for gender equity, rather than gender equality. The *chacha-warmi* is part of a revival of cultural heritage, and maybe an idealized past projected into the future. It is difficult to know whether the ideas of *chacha-warmi* and dual leadership are traditions lost due to exposure to the colonizers and the West, and thus traditional practices to be revitalized as the women's organization claims, or to what extent they are modern reconstructions. This is not the point, however. The point is that in the light of capability approach these ideas offer workable solutions. They are perceived as part of indigenous cultural heritage to be revitalized, and not as an ideology imposed by the West. The *chacha-warmi* ideals are also felt to be less conflictive. The ideals expand the capabilities of married Aymara women and their ability to express their needs and to participate in decision making and to assume leadership. The conceptualizations of *chacha-warmi* are meaningful for the participants, and as long as they are, they have a function as tradition and part of lived culture. On the other hand these ideals valorize a heteronormative line of life pattern. Homosexuals and any queer orientations are generally stigmatized and mostly invisible in the public. Single persons[30] and single women in particular, are often not acknowledged as "grown-up" or complete persons. Thus single mothers are easily marginalized and perceived as deviant even though there is nothing unusual about them in statistical terms. The households headed by women are also particularly vulnerable to poverty.

A Capability Approach to Social Justice

The capability approach enables the study of inequalities or injustices between social groups, such as men and women, or justice for indigenous people. It offers a framework of an opportunity theory to social justice, and thus is an alternative to outcome theory or a material resource theory or other conventional ways to assess gender equality. At the level of theory and principles, most theorists of justice endorse the view that justice is achieved when all have equal genuine opportunities (Robeyns 2009:112). Sen's theory of justice aims to "clarify how we can proceed to address questions of enhancing justice and removing injustice, rather than to offer resolutions of questions about the nature of perfect justice" (2009: ix). Criticizing John Rawl's theory of justice and other acknowledged theories, Sen argues for the need to focus on actual realizations in the societies involved rather than only on utopian institutions and rules, and to take a comparative rather than a transcendent route to advance and assess justice (2009:9ff). He also criticizes the limited and limiting framework of social contract theory as the only foundation because it draws on the perspective of mutual benefit based on symmetry and reciprocity. Instead he calls for a line of thinking about reasonable behaviour towards others that takes account of asymmetries of power (2009). He argues that the accountability that emanates from the ability, the effective power to reduce an injustice, is argument enough for the per-

son to consider seriously the case for action. In other words, unilateral obligations follow from asymmetry of power (Sen 2009:205–206).

The capability approach offers some answers about which dimensions to look for to study inequality or evaluate justice. And that is whether we choose to assess injustices in terms of capabilities or a mixture of both achieved functionings and capabilities (Robeyns 2009:113). An important and much-discussed question is how to decide and justify which capabilities matter the most for purposes of social justice, without imposing a specific view on what counts as a good life (Robeyns 2009:110, Nussbaum 2009). Sen is critical of such attempts, commenting that the capability theory is – and has to be – incomplete and pragmatic. To set a predetermined and fixed list of capabilities to define a good life, Sen argues, would be "to deny the possibility of fruitful participation on what should be included and why" (cf. e.g. 2009:242f.). Instead he points out that there can exist several conflicting and competing arguments for justice, each of which survives critical and impartial scrutiny, but yields divergent conclusions (2009:x). This is what I would call a true dilemma, and also an example of how this approach accommodates pluralism and what Sen calls "plural grounding" (Sen 2009:2). For instance, the disadvantaged position of indigenous peoples in Bolivia, and women in particular, could justify policies varying from equal rights and non-discrimination policies, to redistributive measures or policies of recognition and preferential treatment. These policies can sometimes be combined, but in the implementation there will often be conflicting and competing arguments.

As the philosopher Ingrid Robeyns argues, the capability approach is particularly well-suited to studying different dimensions of justice for a number of reasons. First, it is an empirically-based approach which does not rely on simplifying assumptions and idealizations that basically brush the dimensions of disadvantage and oppression under the carpet. Second, it uses a multi-dimensional metric of justice, so that it does not only focus on either subjective assessments or material inequalities such as income. The problem with subjective assessments is that people get used to their respective circumstances. Deprived groups adapt to their objectively poor circumstances and many deprivations will not be fully reflected in their subjective judgements. Privileged people also get used to their circumstances, and thus their subjective self-assessment may be much more modest than one would expect, given their social advantages. However, as Robeyns points out, the human development and capability approaches need to more effectively combine the focus on capabilities, as normative units of evaluation, with theories that explain the causes and workings of the social structures of group oppression, such as gender, caste or class (Robeyns 2009:115). The contribution of intersectional theory is the focus on the structures of oppression, not only at a macro level but also at the level of individual experiences.

Concluding Reflections

An aim of this article was to explore how the ethnic mobilization among the indigenous people, Aymara, in the Bolivian

Andes relates to gender equality. The organization of social practices along ethnic and gender lines of differentiation often implies unequal access to resources, power and agency, and this is certainly the case in Bolivia. To understand how social categorizations such as gender, ethnicity and class intersect and impact on a person's position in the social hierarchy and which capabilities he or she has, it is necessary to analyse social differentiation in its cultural context. Thus an intersectional analysis is necessary. I have tried to show how the intersectional perspective can be combined with the capability approach to analyse the approaches to gender equality and indigenous identity in the Aymara indigenous movement and the new Bolivian constitution and how they can supplement each other.

The new Bolivian constitution has been at once a political core symbol of the decolonialization that according to the indigenous movements needed to be done, an implementation of the visions of the indigenous movement and a vehicle of social changes. I have indicated how it embraces the international human rights doctrine, declaring citizen rights and state obligations, and in particular defending women and indigenous peoples and how it at the same time adapts to an indigenous or Andean worldview, based on ideas and values of dualism, complementarity, equity and harmony. The Aymara conceptualizations of gender equity and *chacha-warmi* are also based on these values. I have described how this conception differs from the concept of gender equality as equal outcome. The interpretation of gender equality as gender equity based on the conception of women and men as fundamentally different, opposed and complementary, is not logically compatible with the Western conception of gender equality as sameness and equal outcome.[31] However, approaching development as "a process which expands people's possible choices", or "people's capability to lead the lives they value" (Sen 1999; Nussbaum 2011), the construction or revitalization of the ideas of *chacha-warmi*, promotes development and gender equity adapted to the cultural context and on their own terms to an extent that the gender equality agenda cannot offer. Gender equality is in other words not a universal concept, but an idea that is culturally interpreted and adapted in different ways. This requires further investigation. There is also a strong rationale for extending the evaluative space of gender equality to capabilities in general and political capabilities in particular. Because individual agency is central in promoting capabilities, research studies should not ignore how the impact of the ethno-political structures may restrict individual agency and well-being, nor the impact of the values and norms they are aiming at. If the capabilities of Aymara women in Bolivia expand, time will show whether *chacha-warmi* is a value worth pursuing also in the future, and for whom, or whether gender equity and complementarism are exchanged with gender equality as similarity or other values considered being worth pursuing for a dignified life.

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Notes

1 Bolivia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1990.

2 The Aymaras constitute about 25% of the Bolivian population and the second largest indigenous group after the Quechuas. They relate their history to a pre-Inca empire (Tiwanaku from c. 300 BC), and have a distinct language and cultural heritage. They also had the most organized nationalist resistance to oppression from colonial times to dictatorships and the riots in the years 2000–2005. There are also Aymaras in southern Peru, northern Chile and north-western Argentina.

3 Class is used here in terms of position in the social hierarchy and access to resources and power.

4 On my annual travels to Bolivia, about three of four weeks are fieldwork with a group of Norwegian bachelor students in intercultural studies, and about one week is on my own. On the five-month trip, my husband and a son aged 11 stayed with me in La Paz city, but they did not join me on field work except for a few longer expeditions in the countryside. My son went to school and my husband had his own research project. It possibly eased my way, however, that I presented myself as part of a family relation, wife and mother, and not a single woman.

5 The main funding all these years has been through development cooperation with a Scandinavian NGO with mainly public funding, here just called "the donor". The donor was supposed to withdraw after the end of three five-year periods, as part of the public development policy to prevent dependence.

6 The interviews lasted from about half an hour with the two youngest employees, up to 4 hours with the leaders, and are part of a total of some 30 digitally recorded and transcribed interviews. The conversations are from all my visits in Bolivia, and both from the fieldwork in the organization and other conversations during my visits including fieldwork with students, dialogues with taxi drivers, acquaintances and friends. All names are fictional.

7 All translations from Spanish are mine. I participated only in the courses given in Spanish. Spanish is a second language to me and the leaders and the rural participants, while many of the urban young Aymaras are monolingual Spanish speakers.

8 Thus I first asked for permission from the Bolivian NGO, and then, two years later from the Scandinavian donor NGO. In spite of my phenomenological approach, aiming to describe the experiences and actor's point of view (Schütz 1997), and even though I sympathize with them and thus have access to my resources of empathy, I am unable to situate my analysis from within. I am an outsider, an observer, and their struggles are not mine. This increases the risk of reduction and exoticization, thus possibly involuntarily reinforcing forms of exclusion. I was met with great hospitality, however. Even though there is much more to be said in terms of self-reflexivity, I adhere to Kobayashi when she points out that "there are some limits as to how useful public reflexivity is, either to encouraging analytical exchanges with other scholars, or to advancing an activist agenda that might improve the world" (2003:349).

9 For example, while the representatives of the donor NGO expect punctuality from their Bolivian partner NGOs during their busy visits, I waited patiently for hours, and sometimes for days, because my interviewees were delayed or had to change plans.

10 Western is used here metaphorically as Bolivia is geographically west and south of the point of Greenwich, London. Thus North would have been more appropriate, but the informants speak about the Western (*lo occidental*).

11 There was a new national census 21 November 2012 still not accessible. There has been controversy about the fact that "mestizo" was not included as a response alternative when the census asked about ethnic identification. They asked whether you belong to any of the indigenous groups or nations or not, and if so, to which one. The answer "white" was the only alternative to indigenous. Some claim that the majority would actually identify as "mestizo" if they had the option, but the MAS authorities do not want this change. As it is a political advantage for MAS to display Bolivia as a country with a grand majority of indigenous people, it is argued that the census is biased (cf. BOLPRESS 2012; cf. also Reyles 2008).

12 The Human Development Index (HDI) was developed by Mahbub ul Haq to operationalize some of Sen's ideas by means of social indicators such as life expectancy, literacy, education, standards of living and gender disparity. It has become UNDP's standard means of measuring well-being, comparatively and over time.
13 An important forum here is the Human Development and Capability Association, launched in 2004, http://www.capabilityapproach.com/index.php and *the Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*.
14 This example also draws on Alkire and Deneulin's bike example (2009:41–42), and on my cultural contextualization in Bolivia.
15 Boserup's seminal research was based on data from Sub-Saharan Africa.
16 In a lecture in Sucre 27 February 2006.
17 She was also one of the two women in the women's organization wearing "Western clothes".
18 However, many indigenous still did not have the capabilities, and thus there were systematic inequalities. According to the census in 1992, for example, only 52% of men and 38% of women in the rural sector over 15 years of age had the necessary identity documents (Albó 2002: 97, note 7). This is also confirmed in interviews.
19 MNR actually won the elections in 1951, but were kept out of office by the military. They were overthrown and replaced by the military in 1964 (cf. Klein 2003:222).
20 Represented by the largest opposition party, PODEMOS, a conservative and liberalist party.
21 Olivia Harris explains *ayllu* as a "Corporate descent group with collective ownership of resources, including lands and theoretical endogamy […]. Within the Inca decimal system, the term may also be used to designate a unit of 100 tributaries" (2000:vi). In modern Bolivia the term is recognized by law as a basic indigenous political and social unit.
22 A general attitude in the women's organization. The women's organization participated in workshops to make proposals for the constitution and some of the indigenous women representatives in the assembly had attended their courses and returned to share their experiences.
23 Ethnographic notes, fieldwork November 2009.
24 There has been a law against intrafamily violence since 1995, supported and promoted by international development organizations such as UNICEF (Vleet 2008:3), but intrafamily violence seems to be abundant. It was a scandal, however, when it became known that a member of MAS, with the help of other party members, violated a drunken woman at the legislative assembly of the Chucuisaqa province on 20 December 2012. The event was filmed and published in newspapers and social media. Both these acts have been investigated. Cf. *La Razon* 17 January 2013 and 23 January 2013.
25 Olivia Harris refers to the same concept among the Laymis. This conceptualization is widespread in the Andes, but most of the writing about it has had a Quechua focus and the Quechua form, *qhariwarmi* (Harris 2002:164 n4).
26 Ethnographic notes, fieldwork 2009.
27 She was publicly humiliated, raped and then hanged by the colonial army in 1782.
28 They are called Bartolina Sisas, while the Aymara nationalist movement (the Katarista movement) is named after her husband.
29 I heard the same expression related to the training by a Christian NGO, interviews 2009.
30 Paradoxically, the first indigenous president of the state, Evo Morales Ayma, is unmarried and thus does not adapt to the "straight line" (cf. Ahmed 2006:26). An indigenous friend commented that he should marry, and that he should "stop behaving like a teenager, dancing and flirting around with girls, and playing football." The president has used his sister, also unmarried, in the role as the nation's first lady.
31 This is not to say that any Western country lives up to these ideals.

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Classifying the Tropics

Nature Makers in Deep Water

By Frida Hastrup

Encounters in India: Producing Tropical Nature

This article explores a series of encounters between Danes and the tropical nature of a particular place on the south-east Indian coast. By engaging with and juxtaposing two undertakings that deal with the tropics there in different ways and across time, my overall aim is to analyse what I see as the production of an ambiguous nature by way of complex comparative classification. My approach here is to view nature as created through specific knowledge practices, and to see these practices as employing a playful and partial connecting of different natural objects, keeping them separate and heterogeneous, all the while relating them (cf. Strathern 2004; Abram and Lien 2011).

My main argument is this: The process of classifying tropical nature, whether by nineteenth-century literary description for a Danish audience as in the one project, or by present-day landscape intervention as in the other, is a particular kind of comparison, defined here as complex analytical work undertaken from a doubly located perspective, a divided position that sees the tropics both from within and from without, and, accordingly, that manufactures tropical nature as both familiar and unfamiliar to itself. One intriguing effect of the acts of comparison practised in the projects on which I focus is that nature seems to somehow explode or at least challenge its own classification, and that it does so in the very process of being classified. What is considered true to the tropics turns out to be a matter of analytical processing, through which the project makers sanction some elements of nature as appropriate, healthy and timely, and others as foreign, threatening and ill-timed. A guiding question for the following study is this: from which point(s) of view is it possible to articulate this ambiguity of tropical nature? This is where my notion of comparison comes into play – as a feature of the specific projects I engage in and as a quality of ethnological analysis.

The argument is based on my exploring, first, the impression the Indian tropics made on a Danish pastor sent out to Denmark's trading colony of Trankebar in the 1830s, which he conveyed in a volume entitled *Letters from India*;[1] second, a landscaping project, also funded by Danish money, currently undertaken by heritage advocates in the village of Tharangambadi, the local Tamil name of the place which was translated into Trankebar by the Danish colonial envoys, where I have done ethnographic fieldwork intermittently since 2005 (see e.g. Hastrup 2011a). These two projects are then juxtaposed in a third project, which is this article that has another Dane involved in nature making along the South Indian coast. By creating a single field out of different nature making endeavours, each from its own era, and thereby extending the fieldwork into the knowledge practices of other nature makers, I want to argue for and try out a kind of lateral cultural analysis, the basis and result of which are ever incomplete and temporary objects, crafted by conversation and improbable connections all the way through. Whether undertaken by pastors, heritage workers, ethnographers or others, classifications of nature are ongoing productive processes that imply complexly situated styles of knowledge making and creative relating (Hara-

way 1988; see also Damsholt and Simonsen 2009).

Before I go on to explore the comparative classificatory moves involved in the two nature making projects that I concentrate on here and the split position that enables these moves, I will briefly revisit the formal beginning of the Danish interest in the small plot of the tropics that takes centre stage here.

A Home Away from Home: Denmark in South India

About four centuries ago, in 1620, the royal Danish court established a trading station on the South-East coast of India in order to deal in colonial goods. The station came to be located in what is now the coastal town of Tharangambadi, back then going by the name of Trankebar. The first Danish East Indian Company was established in 1616 with the industrious Danish King Christian IV as the primary shareholder, and although the merchant ships originally set out for Ceylon they landed on the Indian mainland instead and settled there. In addition to the pull of joining in the European race for trade in South Asia, where primarily Dutch and Portuguese ships had had a head start, the main commercial attractions for the early Danish merchants were tropical products such as cotton, silk, sugar, pepper, cinnamon, cardamom and cloves, some of which were procured further east from trade in Indonesia, China and the Philippines (Feldbæk 1990:104 ff.; Olsen 1967). Except for a flourishing period of thriving business in the late eighteenth century, on the whole the Danish overseas trade based in Trankebar was not very prosperous, whether undertaken by state-sanctioned companies or, later, private merchant ventures (Feldbæk 1990). Regardless of imperial ambition, ships would wreck in the tropical storms and lose their cargo, just as droughts or excessive rainfall would regularly spoil the harvests or stores of spices (Olsen 1967). Nature, one might say, continuously challenged the business to be made of nature. Eventually, for this and other reasons, the Danes sold the territory to the British in 1845.

In the course of the era when Danes roamed in and around Trankebar, they built mansions, churches, gates, bridges and houses, in addition to a fort constructed in 1620, which is now considered a historic gem by Danish cultural heritage advocates. Quite a few of these structures are still found in Tharangambadi in more or less dilapidated states, attracting restoration initiatives, heritage tourism and economic support for project work of different kinds (see Jørgensen 2011). Some of these project interventions are intended to stop the tropical climate from ruining the remnants of Danish colonial presence, as is the case of the Danish National Museum's prestigious renovation of the Danish Governor's mansion in Tharangambadi, which until recently was steadily falling apart, overgrown with shrubs, eaten by monsoon rain and occupied by stray goats.

Thus, Danes in various positions, probably feeling more or less at home, have had a long history of involvement with the tropics of Tharangambadi, played out in a series of encounters with waves, saltwater, spices, heat, people, sunrays, fish, fruits, ants and snakes among many others. These diverse actors have continuously been configured and reconfigured to

Preserved cultural heritage. The Guvenor's Bungalow in Tharangambadi.

make the Indian tropical nature come about as an object of interest, if not exactly of control. In the following section, I explore one such early project of articulating the tropics.

Mission Impossible: Tropics and Pastoral Order

Pastor Møhl, who was sent to Trankebar in the 1830s to preach to the Danish congregation in the local church and to further the Protestant mission in South India, has plenty of things to narrate about the tropical nature he finally landed in after more than four months at sea. A collection of his travel letters has been published, and in spite of the pastor expressing a slight worry in the preface to the volume that "some pieces of information and comments will seem insignificant to many", the letters give an interesting insight into an early instance of a kind of space compression experienced long before globalization became a key word in social theory. As Mary Louise Pratt has argued, European colonial travel writing made use of descriptions of nature to specify foreign plants and animals in a finite and totalizing order, preparing the way for and contributing to European economic and political expansionism (Pratt 2008:37). As Pratt notes, however, this is not all there is to travel writing concerned with unfamiliar natural features. As she puts it: "At the same time, in and of itself, the system of nature as a descriptive paradigm was an utterly benign and abstract appropriation of the planet. Claiming no transformative

potential whatsoever, it differed sharply from overtly imperial articulations of conquest, conversion, territorial appropriation, and enslavement (Pratt 2008:37–38). We find an echo of this dual quality in Møhl's letters that are prefaced by his asserting the blamelessness of his undertaking to which, apparently, no one can object, when he states that: "Given that the letters are of a simple and innocent content, I fear no unfair judgement"[2] (Møhl 1840: unpaginated preface). On the one hand, the pastor does not refrain from describing in his letters pagan and horrifying customs, whereby he naturally assumes the position of the universal Christian male, generously offering religious conversion allegedly for the best of all, nor does he question his right to procure samples of animals and plants to send home to Denmark as if these were naturally his or his country's property, the instrumental purpose of which it is to teach the public about the wider world. On the other hand, he often seems impressed by features of the tropical nature, whether in the form of the ingenious construction of a bird's nest or the agility of local palm toddy tappers climbing the palm trunks in no time. In an early section of the letters, in fact, Møhl explicitly acknowledges the beauty of South Indian nature and the locals' knowledge of it: "Doubtlessly, I will greatly enjoy observing the exotic nature here, and it seems that the locals know in great detail the natural phenomena that surround them"[3] (Møhl 1840:32). Møhl thus explains his project merely as catering to the benign curiosity of a Danish readership; he simply puts pen to paper to describe the new world he has encountered and to share his fascination with it. Normative evaluation, whether of good or bad, and innocent objective reportage go hand in hand – by which, of course, these categories are contested in the instant they are made.

My reading of the letters focuses mainly on the instances of spatial comparison that Møhl employs to both connect and differentiate between Denmark or Europe and Trankebar, and the ways in which the tropical nature's wonders and threats are complexly configured in a kind of dynamic scale ranging from the natural, recognizable and even wondrous to the unnatural, outlandish and unacceptable. The question is what it takes to make such an ambiguous scale out of the tropics. Donna Haraway has suggested a doctrine of what she refers to as feminist objectivity, and for the purpose at hand, what is particularly interesting about this idea is that she sees it as built on split agents. As Haraway puts it: "Splitting, not being, is the privileged image for feminist epistemologies of scientific knowledge. 'Splitting' in this context should be about heterogeneous multiplicities that are simultaneously salient and incapable of being squashed into isomorphic slots or cumulative lists" (Haraway 1988:586). The impossibility of such comprehensive and infallible lists conceived from nowhere in particular, however, can show itself in the very attempt at making them, since this proves to be a particular creative exercise that both shows and challenges what can be connected and kept apart (cf. Tsing 2005:90–91). Borges, famously quoted by Michel Foucault in the opening of *The Order of Things* refers to a "Certain Chinese Encyclopedia" that divides all animals into categories such as "a) belonging to the em-

peror, b) embalmed, c) tame, d) sucking pigs, e) sirens, f) fabulous, g) stray dogs, h) included in the present classification, i) frenzied, j) innumerable, k) drawn with a very fine camel hair brush, l) et cetera, m) having just broken the water pitcher, n) that from a long way off look like flies" (quoted in Foucault 2002 [1970]:xvi). Foucault takes this fascinating and surprising taxonomy to exemplify the contingency of what comes to count as the order of things, by seeing the encyclopedia as a shattering of "all the familiar landmarks of my thought – *our* thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography – breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and the Other" (ibid.:xiv). To Foucault, what the Chinese encyclopedia illustrates is the limits of our thinking – "the stark impossibility of thinking *that*" (ibid.: xiv) – and it comes to serve as an argument for critically exploring why it is that the encyclopedia is, to our thought, such a disturbing heterotopia. To Pastor Møhl, though, well out of his comfort zone if not quite as far away from Denmark as China, the encyclopedia may not have seemed that far-fetched and discourse-undermining. Indeed, Tharangambadi seemed to be a topos for surprising connections, which it took new discourse to articulate in the process of making the nature of the place come alive to Møhl's readers. Consider this excerpt from the table of contents for the fifth of Pastor Møhl's letters. Here, we learn that the letter, among other things, will deal with:

> The Land Wind – Mats – Foods – Game – Snakes in the Houses – Poisonous and Non-Poisonous – Wasps – Scorpions – Antelope – Envoys from Tanjore – Strong Rain – Moon Shine – Fireflies – Tree Worms – Grapevine – Caste Strife – Soap Tree – Shoe Flower – Marking Ink (Møhl 1840: III).[4]

To Pastor Møhl, it seems entirely possible to be thinking of these elements in conjunction and have them jointly make up a tropical nature.

If we allow ourselves to go along with Møhl and think about nature as made through listings that are at once incomprehensive and absolutely possible, we get an opportunity to hold on to our curiosity and explore the mysteries of nature, otherwise threatened by totalized systems that reduce diversity to already understood data. Here I am conversing, among others, with the anthropologist Anna Tsing whose work on nature making projects takes us to interesting places, including systems of botanical classification. Discussing Linnaean botany as a comprehensive system aimed at uniting all nature's diversity in a singular logic, Tsing notes that this eventually punctured the mysteries of nature; if the system is already known, the task of merely filling it in can suddenly appear tedious (Tsing 2005:90–91; Brichet and Hastrup 2011). What comparisons – in and out of the system – are at play in Møhl's work? What do we make of the idea that the Indian tropical nature is both a class and not self-contained, both possible and mysterious? As we shall see in more detail below, the point here is that the unifying class of things, i.e. Indian tropical nature, cannot be deduced comprehensively from the separate entities that make it up. The particulars and the total system are not co-

A sea full of sharks – and the Danish fort built in 1620.

extensive with each other; the first do not necessarily add up to the latter. Let us look more closely at Møhl's nature production, keeping in mind the comparative move of identifying common, natural, wonderful, threatening, outlandish and weirdly unnatural features in the same analytical movement, producing a complex scale of the tropics as ranging from the familiar to a point beyond what is recognizable – even, apparently, to the tropics themselves. Classes, one might say, remain interesting and relevant only insofar as they are not already filled; this is where there is work to be done – sometimes, of course, with the explicit aim of correcting an existing system to make a new one. Think about this passage from one of the letters where Møhl conveys a particular lesson to be learnt from his encounter with Trankebar's nature:

> This morning I have discovered a very grave misunderstanding in a textbook I know of, which I must correct immediately. The Tamarind is not, as it is stated, a bush, but a very large tree, of which two species grow here in the church yard. Similarly, I take the opportunity here to correct no less of a misunderstanding, albeit not in the said textbook, namely that India does not have flowers that smell nice, but only beautiful ones, which is common knowledge at home, even if unjustified. I do not even want to mention roses and resedas and several other flowers with pleasant scent that one here shares with Europe; if I could only show you all the flower trees that grow in the church yard from which I can collect flowers, all of which smell strongly and very pleasantly, I would need no other proof (Møhl 1840:30–31).[5]

A strong didactic undercurrent is obvious in this and other passages; Indian tropical

nature can be described in such a way that it becomes imaginable for readers. Interestingly, this is done by employing a mix of the well-known and the truly foreign to capture the tropics. Many of the flowers that smell nice are the ones that people in India have in common with people in Europe. At one point, Møhl writes about the mountainous regions of the Nilgiri Hills, an inland area west of Trankebar, where, again, Europe is curiously present: "All the European plants grow lushly there, since all of temperate Europe's climate is found in the higher and lower terrace-like structure of the mountains" (Møhl 1840: 47).[6] What is striking here is that the Nilgiri Hills are home to "European plants" within a "temperate Europe's climate". One might question why it is that the plants of the Nilgiri Hills are not Indian? How can they in fact be anything but local? Can they not be both Indian and recognizable at the same time?

More comparative nature making is articulated. In one of the first sections of the letters, describing the initial impression after landing in Trankebar, Møhl writes about the wonderful tropical fruits:

> The lovely fruits, which were served along with the pudding, were equally beautiful to look at and to taste. Pineapple and bananas (plantains), mangos and pompelmos, oranges and grapes; all delicious, each in their way, but, in fact, not so tempting for others than "griffins" to enjoy; since the Malabarized Europeans have become so used to these rarities (Møhl 1840:25).[7]

One interesting thing here is the assumption that the fruits are primarily tempting for the newcomers, and that their attraction will wane, as has already happened to the "Malabarized" Europeans. Increased familiarity, it seems, will result in decrease in interest. Further, the double location of Møhl's point of view, that is, his comparative analytical processing of nature as made of both India and Non-India, is brought out here in his paradoxical description of the abundant tropical fruits as "rarities". How come, one might ask, Møhl describes the fruit as rare when it is also so plentiful that foreigners and the people of Malabar eventually lose interest, even if they find it delicious upon arrival? Does the tropical fruit cease to be tropical nature once it is experienced as mundane? Or does it become naturalized to such an extent that it fades from view to become insignificant background? Møhl does not seem to have made his mind up; in a later section of the letters he writes about the banana and its sustained outstanding qualities:

> Hardly any of them [the fruits], however, are more healthy or nutritious, or less hard to keep on liking, than bananas or plantains (musa paradisiacal). A better fruit, especially the more noble of these, is hardly borne by any tree on earth. If not because of likeness then because of usefulness and necessity as a healthy and nourishing food, I know nothing better to compare it to than the potato; and as this was my favourite food in Europe, I do not doubt that the paradisiacal fig will be so here (Møhl 1840:47).[8]

What we see here is that on the one hand the tropical fruit is delightful only until it becomes commonplace, on the other it is celebrated as a main staple, equally important to the potato at home, and equally unthinkable to tire of. The interesting thing here is the explicit comparison he employs to bring the wonder of the banana home to Danish readers who get to see it by relating it to what they know best, all the while, perhaps, being reminded of the paradisiacal qualities of their homeland.

Obviously, not all features of Trankebar's nature are that benevolent, and Møhl sometimes describes having to choose a lesser evil from among a selection. On bathing customs and their relation to the wild, he notes: "One bathes at home in the house in a chamber made for the purpose with a built tub, always with the greatest care not to get in contact with scorpions or large spiders. Of course, one cannot mind the frogs that jump around on the bathroom floor"[9] (Møhl 1840:45). This observation is elaborated in a footnote stating the dangers of the alternative to bathing among frogs and poisonous guests:

> In the river and the dams the water is too hot and muddy, and into the ocean one does not dare to venture because of the sharks. Many have been injured by daring to cross the surf. Even in the surf there is danger. True, the fishermen cross it daily, and children are often seen swimming near it, but it is also said that once a shark bit a boy's head off while he was washing a dog in the surf. It is not a rare occurrence that sharks are caught with children in their belly, and injuries from their bite have been survived by many who have been able to recount the danger (Møhl 1840:45).[10]

What I find striking here is the organization of tropical inconveniences along a scale of acceptable on the one end to beyond all taming and acclimatization on the other: Frogs are not a threat, scorpions are something to be alert to, and sharks and their sea are not to be messed with at all. While this taxonomy is perhaps not in itself particularly striking, what I do find really curious is the fact that it does not really affect Møhl's description of the sea as a site to be avoided that he witnesses the local fishermen make it through the surf, out to sea, and back on a daily basis. There are apparently limits as to what "one", as in a European, can get accustomed to; it seems as if it is simply not an option to become sufficiently "Malabarized" to do as the local fishermen do and brave the waves, disregarding the risk of sharks. It is possible to get accustomed to tropical fruit, even so as to lose interest in it, unless the fruit can be translated into a familiar object like the potato, whereas the sea is maintained as dangerous, even though local people, judging by their daily practices, do not seem to be particularly frightened of the sharks that might roam there. Of course, it may not come as such a surprise that a fruit and a sharp-toothed predator are not described in the same way. However, my point here is that by conveying such classifications of nature, Møhl makes claims as to what can even count as natural and about who can judge this. The local people's analysis of nature, which enables them to go out to sea, seems in this case to have no effect on Møhl's nature making. Pratt has shown how colonial travel writing is often curiously devoid of the people who inhabit the grounds that are otherwise meticulously described when it comes to flora and fauna (Pratt 2008:50–51). Here, too, the locals and their practices play no role as contributors to domesticating the sea; in a sense, Møhl describes it as remaining too much a part of nature, although he can see that Trankebar's fishermen have naturalized the sea in a different way by living off it.

Again, what we see is a complexly split perspective on the tropics: While Møhl thrives on bananas, enjoys wonderful flowers, corrects botanical misunderstandings in Danish textbooks, comes to terms with nuisances such as frogs, he also relegates parts of the tropics to be off-limits, labels local plants as European, and

reminds readers of the paradise they might have right there in their own potato plot. What I want to stress here is that Møhl can be said to combine two comparative strategies in the same performative classification of nature; on the one hand he sees its features from within and would seem to have no problem with the approach that Haraway terms a feminist objectivity, whereby he embeds himself in the world and meets it eye to eye. On the other hand, he also acts as a distant and normative observer, comparing given entities from outside and designating some elements of the tropics as non-local and unnatural. Some features of the tropics, he seems to say, not even nature can get accustomed to. Consider the following excerpt:

> The avenues already have a naked and dry look because of the heat, and for the time being all nellu-lands (rice fields) are completely barren of vegetation, so that one can walk across them and the many canals and ditches that crisscross them. They do not even look as well as a harvested corn field at home, so bare is the ground, and so closely to it are the rows of rice cut with the sickle. It gets worse day by day, so completely dried up is everything, which is not watered or shaded by trees. The trees withstand admirably the strong heat that otherwise seems to oppress everything (Møhl 1840:40).[11]

It seems striking to me here that to Møhl it gets "worse" every day and that he sees the trees as having an "admirable" strength not to succumb to the heat. One wonders about the perspective it requires to produce local nature in such evaluative terms, while still viewing one's statements as innocent and incontestable. What we see is that Møhl is at once a pastoral guide teaching people about the nature, remaining aloof from local tropical conditions such as heat and threatening animals and an embedded actor enjoying the exotic. The spatial compression of Denmark and Trankebar in Møhl's comparative nature making is dependent on his alternating between these points of view, on his being a split agent.

Synchronizing Tropical Plots: Contemporary Nature in the Colony

Later, other missions of nature making have also found their way to Tharangambadi. During my fieldwork periods there, undertaken in the more or less immediate wake of the Asian tsunami of December 2004, which dramatically changed the layout of the village, I have seen the unfolding of a host of interventions aimed at rehabilitation, landscaping, environmental awareness and what have you (see e.g. Hastrup 2009; Jørgensen 2011). Strong development agendas are widespread in all of South India, where they often explicitly communicate a modernizing project, sometimes bordering on a kind of civilizing mission (Pandian 2009). In Tharangambadi this commonplace development work is supplemented by a conspicuous cultural and environmental heritage preservation ambition, the advocates of which aim to protect and restore both manmade structures and natural landscapes, considered to have historic value. Whereas my reading of Møhl's letters focuses mainly on the complex comparative moves by which the pastor compressed space by relating Denmark and Trankebar by sameness and difference, in the nature making work of the heritage projects I concentrate on a kind of temporal compression that brings the colonial history up to date – or perhaps the other way around. If Møhl produced the tropics along a scale

of more or less fitting elements for a place like Trankebar, the heritage workers add to this a temporal scale of more less well-timed nature.

The history of the Danish venture on the shores of Tharangambadi, which Pastor Møhl enacted earlier, has once again brought Danes to the place. A number of the heritage projects that I have encountered during fieldwork are undertaken by the humanitarian fund of a large Danish clothing company named Bestseller. In addition to organizing much appreciated women's groups and microcredit initiatives, the fund targets what are considered fragile landscapes along the coast where the remnants of Danish colonial presence are primarily found. In the descriptions of these nature making projects, there is an implicit sense that just now is the time to act on the treasures of Tharangambadi for the heritage village to recover. On the Bestseller website, it is stated that: "Today, Tranquebar is a perfect example of what timely developmental support, conscious restoration and heritage awareness can do" (www.bestsellerfund.com). Of course, this might be articulated as an inconspicuous toast to the success of implementing corporate social responsibility, but I still think the wording in the quotation is interesting, when read in terms of the temporal compression I mentioned above. If one combines "today" with "perfect" and "timely", there is a sense in which Trankebar emerges, thanks to the heritage workers' interventions, as a completed place, which, finally, after a period of being other, has become itself. This is the curious effect of comparison here: that the project makers work to somehow synchronize Tharangambadi with itself. As in the previous section, one might ask here what kind of perspective allows for ever seeing the village as being anything but itself.

The idea of perfection is interesting in this connection because it connotes a kind of isomorphism – a style of comparison which looks at objects from an externalized point of view as finished products and ascertains whether two objects are the same, as in asking whether Trankebar now is identical to Trankebar then. This idea of correspondence between model and (perfected) village is given a very literal expression by a "large stone model of Tranquebar town" that Bestseller has arranged for. Further on the idea of perfection, by which Trankebar today is compared to what Trankebar's history warrants, consider this quote from the Bestseller Fund's website:

> After the Tsunami, a large part of town was abandoned by the people due to the damage that was caused to property and life. The BESTSELLER FUND acquired a piece of land along the coast to establish a tropical park and a beach promenade, where the citizens can now take a peaceful walk or rest (www.bestsellerfund.com).

What is important here is that the fact that a part of the village has been abandoned by people in the wake of the tsunami seems in a way to have helped the village become itself again and does not contest the perfection brought about by the timely intervention. The people, welcomed back as citizens, now have a tropical park in which to relax instead of a home in what has proved to be a dangerous zone. Just as in Møhl's letter where the fact that the fishermen went out in their boats and usually lived to tell the tale did not influence his view of the sea as dangerous and

The Bestseller tropical garden in Tharangambadi.

crowded with sharks, here it makes no difference for the idea of a perfected heritage site that the original inhabitants have been moved. This, apparently, is a part of the timely intervention that makes Trankebar compare to itself. Indeed, one gets a sense that the fact that an area was abandoned was what enabled it to become heritage at a site no longer dangerous but available for all to enjoy:

> This part of the town was abandoned after the tsunami destroyed the area. This has changed because a stone sea-wall in front of Tranquebar town has been built and a coastal plantation outside the town center has been planted, so the area is now protected from future tsunamis (www.bestsellerfund.com).

My point here is that, as Møhl needed Europe, potatoes and other such entities foreign to Indian nature to make Indian nature, the heritage workers need a place abandoned due to tragic circumstance and an active project intervention to make Trankebar become itself.

Importantly, I do not point to all this to blame the fund's projects in any way; indeed, during my fieldwork I often heard local people express appreciation of the organization's assistance. I point to it to show the paradoxical view which is one effect of the nature makers' comparative work: The class of Tharangambadi is made by a curious time travel that rewinds and perfects, goes back in time and into the future, in the same move. The synchronizing that will make Trankebar into a heritage destination is a kind of perfection underway, and once accom-

plished we can all relax within a finished product:

> The BESTSELLER FUND anticipates that the park area will become much more interesting, because it is situated close to the sea and is an important factor in the process of turning Tranquebar into a Cultural Heritage Destination. The park is filled with tropical plants, flowers, and pavilions and has benches where visitors can sit and relax (www.bestsellerfund.com).

However, when seen from the ground, one might say, nature cannot really get used to itself; perfection, in the shape of complete synchronicity between Trankebar then and Trankebar now as a perfect heritage site, is a long time coming. In a book from 2010 describing the joint efforts of a host of development and heritage actors, published by the Bestseller fund, the design for the coastal restoration is described in interesting details. A rather long quotation from the book is necessary:

> The coastline of Tamil Nadu has lost most of its tree and bush cover. This is one of the reasons why the tsunami had such a devastating effect. In order to change this, a programme for coastal plantation for the Tranquebar coastline has been started. Instead of traditional monoculture of eucalyptus or casuarinas, we decided to restore the area by re-establishing the plants that grew here before. More than 20 species were selected and local seeds collected […] The area is very difficult to cultivate, because it is sandy and very close to the sea. Many replantings have been necessary and women have worked hard, watering the plants for long periods in the dry season. The plantations are now well established and will soon change the coastline into a green forest belt. More plantations are planned: one in the fragile former fishermen's village, which is in a low-lying area, exposing Tranquebar to the sea, and another in the water-logged area in the river which is also a fragile area, as a storm can easily change the coastline here. In the latter, a mangrove plantation is planned, as this would be a good way to secure this area and at the same time give Tranquebar a unique natural asset (*Tranquebar – Land of the Singing Waves* 2010: 85).

What interests me here again is the complex kind of comparison that enables a rejection of "traditional monoculture" to make room for local plants that are apparently seen as even more traditional – although they need many replantings. An issue of authenticity is somehow at play here, but curiously the challenges posed by sandy soil and salty winds are construed as somehow external to the authentic nature; in the fullness of time, it seems, the local (and most traditional?) plants will prevail over (less local?) salts and soil conditions. Similarly, the mangrove that will shield the low-lying areas is a future accomplishment. Much work, it seems, is needed to sort nature from nature and bring the village in sync with itself.

What these paradoxes in the descriptions and activities of the heritage conservation work show is that the ideas implied in perfecting Trankebar as a model heritage town are continuously challenged and analysed from within the practices that are designed to accomplish just that. What we see here is a dual comparative analysis of nature that sees it both from outside by comparing it to the past and an anticipated future, and from inside by acknowledging its waywardness and letting that affect the nature making practices. In the process of classifying tropical nature, the category of tropics is both made and questioned. A poster on the wall in a newly renovated traditional Tamil house that has been designated cultural heritage brings home this point. The poster, graphically showing the planned phases of the landscaping work

also described above, reads: "The proposed bio-shield uses an indigenous variety (tropical dry evergreen forest) of plants that can withstand the salt spray, scorching sun, poor soil conditions and the periodical inundation by sea water."

To me, the puzzle here is this: Why is the sun seen as scorching to a hardy indigenous plant? To arrive at this paradox it takes a split agent and an intriguing kind of comparative project of nature making that finds it both interesting and valid to be unsure as to whether indigenous plants can in fact live in their own habitat.

Out of Our Depth: Foreigners in the Tropics

In engaging with the two projects, I have focused on the doubly located viewpoint that is inscribed in the knowledge work of the nature makers, for whom the Indian tropics emerge as realistic and contradictory at once; tropical nature appears to be made up of bits that make it strangely non-identical to itself. What I have stressed is that the elements of nature that are seen to contest their allotted place in the classificatory system do so in the very process of classification. In other words, the odd fact that not all features of the Indian tropics are seen to correspond to the category of Indian tropics becomes apparent in the nature makers' attempt exactly to fill in the class. In their comparative classifications the nature makers in the projects I focus on here almost seem to mock themselves by switching between different perspectives on the tropics, producing them sometimes as an instance of a class, sometimes as an undermining of it. The point of stressing this is that it articulates classification as a generative exercise that operates through sameness and difference, hence the focus on comparison.

In my juxtaposing in the article of two projects, each from its own era and each with its own purpose, I have tried to extend the peculiar comparative perspective that the nature makers employ: I have attempted to see one project through the other, letting them shed light on one another infra-actively, as one might call it, by viewing them as practices both of which compress (space and time, respectively), and I have engaged with them to let them speak externally to the category of cultural analysis of nature. Neither of these comparative moves alone would have done what I needed. This is to suggest that the split position inherent in and produced by comparative thinking – about the tropics or something else – is extremely fruitful for continued and dynamic cultural analysis, because it makes it impossible to fill out any class of knowledge only with itself. If this were the case, the mystery of the world would have evaporated. However imperial, scientific, conservationist, representational or, indeed, cultural-analytical the ambition of any nature making initiative may be, the Indian tropics resist the total embrace of any comprehensive and sealed knowledge system. Importantly, this is not just a statement about the uncontrollability of nature, nor merely an ethical call to engage with the environment with respect and humility – though it is that too. Rather, it is a general humanistic point about the production of knowledge being a complex and embedded analytical exercise that generalizes

and concretizes, creates and undermines a system in the very same movement – the particulars of a class are both what make it and what challenge it.

The deep water that I refer to in the article's title is meant to capture just this sense of being engulfed by the world we study and our inability to stand dry-shod on firm ground and see it comprehensively and as a bounded object from afar – in addition, of course, to the physical challenges posed by tropical storms, rainfall, heat, waves and the like to people who are not familiar with these environmental features. We are all and always – blissfully, I should add – out of our depth when it comes to mapping the living world, even in our attempts to do that (cf. Tsing 2012; Tsing 2005:90–91; Brichet and Hastrup 2011). As Haraway has shown, we do not need a singular master subject and a totalized point of view, from where comprehensive systems of knowledge can be thought and seen to make interesting connections. In the light of this, we need to engage analysis that can accommodate this dual work of classification as a practice that curiously creates objects that are not self-contained. What I have tried to learn from the nature makers featured here – and, indeed, enact by juxtaposing the two projects in a third – is that a lack of distanced overview and finalized systems of thought do not stop knowledge making in its tracks; rather, it makes an object and practice of continued interest. As Latour has argued, it takes specific concerns to fix something as facts (Latour 2004). I have thus wanted to go along with the nature makers in Tharangambadi and stay with the frictional encounters across difference and celebrate the new paradoxical objects that come about through lack of fit, recognition and surprise (cf. Haraway 1988; Tsing 2005). As I see it, this is necessary for engaging with the living world realistically, or in Haraway's terms objectively. What we do have in lieu of singular master subjects are intriguing split positions, which are both a precondition for and a result of playful comparison, by which we can join same and other, to make salient and real objects.

Throughout the article, I have stressed the way that classifications of nature are simultaneously made and undermined, and I have argued that this is an interesting effect of comparative work that doubly locates the analytical perspective. This, I think, has a general bearing on ethnological and related knowledge practices; keeping the mysteries of the world alive, and not reducing ethnography to cases of something already known, takes just such a dual location captured by the heading of foreigners in the tropics: It is possible and perhaps necessary to remain a foreigner, all the while getting right into the world as a place of concern. This is not a point about analytical distance, reflexivity or a caution against going native. It has nothing to do with anyone's country of origin or with bias. Rather, it is a call for cultural analysis to see conversation between entities or persons that are never self-contained as a salient form of world making. Being foreign, then, is a matter of leaving the home turf by acknowledging the limitations inherent in all classificatory work and wilfully assuming the position of a listening and talking "other" vis-à-vis the object of study, implying that one cannot build a world alone. It enables a particular lateral kind of analysis, built on conversa-

tion and the continued generation of ever incomplete objects (see also Hastrup 2011b).

This is also to say that ethnology and related disciplines, whether concerned with tropical nature or something else, can be practised as a generative rather than a representational activity. Because objects of knowledge can be seen as always made by way of other objects, whether same or different, we are left with no isomorphism sufficient to engender representation. What cultural analysis might – in the interest of postcolonial ceasefire and constructive dialogue – take away from the innocence that the nature makers assert when, for instance, Møhl explains his project as blameless description and when the heritage workers claim to make a tropical park in which everyone can relax is this: A call to keep on trying out classifications from one or more points in the world in order to explore their limits – so as to show that the world could be otherwise and that surprises still occur.

To me, the curious statement that the most traditional local plants struggle under the tropical sun nicely captures the conversational nature of knowledge as halfway creations. And in order to engage in such co-creation the position of being at once immersed in and foreign to a field is central. In the light of this, cultural analysis is not a deconstructive act of exploring where someone got it wrong or was strange enough to make a nonsense statement about tropical plants or fruits. Rather, it is about the will to conversation, even about what seems like impossible connections, and about taking such claims seriously as equally possible to conceive as the Chinese Encyclopedia that so shocked Foucault. What if the shattering of familiar thought through dialogue was one purpose of cultural analysis?

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Notes

1 The letters are published in Danish. All translations of quotations in the main text are mine; the original Danish quotations are given in the notes.

2 "Da brevene ere af simpelt og uskyldigt indhold, befrygter jeg ingen ubillig bedømmelse."

3 "Den fremmede natur her vil det unægtelig blive mig en stor nydelse at betragte, og det lader til, at de indfødte kende meget nøje alle de forskellige naturgenstande som omringe dem."

4 "Landvinden – Matter – Fødevarer – Vildt – Slanger i husene – Giftige og ikke-giftige – Vepser – Skorpioner – Antilop – Gesandtskab fra Tanjore – Stærk regn – Maaneskin – Ildfluer – Træorme – Vinranker – Kaststridigheder – Sæbetræ – Skoblomst – Mærkeblæk."

5 "En meget stor vildfarelse i en bekjendt lærebog har jeg opdaget i denne morgenstund, og den vil jeg strax berigtige. Tamarinthen er nemlig ikke, som det siges, en busk, men et meget stort træ, af hvilket tvende arter voxe her på kirkegaarden. Ligeledes en anden ikke mindre vildfarelse, dog ikke i bemeldte lærebog, har jeg her lejlighed til at berigtige, nem-

lig den, at Indien ikke skulle have vellugtende, men blot pragtfulde blomster, hvilket hjemme er så almindelig antaget, men ugrundet. Jeg vil ikke engang nævne roser og reseda og flere vellugtende blomster, som man her har tilfælles med Europa, men, dersom jeg blot kunne vise eder alle de blomstertræer, jeg her på kirkegaarden kan samle blomster af, der alle lugte meget stærkt og behageligt, ville jeg ikke have noget andet bevis nødig."

6 "Der groe alle de europæiske væxter frodigt, da hele det tempererede Europas klima findes i disse egne efter den højere og lavere beliggenhed, som fremkommer ved bjergkædens tredobbelte terrasseform."

7 "De dejlige frugter, som bleve serverede tilligemed desserten vare lige henrivende at see og at smage. Ananas og Bananas (plaintains), mangos og Pompelmos, Oranger og druer, alle liflige, hver i sit slags, men egentlig ikke fristende for andre end griffins at nyde; thi de malabariserede europæer ere så vante til alle disse rariteter."

8 "Dog er næppe nogen af dem alle [frugterne] sundere eller mere nærende eller mindre vanskelig at vedblive at holde af, end bananas eller plaintains (musa paradisiaca). En bedre frugt, især de ædlere slags af samme, bæres næppe af noget træ på jorden. Ikke for lighedens, men for nyttens og nødvendighedens skyld som et sundt og nærende fødemiddel, veed jeg intet bedre at sammenligne den med, end kartoffelen, og som denne var min livret i Europa, tvivler jeg heller ikke på, at den paradisiske figen vil blive det hertillands."

9 "Man tager badet hjemme i huset i et dertil indrettet kammer med muret kar, vel aftrukket og poleret, altid med den skyldige forsigtighed for ikke at komme i kontakt med skorpioner eller store edderkopper. At frøerne hoppe omkring, på gulvet i badeværelset må man naturligvis ikke bryde sig om."

10 "I floden og i tankene (dammene) er vandet for varmt og for muddret og i havet tør man ikke gå for hajerne. Mange ere blevne lemlæstede ved at vove sig ud over brændingen. Selv i denne er det farligt. Vel gaae fiskerne dagligt igjennem den, og børnene ses ofte at svømme indenfor den, men man har også hørt, at en haj engang bed hovedet af en dreng, som vadskede en hund i brændingen. Det er ikke sjelden, at hajer fanges med børn i bugen, og lemlæstelse af deres bid have mange overlevet, som kunne skildre faren."

11 "Alleerne have allerede et nøgent og fortørret udseende af heden, og for tiden ere alle nelluagre (riismarker) aldeles blottede for al vegetation, saa at man kan spadsere over dem og de mange kanaler og grøfter, med hvilke de ere gennemkrydsede. De have end ikke så godt et udseende som en høstet kornmark hjemme, saa bar er grunden, og så nær kappes med seglen de radplantede nellu-buske. Det bliver også værre dag for dag, saa ganske hentørres alt, som ikke vandes eller har ly i træernes skygge. Træerne modstå med en beundringsværdig kraft den stærke hede, der ellers synes at kue alt."

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Making Palpable Connections

Objects in Migrants' Transnational Lives

By Maja Povrzanović Frykman and Michael Humbracht

Ethnologists, anthropologists, and scholars from other disciplinary backgrounds engaged in the study of material culture have produced theoretically advanced work concerning objectification, consumption, identity, and social memory.[1] While there is growing interdisciplinary interest in material culture, however, transnational migrants' material practices have seldom been in focus (see, e.g., van der Horst 2006; Salih 2003; Werbner 2000). This article is based on an ongoing project entitled "The Transnational Life of Objects: Material Practices of Migrants' Being and Belonging",[2] a project that promotes an interest in studies of transnational migration that has thus far been less pronounced, namely in objects that criss-cross transnational social spaces[3] of migrants' own making. Indeed, "the object-turn" (Woodward 2001:117) is fruitful for the field as it adds important perspectives to research on migrants (see Burrell 2008; Ho and Hattfield 2011; Dudley 2011) and implies the need for the ethnographic approach that is unsurpassed in the ability to reach and represent the individual level of experience and the everyday dynamics of sense-making.

Not all migrants engage in practices that transgress national borders, but many do, in a variety of active and passive ways, with changed intensity, at different ages, and at diverse moments of their migration history. Many migrants tend to be embedded in transnational social spaces and their lives tend to "incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in a destination country and transnationally" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004:1003). Inasmuch as people's activities are sustained by or inscribed in a particular materiality, the objects in this article are explored as elements of material foundations of migrants' lives that traverse locations across state borders.

The principal interest pursued here is not in objects as generators of feelings and cultural meanings, but in the roles objects play in animating material practices (see Woodward 2001). Objects can be important for reasons of personal attachment, practical usefulness, or their "everydayness" in a person's life – regardless of where that life is being enacted. Objects might be recycled, replaced by other objects, or replicate the arrangements from some other locations; they have, however, one important effect in common: by being used, or by merely being present, objects bestow continuity in migrants' practices and in places. Importantly, the analysis attempted here goes beyond the issues of "feeling at home"; it seeks to shed light on how objects establish palpable connections between people and places.

Furthermore, in discussing individuals' practices pertaining to the sphere of the home, this article goes against mainstream studies of transnational migration by not grappling with migrants as members or representatives of ethnic, national, diasporic or any kind of institutionalized groups.[4]

The following sections outline a theoretical framework that pertains to the importance of looking at material aspects of migrants' everyday life in transnational contexts and explaining the methodological choices. The subsequent sections present ethnographic examples and analyse the significance of particular objects

with regard to everyday practices and the recreation of home. Specifically, this article delineates how objects are intertwined with memories and practical uses, are carried across borders from "here" to "there" and back because they appeal to people's acquired taste, and reconfirm social ties in space and time. The last two sections summarize the analysis and reinforce the argument about objects making palpable connections in migrants' transnational lives.

Theoretical Framework: The Salience of Materiality and the Ways of Being

For ethnographers interested more in the mundane than in the symbolic and representational, objects of everyday use are of special interest. The meanings of such objects intertwine with the ways in which they are used and the ways in which they embody people's inclusions in different locations and contribute to the (re)production of social ties; ties that are viewed here as "folded into the materiality of things" (Pels *et al*. 2002:17). Moreover, when an object is so much in use that daily life without it has become inconceivable (or when it is so taken for granted that it is no longer "noticed"), it does not make sense as a sign, but rather as part and parcel of subjectivity (Warnier 2001:21). A praxeological approach to material culture, then, does not elucidate what material culture means but instead what it does to, and for, migrants: especially in terms of producing palpable connections between distant locations. The experiential ground – defined by the materiality of the world around us – is what brings things, social relations, and identities together.

As the approach pursued here prioritizes "home" as an empirical, experiential category, we focus on objects' constitutive effects "within the entangled networks of sociality/materiality" (Pels *et al*. 2002:2). Objects, here, are seen as "things to hold on to", that help migrants to deny or overcome segregation between different locations in relevant social spaces. In creating connection and a sense of continuity "even the most emptied-out, banal objects of […] domestic material culture have a role to play" (Woodward 2001: 134). Indeed, the examples below refer mostly to home-making practices and the use of objects in the domestic sphere – to *ways of being* in transnational social spaces.

In conceptualizing the simultaneity of migrants' lives in transnational social spaces, Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller (2004) distinguish between *ways of being* – the actual social relations and practices in which individuals engage in their everyday lives, and *ways of belonging* – practices that signal or enact identity and demonstrate a conscious connection to a particular group. While *belonging* combines "action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1010), *being* in a social space does not necessarily mean that people identify with labels, cultural politics, or any representations associated with that space. One can lead a transnational life without ever signalling or enacting one's ethnic identity (see Povrzanović Frykman 2012); it is a matter of interpreting if and when an object of daily use can also be used to display belonging. The examples in this article mostly encompass objects

that were not used by their owners to display their ethnic affiliation – at least not while in contact with the researcher. What the objects discussed below might symbolize is not of primary relevance here; instead the focus is on objects' habitual use that remains uninterrupted in lives that are stretched between different locations.

An illustrative example is found in the autobiographical essay the second author wrote in connection with the project mentioned above (see note 2). He is American, in his late twenties, married to an Italian woman, studied in France for one year and lived in Italy for three years before settling in Sweden, where he has lived for two years:

> There are not many objects that I and we bring in moving about places. One for sure, is the *espresso moka* – a non-electronic espresso making device that is used on a stove. Since meeting my wife everyplace I've gone I've taken it with me. I developed a taste for it, it is more tasty than American coffee. After a bit I stopped taking it to USA because I bought one for my mom so I used hers when I went back home. My mom doesn't use it in the US, she tried it but doesn't like it. It just sits in the kitchen unused until we visit. It is also always with us when we go camping, or when we travel to a place that has a kitchen or burner. Some other objects that stand out are my computer, my wii, and my books. Every place I have been in the past few years I have had them with me. My computer is probably the most important object I have. Because I have moved so many times in the past years the importance of a cell phone or TV have virtually gone away. To communicate with friends I use my computer (skype, e-mail, etc.). It is one of the few things that are consistent in my life. In fact, it has broken twice in the past few years, and I realized how dependent on the computer I had become because of it. I use it for so many things, watching old TV shows while exercising, communicating with friends, watching movies with my wife, finding recipes to cook with, finding music, etc., that without it I felt a bit naked.

The objects singled out in this excerpt have different functions in this migrant's life. Because mobile telephone subscriptions are territorially bound and therefore very costly for transnationally mobile people, the computer became a central device of communication with significant others across borders. Its practical function as a connector, indeed, an experiential "unifier" of a transnational space is thus paramount. However, several other functions of this object are mentioned as vital that are not specific to migrant experience. Also, while the choice and the provenance of films or television programmes this migrant watches via his computer would perhaps tell something about his and his wife's transnational lives, they are not relevant in the discussion of objects as material facilitators of transnational connections. On the other hand, the practice of carrying a particular coffee-maker ("for sure… everyplace I've gone") demonstrates a strong preference for a particular type of coffee (acquired since the start of a transnational relationship with his wife), but also the perceived importance of keeping the habit of consuming the "right" type of coffee regardless of the location in which it is enacted. This makes the espresso maker an example of highly relevant data in the context of the research presented in this article.

What is especially interesting is the issue of replicating or duplicating the use of a utensil both "here" and "there" in the transnational space. The research material gathered in the wider project suggests that

Espresso moka coffee maker in the kitchen in Malmö. Photo: M. Humbracht, 2013.

keeping the same kind of utensil in each location in which migrants organize their everyday life is rather common. Kitchen utensils such as teapots, coffee-makers, knives, and mugs were often given as examples (see Povrzanović Frykman 2012). Such objects ensure the uninterrupted pleasure and smoothness of everyday practices of cooking and eating in a preferred manner while avoiding the trouble of transportation. In the example above, the "proper" start of the day is secured, as the smell, sound, and taste produced by the coffee-maker create a particular sensual environment in any place this device is used: on regular workdays, on tourist trips as well as at family visits; in this migrant's homes in Italy, Sweden, and the US.

While this vignette illustrates the kind of issues focused upon and the analytical approach pursued, it also brings to the foreground the main questions discussed in the article: how do people make choices, exercise agency, and create normalcy and continuity with the help of objects? Which objects do they see as important for allowing them to keep certain practices? Which are pointed out as unique for a particular place and thus require to be brought from there? Which are simply liked and seen as useful? Finally, which objects are cherished because they materialize significant social ties?

The following section presents the research participants and explains the methodological choices made in the project.

A Praxeological Approach: Methodological Choices

The material presented below has been gathered within the framework of a wider exploratory ethnographic research project (see note 2) that also touches upon questions concerning people's agency, place-making, representation, and involves both migrants' perspectives and the perspectives of those who stayed behind.[5] In this article, however, attention is devoted only to migrants' experiences and to the objects respondents themselves chose to show and explain to the researcher. They are relevant as research data on the grounds that

they are seen as relevant by the research participants who were asked about the transnational routes of objects they acquire, use, or keep in different locations. The private sphere of the home, in general, and the material practices of homemaking in particular, is a primary venue for research into migrants' ways of being. While the home is a classical ethnographic site for examining the connection between the domestic space and larger social and economic systems, here the home is seen in a specific context of transnational migration. For migration imposes an awareness of the tension between geographical mobility and domestic fixity. Everydayness "loses its appearance of innocence and stability, when the routine homemaking practices become more intentional, when the 'everyday' becomes not so everyday and the 'mundane' takes on a new significance" (Kurotani 2007:28) in a different place. The affective qualities of places and the related sense of incorporation cannot be separated from the concrete materialities of houses, rooms, kitchen tables, and all the objects that make places one's "own" (see Povrzanović Frykman 2009, 2011).

The primary purpose of this article is to present a praxeological approach that intersects with ethnology, migration research, and studies of material culture. The ethnographic examples are limited to a few research participants who come from different countries but have a similar socio-economic background. They all work as medical doctors in southern Sweden and enjoy a relatively privileged financial situation. While the wider project attempts comparisons that take into consideration issues of class, the choice of participants presented in this article speaks to a lack within migration studies of substantive empirical data for "a more fine-grained ethnographic analysis of the social and material practices of such privileged migrants" (Fechter 2007:34). The important comparison between economically advantaged and disadvantaged migrants has not been pursued here, but is pertinent inasmuch as migration studies tend to focus on less privileged people.[6] Hence, this article also responds to the critique of "alterity and marginality automatically ascribed to migrants" (Raghuram *et al*. 2010:623).

The material is based on interviews and observations conducted by the second author in respondents' homes in Malmö in 2011 (see note 2). Four medical doctors were interviewed, two women from Italy (Anna) and Romania (Elena), and two men, from Germany (Andreas) and Greece (Sebastian); the latter was interviewed together with his wife (Leyla) who comes from Turkey. All are married, but only Anna is married to a Swede. The interviews were conducted in English, the language mastered by all the respondents and the native language of the researcher. The names are changed, but the basic relevant personal information is presented below.

Anna is a 34-year-old Italian who had been living with her Swedish husband in Helsingborg and Malmö for more than three years. They regularly visit and receive visitors from Italy.

Elena is in her early forties. She arrived in Sweden from Romania in 1992 and for the first two years went home every summer, but has not returned to Romania since 1994. Instead, her parents visit her,

staying for several months and helping her and her husband with their three children. The husband is "half English, half Italian" and does research in Italy, so this family travels to Italy every summer and stays in a house shared with the brother's family. Their transnational space also involves a destination in Denmark, where the husband's brother and his Danish wife live with their children. Elena's transnational social space thus encompasses four countries, although she has not returned to her country of origin for many years.

Andreas is German, in his late thirties, with a German wife and two young children. They have been living in a rented house in Malmö for several years. They visit their family in Germany regularly and often receive visitors from Germany as well.

Sebastian is thirty-six years old. He was raised in Greece but, having an Italian father, he moved to Italy in his late teens. He later moved to Sweden with his wife Leyla, an architect from Turkey. They have moved three times to different locations in Sweden. They travel back to their respective countries about once a year. His parents visit once or twice a year and only her mother visits once every two years.

Everyday Practices and Recreating Homes

To the question about objects in the home not acquired in Sweden, Sebastian mentioned his books and a map. Even if they are heavy, he "has to" take the books with him when moving; he prefers to read in Italian, and even if some of the books are old he likes to read them again and again. Referring to the map, he said his father had a similar one in Greece. He later bought one and "takes it with him everywhere". Entitled *Bononia docet mater studiorum*, it is a reprint of a map of Bologna from 1663.

Sebastian's map partially recreates a setting originally established by his father – an Italian living in Greece. It materializes an emotional connection that intersects with the experience of growing up in a home where a similar map was a part of the home decor. The books he cherishes connects him to his old home in Italy, to the wider Italian context of his life, where reading the books "again and again" engages him in a recurrent practice that is not specific to his present Malmö apartment, but to his preferred pastime in any place where his everyday life is situated. Sebastian also likes to cook: he has a collection of cookbooks in Greek, Italian, English, Swedish, and German. They signal not only his linguistic competences but also his multiple transnational inclusions. These books were acquired on tourist travels as well as travels home – to both Italy and Greece.

His wife Leyla mentioned her teapot as the most important object of everyday use, for it allows her to make tea in a way that she asserts is unique to Turkey. Similar to the coffee-maker in the introductory vignette, her choice refers to her habitual normality of enjoying tea, as it facilitates a familiar practice engaging one's body and senses. It was engrained in Leyla while growing up in Turkey and enacted wherever she can use this or a similar teapot.

To the question of what in their Malmö apartment makes them feel at home, Sebastian answered "my ladies", meaning

his wife and his baby daughter. Leyla instead said it was the television. She likes watching movies with her family. They download movies and watch them together. This is also how she relaxes. "No matter where I go, it is there," she said. By this she did not refer to the same television set but to the continuity of a practice that requires television as a device, but has been the same in every location of her life.

Similar to Sebastian, Anna likes to read in her native language, and she is aware that the presence of Italian books makes her feel at home. Some of them are also related to her professional identity:

> We can start from the books […]. I know that sometime I wonder why do I have so many books, but really it makes me feel at home. To have the Italian books when I feel like reading something I just pick it up and I read, so I really like having books. [What kind of books are they?] Novels. And then I have some books from school, some medical books, in Italian. They are not actually Italian but translated into Italian.

It is important for Anna to bring back books to Sweden after visiting Italy. She described a "tradition" of going to a local bookstore in her hometown where a friend of the family would give her advice on new books. Anna mentioned that the family friend has passed away now, so she no longer goes back to the bookstore, but she does still take books from the bookshelves in her parents' home that perhaps she had bought in the past but never read. A practice originally emplaced in her Italian home is continued in her home in Sweden. This practice parallels Sebastian's use of the map in order to recreate a part of the parental home.

Elena also spoke about her books. As a matter of fact, they are her most important possession from Romania.

> Literature. Because when I came here my boyfriend had a flat that had everything in it and I was living with my parents in Romania so I could not just take the furniture. So I just had my clothes and my books and they were very important to me. Dictionaries, yeah, that was later, in the beginning just clothes and books. I think I have two bookshelves, the big ones that are mine, and five are my husband's.

Her reasons for keeping the books are manifold, and include the sensual experience of smell and touch that can be related to Sebastian's narrative about the joy of holding and rereading his books.

> I can't throw books away, it's something stronger than me, I don't know. Even books I haven't touched for a long time, I still don't want to, once I thought just to donate them to the library. But then I was hoping that my kids would want to read in Romanian, I don't think so, they are much better in Italian than Romanian. If they are not travelling to Romania, I don't think they will, not in the near future. […] I always like to read them, I like the smell of them, the ink and I um, I'm a little bit old-fashioned. Computers are okay but they don't give me the same feeling […] and I like to underline.

In addition to being aware of the sensual experience contained in the books' materiality, Elena also expressed how her books are an important link to Romania that might also become a link for her Swedish-born children. The analytical avenue of looking at objects as bearers of heritage is not pursued here. This, however, is a clear example of how experiences and concerns are "folded into the materiality of things" (Pels *et al*. 2002: 17). What is also apparent is this migrant's awareness that competence (in using Romanian language) and practice (of reading the books) are central to how objects acquire meanings.

Emplacing Memorable Objects through Practical Use

When describing important objects that have travelled from Germany to Sweden, Andreas told the story of a wooden couch. The couch was bought and given to his wife by her parents. The couch can be converted into a bed and was in fact the first bed that Andreas and his wife owned when they began to live together. While the couch is old it has become important.

And there was a plan to throw it away and buy a new one, but not yet. […] My wife got it from her parents who had bought it from a co-worker. […] And when her parents come to visit us they always sleep on it. [So they are very familiar with this couch then?] Yes, they also realize that it is lasting and it is fine. Even if it's old now and it's not very comfortable. They still remember it, they have a memory of it.

The parents appear in this narrative as an active part of transnational space; their involvement in the fluid positioning of what is "here" and what is "there" is a particularly telling example of the character of transnational social space and its material underpinnings.

The coffee pot, on the other hand, is a part of his personal life-history. Andreas bought the pot from IKEA while living in a student house in Germany. However, once he tried to incorporate the coffee pot into his daily life he found it impractical and seldom used it. Even if it has not been used continuously, the pot has accompanied Andreas on his migration route:

So that was a long time in the… we didn't use it. But it followed us here, and then here in this house, it was … the first time. […] So yeah, all the things that survived. My wife wants to throw it away, but it's hard, and I spared it. Yes, really funny. [So it's kind of reborn?] Exactly, yes, yes, reborn. [So do you use it?] Yeah, yeah, we use it, when we want to cook tea, we use it.

They both agreed on keeping and using the water-filtering device brought from Germany, of the kind that is commonly used in there.

The thing that we took with us was, a thing here. It's a filter. We realized that if we got a new kitchen, now, at all the years this thing survived as well. [And why is that?] There is no reason to throw away. And in fact we use it because we want to have our water a little more filtered. Not have very much calc. So um, so we like it more when you go to drink it, we filter it. And um yeah, it's funny...

Andreas also spoke about a storage cupboard that he and his wife bought together for their apartment in Germany. The couple brought the cupboard with them to Sweden where it took on new uses.

It was very practical… also today because it's doesn't look very nice, it's more practical. But now, it's in the room where children can play, you can put the legos there. And uh, they uh, take them and throw things in there and they can damage it. But it doesn't hurt it. When the children are older we can think about buying a new, but now it's perfect.

Andreas also has a cupboard he grew up with in his parental home in Germany.

I grew up with it. Now it's in the cellar because we don't have any other place to ah, a place. It's a cupboard. When I was growing up it was in our kitchen and there was white paint. And then when I moved out to study I only took with me my books because the first time I moved to a student apartment and there was a yeah, a table. And I just needed my personal things. Then little later, I asked my dad if I might have it. And I did the same thing that I painted it and sanded it. So because I spent much time on it, I didn't throw it away either.

Andreas and his wife have a lot of paintings that were given to them by the wife's

parents that Andreas refurbished once in Malmö. Andrea's father taught him how to refurbish and repair objects when he was younger. Andreas described the importance for him in having his tools from Germany in Sweden: he explained that, "I like to do things for my own. So I do not call a mechanic or other people very often." Andreas enjoys doing odd jobs around the house, like hanging picture frames, and doing repairs, such as refurbishing the cupboard. He brought tools ranging in size from screwdrivers to a circular saw (a somewhat large electric saw). Once in Sweden he began to buy news tools, like a drill large enough to penetrate thick walls in order to continue to be able to do the same kind of repairs he used to do in Germany.

The objects and practices described here by Andreas act as a means to channel personal life histories, family relations, and embodied familiarity into a situated and practical everydayness. This everydayness forms a part of his tactile and sensual environment that allows for a daily experiencing of both "here" and "there".

Liking, Craving, Carrying: The Importance of Familiar Tastes

As with many other participants in the project, having objects related to food consumption, both home-made and industrial, is paramount. Importantly, however, Andreas connects what is brought to the amount of space available in the house when first moving to Sweden. He expanded on how this has changed through time.

> Also, we have changed our behaviour, in the beginning we took with us a lot of things. That was a time when we had… we didn't have anything else […]. But now we use to look at what we can buy here um, bigger, electronic stuff we use to buy here because sometimes it's necessary to change it, if it breaks down. The TV for example, okay, it's a little cheaper in Germany but when it has troubles I can't take it back. That's the reason why we changed. But in the beginning, we did get more stuff, they [the parents, visiting from Germany] brought us a few, fruits and vegetables. But it was not because we cannot buy it here, they are… they want to bring us something. If you bring us something you cannot buy here mmmm, think, I have to think very much. No, not very much more than wine and beer.

The changes in what things are transported and the amount of things transported are related to changes in Andreas' financial situation since moving to Sweden. In the beginning, it could be said that the family's financial situation meant forced hierarchies in decisions that configured which kinds of objects should be from Germany and which could not. Through time the family went from decisions based on necessity to decisions, as with larger electronic devices, based on choice. Wine and beer are also a matter of choice, related to taste acquired while living in Germany.

Food often fills Anna's luggage as well – on the way from Italy to Sweden.

> A lot of food, cheese. A lot of cheese. Parmesan, and a lot of different kinds of cheese. Ham. And then food, it can be everything, chocolate. Turin is well known for having a lot of good chocolate. It can be polenta flower. It can be, eh, eh, some desert. It can be olives, onions, once I bought small packages of onions in vinegar. When Franco and Stefano [Italian friends living in Sweden] were at my place they appreciated it a lot. They can't find them here. So, food, I can tell you a long list.

Even if she eventually realized that many of those products can be obtained in Swe-

den, Anna still prefers to bring them from Italy.

You can find many things in Sweden, you can. But especially in the beginning I didn't know how to find things. So, they make me feel at home with my things. It makes me feel, when I cook, and I have my things, I can do it better, with the oil, I bring a lot of wine, even if it's very dangerous. The bottles can break, but we bring a lot of wine, because my daddy comes from a wine area. So, we have a lot of wine. And then, about the food, something special, the vinegar once I brought it and because I knew that it was good, so I brought a bottle of balsamic vinegar. And it can be, once I brought this, the pizza, ah, something to make pizza, and then I brought fresh pasta, it was so good. I bought it in Italy and then I brought it here to Sweden.

A personal preference for taste and quality is mentioned as the reason for using those products; they are not presented as "typically Italian", or as "better than in Sweden". Importantly, Anna calls them "my things"; as such, they make her "feel at home". Anna's husband, who is Swedish, loves *insalata russa* (a salad made from mayonnaise, carrots, etc.), so Anna "tries to remember" to bring it from Italy to Sweden if he is not with her. The liking, craving, and carrying are done in multiple directions, for multiple reasons and for the sake of different people embedded in this migrant's transnational space.

Elena does not want her Romanian parents to spend much money when visiting her in Sweden; she only expects them to bring along some wine: "We always tell them don't bring anything, just Romanian wine. I like it." Her husband, as mentioned, is "half English – half Italian", and they have an Italian coffeemaker (or *moka* – the same as in the introductory vignette). However, it is placed in their home only for the sake of Elena's husband's brother who visits his family some three times a year and is the only one to use it. Living in Denmark himself, he is obviously an important subject in Elena's family transnational space.

Elena also mentioned home-made rose water to put on pastry or cakes.

Yeah, they make it, it's called rose water, it's a typical dish from that region and you have to have this to season, to make it tasty. And you can't find it anywhere, they only do it in that place. It's a flower something, it's very concentrated, one drop and that's enough. [Do you have some at your house now?] I don't have it because we bought it and gave it away as a present. [But you normally go and buy it and bring it back to Sweden?] Yeah, yeah, sometimes people ask us to bring something like cheese, or whatever… oil – food again, sorry!

She "apologized" for recurrently mentioning food; probably because she sees food as trivial. But she did add that they would bring more food from Italy when visiting once a year, but travelling by car is a problem:

[We bring] *peperoncino* paste, fresh. Yeah, uh, the problem is we travel by car and it's quite warm when we, it's 2000 km, we can't, otherwise I would come with salami like this. But we can't.

In Elena's kitchen, however, all but one device was acquired in Sweden. It was necessitated by a particular practice characteristic of cooking in Romania.

Yes, the only thing we didn't have here, you know we make the aubergines in a certain way, you grill them whole on the plate. Then you peel them, and you put them in salt and let them take away the water. And then you need a certain hammer, it looks like this, it's made of wood, has to be made

of wood otherwise it becomes greyish. So this I didn't find and my mom took it up [from Romania]. It's a lot of work but…

There is one more dish Elena craved for, at least in the first years of her stay in Sweden.

There is a special Romanian dish that is typical that you do in the autumn, sort of pickled, it's very difficult and everyone is making it in the autumn and they put it in these small jars and they keep it all winter and then they boil it, it's very difficult. […] It's tomato, um, um, this pepper, aubergine, and onion and you boil it, but first you grill and then all together and it takes some days, to reduce it and then you put them in small jars and cook them so they are in a vacuum. So she [her mother], in the beginning – I missed it so much – sometimes she would bring it, but not lately.

She said she would never do it herself: "Forget it, it's so many days for one dish"! Having acquired the taste for it in Romania, she is the only one in the family who likes it, so the choice of not engaging in time-consuming preparation appears rational and pragmatic. However, she is sorry about not being able to recover the recipe and re-enact the joy of eating home-made ice cream that her grandmother taught her how to prepare: "She taught me to make an ice cream made of yoghurt, it was beautiful, and I lost the recipe. And I can't remember, I've tried several times."

The palpable "borders" of a migrant's transnational space are defined by the extent to which significant others and objects can become emplaced in different contexts. The fluency with which they are contextualized in different locations can determine the level to which migrants can experience that their everyday practices are "normal" and occur without interruption. An element of interruption mentioned above is not caused by the loss of the recipe as such, but by the grandmother's death.

From "Here" to "There"

Favourite food products are not transported only for the migrants' taste or needs, but also because of family members who become transnational because of being related to a migrant. To her parents in Italy, Anna brings salmon, herring, and mustard from Sweden: "The one you have for Christmas, with a kind of seeds, and it's so very good. That one they really love. And the bread, they have from Sweden, this *knäckebröd*."

Anna said she was not used to taking many things from Sweden when flying back to Italy in order to visit her parents and her two sisters.

It's just clothes, and then, I'm used to buying perhaps some presents for my sister. For example clothes during the winter time, things like hats, gloves, things like that, and otherwise some food […] And sometimes I bring things which I don't use here. So for example I brought things I wanted to give to my sister, for example I brought her a helmet to go skiing with. I bought the helmet and I knew that I'm not going to use because it we don't go skiing here. She uses it every weekend because she can go skiing. So I gave it to her and I told her when I go skiing again when I am in Italy, […] I will take it back.

While the choice of leaving the helmet in Italy is pragmatic and practical, it also materializes Anna's inclusion and presence in the place she has left behind. Bought in Sweden but left in Italy, the helmet can be seen as embodying Anna's presence in her sister's place, and confirming an everydayness of the sisterly practice of sharing things.

Anna keeps many personal items at her

parent's home in Italy; she brings used clothes from Sweden to Italy, the ones she might use there but seldom uses in Sweden.

> If I have clothes or shoes I don't use, because I really don't like to throw away things. So if they are still nice and new, I do it. It can sound very ridiculous – bringing clothes from Sweden to Italy. My clothes, the clothes I'm going to use. I'm used to having a big bag because I'm used to bringing a lot of things on the way back to Sweden. […] I always have a big bag. On the way back it can be everything.

When going to Greece from Sweden, Sebastian brings along a cheese cutter, something he sees as typically Swedish, but that he also wants to keep using when away from Malmö. He is also now used to washing the dishes with a dish brush and using a sauce whisk; kitchen utensils he never used before coming to Sweden but now uses on a regular basis. Sebastian explained that for him the brush, the cheese cutter, and the whisk "are Sweden".

Being raised in Greece and Italy, at first Sebastian stabbed the cheese because he didn't know how to use the cutter in the intended manner. Now he uses it properly, on an everyday basis, and takes it home to give as a present to the family. He endorsed a new material practice that he tried to introduce to the counterparts in his transnational space. This "strategy" brings to mind the example described in the introduction concerning a favourite coffeemaker presented as a gift to a relative living in the US: that of emplacing an object of preferred everyday use in every household one inhabits transnationally under the pretext of a gift.

Sebastian also takes his snooze with him back home and on vacation. He quit smoking and started to use *snus* (moist oral snuff) in Sweden. He embodied a "Swedish" material practice and enacts it wherever he goes.

Elena and her family visit her brother-in-law's family in Denmark some three times a year. When asked about what they give for presents from Sweden, she explained.

The type of cheese cutter brought to Italy and Greece as a present, along with the brush and sauce whisk that are two more "typically Swedish" things used regularly in a migrant's home. Photo: M. Humbracht, 2011.

It's not so formal. It's not so formal. I know there is an Italian food shop in Copenhagen and we'll go there first to buy the thing that we know we like. That we can't find in normal shops… or whatever. Or a special hazelnut cream that is like Nutella, that is to die for. But, I like it three times as much and it's so good. Called Jon Due. […] It's a food shop, and Italians like food, even if I'm not Italian I love food, so… Food is very important to me. Um, yeah, food, wine…

She also brings along her children's clothes to be used by their cousins in Denmark; she does the same when going to the house in Italy.

I like to recycle, I don't like to throw away stuff. I like to keep stuff. I'm a... [she means a hoarder]. But clothes and stuff like this – just to throw them away? Or I will just bring them to kids I know that are the same age, or I just keep them for this, how do you call it… second-hand, for charity.

The recipients of her children's clothes are also the children in the Italian village where they have a house. Elena developed a strategy for packing the car rationally and allowing her children's clothes to circulate between Sweden and Italy:

[Do you have difficulties packing the car?] Yeah, sure. I always try to take clothes that are a little bit small. So I don't have to bring them back; I just leave them there in my house so I don't have to bring them to Sweden again. […] The kids' clothes, shoes, for example, sandals. […] [If kids outgrow things and you leave them there, is there any use for them anymore?] No, no, no, they are full of kids in the village. So we can give them away. […] We have friends that have kids, and we, we've done so that I never throw away things. And I must say that I've been given things too.

By circulating, the clothes make relations between donors and recipients and create the classical bonds that gifts are supposed to establish. At the same time, they establish material connections between homes and families in Sweden and Italy.

Sharing across Borders, Sharing across Generations

While Anna talked about the presence of her books in Italian as important for her "feeling at home" in Sweden, another sort of objects – "a lot of things in the kitchen" – are also important in her home-making but are related to her identity as a daughter and granddaughter:

All, not all, but most of the pans, are from Italy. Because they were a present I got from mother for my marriage. But she got them a lot of years ago, she bought them earlier as they were very special, she thought. So when I moved here she gave them to me. It was a present, she bought them for me. But saved them, and she said when you get married you will have them. It was my mom [who bought them], but *la mia nonna*, my grandmother, she had them there [kept them at her place for five years]. So when I was living in Turin [while studying], she said no no no, that's not marriage, but when I moved here it was like a marriage, so she said of course now you move with a guy. And I got the pans.

As a marital gift she also received two rugs, and two paintings from different family members. One of them was also a material connection to a home in Italy (echoing Sebastian's narrative) where the painting was placed earlier.

One is from my sister and the other one is from my uncle. […] The uncle had it at home, he had it at his place and when I got married I got it. And my other sister bought the other one for me for my marriage. […] And I have bed sheets, which my mom had bought, they are hand sewn, with my name, with my grandma's name, my mom's name. [Did she have them made for you?] Some she did, for the most part she had, she had from her grandmother, from her mother, so I had all of the different names. Not the names but the initials. And then some with my initials. And then I have some which she bought without the initials. So I have bed sheets and then I have towels, very traditional things. [What do you call that in Italian?] *Il*

Grandfather's trunk that travelled from Italy to the US and back, now in a Malmö bedroom. Photo: M. Humbracht, 2013.

corredo, exactly, exactly. I had *corredo*, these things that were prepared for me when I was getting married. [Did she bring them here or did you bring them here?] I sent them here, I sent them. I sent them with, um how did you call it, *il baule* [the trunk]. I have two, one has been in USA with my granddaddy. With my granddaddy, who was in the US, with that one, because at that time, my granddaddy had immigrated to the US. And then he came back with that trunk to Italy.

This story about the traditional dowry transported from Italy to Sweden in an old migrant trunk may be a less standard one, but it is an excellent example of how objects, social relations, and identities together criss-cross space, but also time. They are shared across borders, but also across generations.

Anna, in fact, had two trunks that were originally her grandparents' and passed down to her from her parents, one trunk from each side of the family. While the trunk from her immigrant grandfather had a "romantic" quality, both trunks had important family meaning and were used to transport Anna's things from Italy. The two trunks served a practical function in that they were strong and able to protect her things; while the trunks were also items themselves connected to her family that she could use in her new home. After deciding to move to Sweden, then, and with the awareness that the move could last for a significant amount of time, Anna explained that she wanted to bring important items from Italy to fill her new home. She used the trunks to bring books, both medical books and novels, her dowry, and kitchen items. She did so because she "really wanted to begin to arrange" her home in Sweden. Anna described a series of other items, many of which were gifts from friends and family that she brought from Italy to use in her home in Sweden. The items included a Bimbi (a cooking device), cooking pans, including a special pan to make *polenta* (a kind of cornmeal), a lamp, a sideboard (for the bed), and curtains that were her used by both her grandmother and her mother.

These objects of everyday use Anna received as gifts. Some of them are carriers of memories connected to significant persons. Their surfaces carry "physical imprints or traces from the activities in which they are caught up" (Knappett

2002:108). Such objects do not "stand for" someone in a symbolic way; they are affected by the physical use of a particular person and thus provide a material connection to that person. At the same time, they are practical and used in a pragmatic manner, to cook with, to lighten the room, or to shade the windows in Anna's Swedish home.

Elena gave a different example of social ties extending in space and time. As mentioned above, she arrived in Sweden from Romania in 1992, but has not returned to Romania since 1994. A musical box that belonged to her late grandmother is the most important object from Romania Elena has in her Swedish home. It materializes their once close connection, but possibly also Elena's childhood fascination with that very object. By being "here", in her Swedish home, it connects Elena to a "there" of the many summers spent in the grandmother's home and to a "then" of the time gone by.

Necessity, Choice, and a Transnational Wastebasket

All the people quoted in this article are relatively well-off and are currently not forced to make restrictive hierarchies of objects to be transported because of economic reasons (only due to the means of transportation). Affluent people may well be able *to be transnational* in more intense ways than those whose transnational practices demand economic sacrifices. Andreas's experiences illustrate this intensity and its taken-for-granted character, while exemplifying the importance of (here, relatively small) physical distance between places involved in transnational connections.

He explained that his family from Germany habitually brings things to Sweden when visiting.

Yes, yes, both my parents and the parents of my wife take things here. That's right. But it's not always easy, because my dad has a little bigger car that can take more things. But you know, he always wants to bring things to the summer house [in Sweden]. So he already takes a lot of things to the summer house. So he doesn't have so much place in the car. The other, times, they are only two who travel. So they can use the whole rest of the car.

Andreas further confirmed the frequent flow and volume of his family's transnational traffic of objects.

It's not always easy, the house is getting more and more full. We used to be able to find place, to get those things. But we have to see that we, um, throw away other things. But yeah, until now there was always some place we can put it.

When asked what sort of objects his family from Germany brings, he said:

Okay, one thing is beer and wine. Other things… Very much toys for the children, yeah. This home-made marmalade. No, um, otherwise, the things we order.

Asked about the things he started to buy in Sweden instead of Germany, Andreas told about a practice that literally connected his everyday life in the two countries.

Uh, yes, it's a quite strange example, with the waste basket. It's what you put in first, I mean the plastic bags. You put in the plastic bags first, then you throw in the things, then you take the plastic bag and you throw it away. But the plastic bags we bought in Germany because I found that I knew where I could buy them, and then I realized that it's quite stupid of me! I just have to go to the supermarket and find it, for that one time, and then I know, but for a few years I bought it in Germany because it was very handy and it was enough for a half year and it wasn't very expensive at all. Such a plastic bag for the waste.

Andreas was used to buying plastics bags for the waste basket in Germany for a few years before he searched for them and began buying them in Sweden. He explained that he did so, as with his shaving cream, simply because he was familiar with the location where the plastic bags are sold.

Andreas and his wife also buy clothes for their children in Germany. The reason, he explained, is that shopping takes more time in Sweden because he doesn't know where to go and in Germany he does. In addition, in Germany, quite simply there are more shops and more choice. The car gets filled with food on the way back to Sweden.

> Okay, let me think again, then it is that we get to a meal affair, a Euro supermarket. We used to buy meat that you can lay on the bread, cheese. Of a type that doesn't exist here. Sometimes you can buy cheese and that you don't buy here. It is sort of… but we are not depending on it, we just buy it because we are in Germany. […] Yes, then, there is a chocolate. Special sort of chocolate, I did not find it here in Sweden, you can only buy in Germany. […] Chocolate. So… colour, and yes, also this is the same, that we are not depending on it. [If] we don't have it, we don't have it.

What is most important to note here is the habitual character of obtaining these items from the Euro supermarket. The items themselves are not necessarily important but more the fact that Andrea's family obtains them by the mere fact that they are in Germany and there is nothing to impede them from doing so. The everydayness embedded in this material practice demonstrates, at least in part, the extent to which the transnational migrant routes experienced by Andreas and his family are uninterrupted. Or in other words, the very mention that the family does not "depend on" the items from the German supermarket reveals a sense of continuity experienced by the family in the transnational space they occupy.

Fluent Emplacements: Familiar Objects and Habitual Practices

As with any other knowledge acquired about migrants, how we answer the questions of *which* objects become important and *why* depends on how we construct our field in terms of theoretical perspectives and how we choose the respondents. This article focuses on the material layers of migrants' transnational lives. The examples above have therefore been analysed through the lens of making palpable connections, directed towards the objects and practices deemed important by their owners. Several relevant issues implied in the material have not been commented on in detail, such as the family relations the people quoted are embedded in, and their reliance on social networks that help or facilitate transnational trafficking of objects.

In the wider project framework, the analytical attempt to connect the answers to *which* objects travel across borders and *why* they are set in motion resulted in four hypotheses that help in outlining a theory of objects in migrants' transnational lives. They relate objects and material practices to the issue of material continuity and the perceived normalcy of everyday life in a transnational context; to the issue of presence in another location; to the feeling of incorporation; and to the issue of social connections and obligations (see Povrzanović Frykman 2012). The following remarks are direct-

ed only towards *the material continuity and the perceived normalcy* of lives stretched across borders.

In the examples above, objects are not transported across transnational spaces out of any kind of coercion but out of free choice and in a context of relative affluence. Indeed, people engage in trafficking objects, in part, because or when they can. The more restricted people are (primarily by the means and the costs of transportation), the more they may be forced to reflect on their choices. It is plausible that socio-economic privilege expands the range and accessibility of practical options. Yet, it is far from certain that well-off migrants bring along more objects. The reasons transnational migrants do or do not tend to establish material continuities between their multi-sited everyday settings could also be investigated in comparison to internal migrants as well as to people with double homes (see Löfgren and Bendix 2007).

What is striking from the examples above is the *habitual character of the practices* described. People often seem to engage with objects transnationally without a desire to be fully rational about what they are doing, sometimes even without reflecting on it. Once reflecting on what is carried across borders, both the German and the Italian doctor said some of the traffic they engage in is "strange" or "ridiculous" as it also involves trivial objects of everyday use. In the wider material gathered in this project there are numerous instances of amused laughs and characterizations of material practices as "dragging" objects from original home-setting, or that these practices are "silly", "funny", and "illogical", because many of the objects can be easily obtained in Sweden (see Povrzanović Frykman 2012).

Important, but only touched upon here, is the issue of what migrants bring along when going back to places and homes of origin. Some of them have become so accustomed to utensils and food products from elsewhere that they "have to" have them along wherever they travel, just as in the introductory vignette about "having" to have a particular coffee-maker. As mainstream migration research quite often positions migrants as longing for and belonging to the homeland, researching material links in the "opposite" direction is especially relevant.

Scholars proposing that we "materialize ethnography" noted that "the multiple and sensuous qualities of material forms […] give them particular powers and effects in social life" (Geismar and Horst 2004:7). Indeed, several examples above suggest that the intimacy of a home is established via objects that have direct contact with the body. Although seemingly very different, food, coffee-makers, clothes, beds and linen, demonstrate how in order to *be* at home (in a new apartment, in another country) one must *feel* at home by relying on some familiar senses and sensations facilitated by the presence of familiar objects. If "'home' is a continual interplay between idea and substance" (Geismar and Horst 2004:9), our examples show that the core of this substance can be found in objects enmeshed in transnational routes, and in the material practices they animate. Their presence in respective users' everyday lives goes without saying. As migrants may

negotiate many of their habits in new surroundings, the objects that allow for habits to go uninterrupted despite the fact that their lives are stretched between different locations appear to be especially important.

Food, both home-made and industrially produced, is of special importance for migrants as a means of connecting places. Virtually all research participants in the project have engaged in receiving, sending and transporting food across borders, in both directions, both legally and illegally. This is nothing new: the importance of food from homelands, home regions, and parental homes has been observed by many scholars of migration (see, e.g., Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport 2000, Petridou 2001). The issue, however, of bringing food from the country of immigration back to the original home has been far less researched. In the frames of the project presented here, it is of the utmost importance as it confirms the multi-relational character of transnational spaces that engage both migrants and those who stayed behind.

In line with our theoretical stance and analytical lens, food that travels transnationally is less interesting from a standpoint of its specific origin and memories it might evoke and more interesting for facilitating familiar sensations and reinforcing habits by enabling a continuity of practices in different locations. In our examples, what emerges is not an ethnic marker but rather a facilitator of familiar senses and practices, at the ever-present intersection of sociality and materiality of hominess. Eating the same food "here" as "there", can be seen as the utmost act of embodying connection and denying the experiential segregation between distant locations.

Conclusion: Palpable Connections and a Sense of Continuity

In pursuing questions of how people make choices, exercise agency, and create normalcy and continuity in conditions of transnational migration, this article has pursued an interest in objects – not as generators of feelings or cultural meanings, but above all as animators of material practices that occur on a habitual basis and establish continuities in transnational social spaces. It has set out to show the importance of looking at everyday practices and the need for an ethnographic approach that reaches the individuals' level of experience.

Analysis of the ethnographic material suggested that transnational spaces are made up of material layers, not only in terms of relevant geographical locations in different countries, but also in terms of objects used and the material practices enacted in transnational spaces. If objects are at the centre of analytical attention they can reveal how perceived continuity in migrants' lives may be emotionally and practically contained in their materiality and why and how this is important for migrants.

The country of origin and the land of immigration are not juxtaposed in migrants' everyday experience. "Here" and "there" are flexible and fluid categories that tend to be conflated when certain objects are used and certain material practices enacted. It is also through objects, especially those made by or inherited from significant others, that intimacy and

physical proximity with original family members is felt, re-enacted and confirmed.

"Hominess" is not the same as "homeland"; "feeling at home" is not necessarily related to a national territory. While objects may differentiate "national cultures" and signal belonging, the examples above refer to personal feelings about homemaking and thereby to the *ways of being*. As the approach pursued here prioritizes "home" as an empirical, experiential category, what those objects might symbolize (if displaying belonging) is less important than how they provide migrants with a sense of "being at home" in different locations. Even if some objects and practices may appear "typical" for a country or a region of origin, the ones depicted in our examples refer to more familial, local, and personal realms and cannot be conflated with larger political identities. The people quoted in this article point out that tastes, smells, and ways of doing things are important – not the representative functions of objects accompanying them along their transnational routes.

These objects by no means constitute the entire or exclusive content of our interviewees' everyday lives; it is our analytical lens that makes them stand out as central in the discussion here. However, the sense of continuity they contribute to, and the related sense of normalcy, can explain the non-existence of nostalgia and alienation that are part and parcel of a different analytical construction, that of migrants as displaced persons. Indeed, our material suggests that enjoying the familiarity of objects and practices is not a matter of migrant nostalgia for the homeland. On the contrary, it is proof of migrants' palpable connections to places and people in different locations.

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Notes

1 See, e.g., Appadurai 1986, Geismar and Horst 2004, Miller 1998a, 1998b, 2001, 2005, Warnier 2001, 2009, as well as a five-volume collection presenting all contemporary approaches to material culture edited by Victor Buchli (2004).

2 Maja Povrzanović Frykman's project "The Transnational Life of Objects: Material Practices of Migrants' Being and Belonging" is financed 2011–13 by the Swedish Research Council (code 2010-33187-77170-219). The ethnographic material used in the article was collected in spring 2011 by Michael Humbracht, then MA student at Lund Department of European Ethnology, within the framework of a seminar series connected to the project, held by Maja Povrzanović Frykman at the Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare (Spring semester 2011).

3 "Transnational social spaces can be understood as pluri-local frames of reference which structure everyday practices, social positions, biographical employment prospects, and human identities, and simultaneously exist above and beyond the social contexts of national societies" (Pries 2001: 23).

4 For a critique of the ethnic lens and an ethnographically grounded questioning of the importance of ethnic affiliation as a motivator of transnational practices, see Povrzanović Frykman 2012. That text, also based on the project "The Transnational Life of Objects: Material Practices of Migrants' Being and Belonging," discusses the material practices of international students in Southern Sweden and focuses on the narratives of four Iranians in order to raise methodological questions revolving around the importance of objects as ethnic markers.

5 More specifically, the project will compare the experiences of people who did and did not migrate out of free choice; people with migratory experience of different lengths; migrants of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds; their non-migrant transnational counterparts and family members in so-called inter-ethnic marriages; and last but not least, transnational migrants vs. internal migrants who move within a single country.

6 "If the experience of transnationality is class-specific, the mobility practices of those who are relatively affluent and privileged are expected to differ significantly from those who are not" (Kurotani 2007: 15). Yet, sustained comparative research is needed in order to establish how exactly home-making practices and the use of objects in domestic sphere can differ in relation to migrants' socio-economic positions.

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How Academic Bodies Matter

On Material-discursive Enactments of Gender in Academia

By Tine Damsholt

This is the story about how the gendered academic body came to matter in a new way when it was enacted in a different discursive and material setting – a *hamam* in Istanbul. The number of towels, humidity, teasing, academic analysis, bodies, sweat, marble, Orientalism, tone of voice, genitals – all these elements turned out to be involved in specific enactments of gender.

The materiality of the body and the materialisation of its gender have been a somewhat challenging concepts for gender researchers over the past few decades. The biological body is often seen as a kind of threshold for social and discursive constructions. However, the performative strategy in the constructivist perception of gender, as led by Judith Butler, reintroduced the sexed body in all its materiality. But the question remains as to whether the analytical focus, even when a performative perspective is employed, should be limited to discourses about the body (Alaimo and Hekman 2008) plus the surface of the body and its coverings, such as clothing and make-up – if indeed the body is ever explicitly mentioned in the analyses. In this article, I argue that a much broader range of material-discursive practises must be included if we are to better understand how gender is enacted in all its concrete complexity.[1]

My analysis takes its starting point in a specific event that I experienced in the spring 2002 in Istanbul while participating in a conference about cultural encounters between East and West. The conference was organised by employees at universities in Istanbul in joint cooperation with a Danish research group of which I was a member.[2] The majority of the participants were male and came from Denmark or Turkey, with a few speakers from the United Kingdom, and only one woman gave a presentation. However, nobody seemed to pay particular attention to this fact – and in principle, the few female participants (myself included) took part on equal terms with the men.

In Istanbul, the conference was held in a disused bank building, where we sat in an open horseshoe formation in the middle of an atrium-like columned hall, which was partially covered with marble. With the exception of the chairman and the speakers, all of the participants were positioned in two rows, facing each other without any hierarchical order. This emphasised that all of the participants were taking part in the conference on an equal basis. We were dressed in classic conference attire: suits, light summer trousers and shirts, or respectable dresses. The fact that we were guests in an (officially secular but nonetheless) predominantly Islamic country meant that we were perhaps more formally dressed than is the case at academic conferences in Denmark. However, on the final morning of the conference, we moved to a different location for a presentation of an analysis of the Italian–Turkish film *Hamam*;[3] the lecture itself would take place in a nearby *hamam*, or Turkish bath. In this new setting, what Butler calls the "sexed body" was made visible in an entirely different way. At the same time, we as participants were all faced with the challenge of presenting and receiving an academic paper in a completely new material-discursive setting. Our presence in the hamam seemed to change how the academic gender was perceived before, during and after the event – in a whole range of different ways. Aca-

demic gender was shown to be a highly heterogeneous phenomenon, which was not only related to the participants' perceptions of gender, but also to bodies and the physical materiality of our surroundings.

Ignoring or downplaying the differences between the sexes is typical in academic contexts. Based on Butler's ideas, Danish psychologist Dorthe Marie Søndergaard has studied how gender unfolds itself among Humanities students at the University of Copenhagen. Søndergaard further develops the performative approach and investigates the coherence of gender by looking at seven components that are performed in different versions and combinations, and which establish particular codes for how gender is performed in male and female versions in the academic culture in Denmark (Søndergaard 1996).

As Søndergaard describes, we in the aforementioned research group performed a local version of gender, which can be called 'the stabilised academic gender'. The significance of the body was stabilised in the research group (along with a number of other aspects in our social relationships) by particular roles and expectations. Our bodies were disciplined and partially veiled by clothing, which made it easier to deal with the sexed bodies in an academic context. Thus, the body and its gender markers were not the basis for how we acted as academics. As in most other similar situations, an implicit agreement was established regarding the centrality of professional and scientific matters; gender should not have any relevance to our seriousness or mutual recognition. In this way, the body was inscribed in an ideal of gender equality, in which we resisted any asymmetry between the genders. However, this stabilisation of gender and the body as subordinate to the academic proved to be dependent on the material situatedness.

In the following, I argue that the specific material situation or setting where gender is performed is an important element that plays an active role in the dynamic reconfigurings of gender; that is, how gender can be done, and how the body is involved in specific relations and stabilisations. Here, I examine the heterogeneous versions of ourselves that we were doing during the conference in Istanbul by using a kind of auto-ethnography, an analytic account of my own situated experience (Ellingson and Ellis 2008).

Through a "reconstructive praxiography" (see Mol 2002) and a 'thick' description of the concrete actions – what happened, what we did, and how I experienced things at the time – I discuss how this event can be understood in its complexity using analytical approaches that focus on discourse as well as materiality. In this text, I attempt to reproduce the physical awkwardness of the experience in the hamam. Portraying the performed self, I try to re-enact an embodied experience for the reader. Of course, this is a very subjective account, as I have not systematically interviewed the other participants about their experiences.[4] But as argued (e.g., Ellis, Adams and Bochner 2011), the focus of generalisability in auto-ethnography moves from respondents to readers, and to the question of whether the narrative and analysis speaks to them. In this way, I aim to bring to light the wealth of material–discursive details

and elements – such as space, humidity, teasing, towels, bodies, sweat, tone of voice, and so on – involved in 'doing' a specific version of gender. The main point made in this empirical example is that it is precisely within this material–discursive concreteness – including the bodily and spatial concreteness – that gender occurs, or is 'done'.

Bodies that Matter

The idea that a paper on the Italian–Turkish film *Hamam*[5] should be presented *in* an actual hamam probably started off as a kind of joke that later turned into reality, perhaps in part because a hamam visit is a required component in any self-respecting tourist's trip to Istanbul. For thousands of years, Istanbul has been the West's doorway to the East, or the Orient – with all of the associations that this has conjured up over time (Said 1995 [1978]). In Turkey, hamams are normally divided into gender-specific bathing days, but our visit had to be arranged as a so-called 'mixed hamam'. This hybrid was not created on our behalf, but is practiced in special hamams for tourists. A gender-segregated hamam would not have made sense for the aforementioned stabilisation of the academic gender in our group. This concrete stabilisation follows the general tendency in Danish academia, where gender clearly *should* not play any role, and where one's relationships should only be determined by academic considerations (Søndergaard 1996). Thus, gender differences are supposed to be downplayed, made taboo or at least treated with irony, especially if they are used as a legitimisation for differential treatment. In Danish academia, gender should be regarded as a long-closed chapter. Therefore, we the Danes did not see any problem in going to a mixed hamam, but instead considered the trip to be something that could be easily reconciled with the stabilised academic gender.[6]

However, this was not the case for our Turkish host. He was graciousness personified and committed in every sense to not offending anyone's cultural preferences. He was clearly worried about the female participants' reservations when he was asked to arrange a mixed hamam. His concerns about doing something wrong and transgressing invisible cultural boundaries meant that he repeatedly asked me (and the few other female Danish participants[7]) whether it was alright for us. I answered again and again that it was no big deal, and that we women could simply use more towels, etc. That is, I insisted on enacting the hamam within a Danish, egalitarian version of academic gender. And on the whole, the number of towels that each participant would be given was a standing joke among the Danish participants. But just as this joke was a way to 'enact' or do our 'Danish, completely relaxed' attitude to gender and nudity, this constant joking was also a way in which the gender differences between participants were enacted in a new way; the number of towels became a materialisation of the gender differences between us.

It could be said that the friendly joking about the number of towels was also a subtle way of testing[8] the female participants of the group and discourses of gender equality. If we wanted to be 'one of the boys' on equal academic footing with the men, we should also be able to participate equally in all of the same activities that they did and 'play by the rules of the

game'. We had to demonstrate our emancipation in the face of a non-egalitarian perception of gender by not being more shy or demure than the men. The teasing had a slightly risqué undertone. The fact that all of the participants had, of course, read Edward Said's canonical analysis of *Orientalism* (1995 [1978]) did not reduce the risqué connotations. On the contrary, it seemed to intensify them.[9] Both the sensual dimensions of *Orientalism* and Said's deconstruction of them were an undercurrent of the teasing. The fact that we had read Said made us think we could enact ourselves in an academic and gender-equal version: emancipated from and raised above Western discourses about the 'East' as well as the 'East's gender-segregated discourses' about the body. We considered ourselves to be cheerfully elevated above it all. In this way, Said's analyses became one of the heterogeneous and discursive elements that was stabilised in a pre-understanding of the hamam situation. This understanding did not take the decisive significance of the body or the material situation into consideration – and this is completely in line with the often-symptomatic absence of materiality in discourse analyses (Barad 2007).

Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingre's painting "El Baño Turco/The Turkish Bath" (1862) illustrates the traditional Western conception of the Turkish bath, which is permeated with Orientalism. Unbridled corporality and sensuality abound, and the female body is portrayed as a piquant and sexual object for the observer, who is configured as a voyeuristic outsider.

Several researchers have criticised the absence of materiality in Butler's performative approach. The Dutch philosopher Annemarie Mol claims that materiality is often lacking in Butler's performative analyses of gender, despite the fact that they include the necessary 'stage props' to perform womanliness or manliness:

> And among the stage props is the physical body. A vagina or a penis need not cause gender identity from the inside to be relevant in staging oneself as a woman or a man. The extent to which they are relevant depends on the scene. Out in the street one does not need a penis to perform masculinity. But in communal showers at the swimming pool, it helps a lot. So there they are, the genitals: on stage (Mol 2002:39).

In this way, according to Mol, the stage is decisive for the significance of the sexed body. The American physicist Karen Barad also takes her point of departure in a critique of Butler. Although Butler reworks the notion of matter as a process of materialisation, matter is re-inscribed as "a passive product of discursive practices rather than an active agent participating in the very process of materialization" (Barad 2003:821). Furthermore, Butler's theory of materiality is limited to the "construction of the contours of the human body" (2003:822). In contrast to this, Barad's theory enables a reworking of the notion of materialisation that acknowledges a more complex entanglement of discursive practices and material phenomena.

Barad argues that through specific intra-actions, phenomena come to matter, and that a differential sense of being is enacted in the ongoing ebb and flow of agency. In this ongoing flow, properties are stabilised and destabilised. The stabilisation of one phenomenon is also a destabilisation of another. As one thing is put in the front, something else is pushed away or excluded. The constant talking about the differences between the sexed bodies threatened to undermine and destabilise the perception of what gender should mean and what it actually meant, which I had helped to negotiate, stabilise and perform during the preceding year of the research group's work.

The bodies of the conference participants – and in particular, the type of genitals they possessed – became part of a reconfiguring of our genders. The fragmentation and compartmentalization of the sexed body and the reduction to specific named parts (Butler 1990:114) was pivotal in this reconfiguring. I felt that my breasts – which were the reason I needed two towels, in contrast to the male participants who only needed one around their waists – became that which was most prominent or relevant about me. My intellectual and research-related interests and potentials decreased in relevance; I was now primarily reconfigured as a natural body with a sex.

However, this experience of a sudden 'sexualisation' or the 'tacking on' of gender, which had previously been less visible, did not compel us as female participants to cancel the hamam visit. We spoke briefly about it the evening before, and almost reconfirmed with each other that 'it really was not a problem' for an open-minded Dane. One person mentioned that, after all, we would not be any more naked than if we were in a swimming pool or on the beach, and that did not usually bother us. And this was indeed true. However, the point is that the sexed body did not become more prominent simply because it

became visible. On the contrary, it would become apparent that it was how the body was covered and the physical locality in which it took place that imbued the sexed body with increased significance.

The Cunning of Materiality

The hamam we visited – Kılıç Ali Paşa Hamami – was built in the 1580s by Sinan, one of Istanbul's noted architects, in connection with a mosque. In 2002, it was still used on a daily basis, and from the exterior seemed somewhat rundown and worn out. Just inside the open entrance, we came into the large anteroom (*camekan*), which was furnished in classic Turkish style with low tables and stools that were arranged in the middle of the floor. Around the edges of the room, there was a raised balcony made from dark wood, with small changing rooms that had their doors facing out onto the balcony and the central space. In this area, five or six male staff members walked around, dressed in t-shirts, loincloths and bathing sandals, and our Turkish host began to negotiate with them. The gender of employees tends to be the same as that of the guests, but in the mixed hamam, the staff's gender was the same as only the male participants, and this contributed to the configuring of the female participants as a slight anomaly.

From the moment we arrived, this cool entrance hall, the employees and the interior generated an automatic gender segregation. As such, the hamam worked as an apparatus in Barad's sense:

> …apparatuses are dynamic (re)configurings of the world, specific agential practices/intra-actions/performances through which specific exclusionary boundaries are enacted (2003:816).

In the hamam, new boundaries that divided the group of researchers into two gendered categories were enacted: We four female participants gathered close to the entrance in a marginal position on the boundary to the physical 'outdoors', whereas the men (12 to 15 in all) 'bravely' moved into the middle of the room and gathered around our Turkish host. None of the other Turkish conference participants, neither the men nor the women, were in attendance[10] – perhaps because a 'mixed hamam' was indeed a hybrid brought about by the egalitarian gender stabilisation that we Danish academics bore with us. So, as well as the gender segregation that was now taking place, the hamam setting had already generated a cultural or ethnic segregation because, with the exception of our host and the staff, there were now only Danish and British people in the hamam.[11] In the absence of the Turkish conference participants, we were suddenly revealed as the tourists in Istanbul that we actually were. Their absence also destabilised the ideal of culturally and ethnically equality that is usually performed at academic conferences. New boundaries were cut, and we were made into a version of ourselves in which the logic of the tourist was more apparent than it had been for the rest of the conference. In that sense, those who were not present were nevertheless part of the stabilisations[12] of that which took place at the hamam.

The hamam employees conferred for a long time, and it eventually dawned on us that there was a problem with where we women should change clothes because there was a glass section in the upper parts of the doors to the changing rooms. These

cubicles were designed to conceal the genitals from other people's view, which is sufficient to preserve male modesty, but not for a woman to change without exposing her breasts. The material design turned the female participants into a problem because we were unable to conform to the usual standardised changing practices. As this discussion continued, they started to distribute towels to the men, who spread out into the cubicles on the balcony (some of them looking a little bewildered), while the employees began to establish a modest and completely closed changing room for the female participants. This involved the slightly haphazard hanging of towels over the windows of a large square cubicle, which was positioned inside the anteroom on the ground floor. Usually, it was the guards' and employees' room, from which the central room could be observed, but now it was given to the female members of the group out of care and an attempt to neither violate our virtue nor the gender borders.

Barad argues that different apparatuses effectuate different cuts and draw different distinctions; it 'cuts things together and apart' (2003:816, 2007:179). The changing room problem in the hamam cut new distinctions primarily gendered: the male hamam visitors and employees were cut together as the females visitors were cut apart. The hideout that we women were given was particularly visible and somewhat attention-grabbing, precisely because its haphazardly covered windows appeared as an anomaly and an apparatus that configured the women as an anomaly. Long after the men had finished changing and were starting to come out of their cubicles, we women managed to get into our changing room, equipped with two towels each.

In her analysis "on being allergic to onions" (1991), Susan Leigh Star argues that every standardised activity is based on exclusion. It is arranged as though it is based on a universal consumer, but as soon as there is a user who does not correspond to this standard, the service becomes much more cumbersome and slow. In Star's case, this applies to ordering a burger without onions, and for us as women in the hamam, it was being given a separate changing room designed for people with gender markers placed above their waists. Star's point is that there are always people, who fall outside of standardised categories, and therefore, every successful network always marginalises someone; she argues that the analysis should take its point of departure here.[13] In the hamam we women were made into a marginalised version that was materialised by our special changing room. At the same time, we were given an analytical head start, as this version made visible the relationships in which our (different versions of) academic selves were configured at the conference – both inside and outside the hamam setting.

When we four Danish women[14] were alone in our concealed yet eye-catching changing room, we started to get undressed in order to put on the obligatory hamam attire: long, roughly woven, cotton garments with a wide red-and-orange checked pattern – called towels here since they are used as clothing/coverings in the hamam as well as to dry oneself. We briefly discussed whether we should keep our panties on, but one of us led the way and took hers off, referring to the sauna and

swimming-pool tradition in Denmark and the Nordic countries; in these countries, a woman would take them off. Keeping one's underwear on in the bathhouse seemed to conflict with the hygiene discourse that is embedded in every bathing situation for a Dane, due to our cultural history. In this sense, pre-understandings based on cultural history were a part of the material discursive entanglement of the concrete doing.

However, our Danish culture-historical and discursive legacy failed to provide us with the skills for how to position the two narrow towels on our bodies, in part because they were very different from the terrycloth towels that we were used to dealing with. Giggling, we tried out different ways of tying the towels, trying to find a method that was 'secure' (that is, so it would neither slip nor fall off entirely) without looking too 'clumsy'. We also talked about our make-up, which may well start to run. Gender could not be eliminated, and we did not wish to look silly or unattractive either. In any case, I had these considerations, and even though I had been annoyed by the preoccupation with my sexed body, or that which I called the sexualisation of the female participants, I had no desire to de-sexualise myself by entering the hamam with a completely disguised body, or as an unattractive lump. I would only be a subject[15] in the academic space that we would attempt to maintain in the hamam through the regulating matrix of gender.

These opposing strategies could be characterised as an 'ontological choreography'. In a study of women undergoing fertility treatment, Charis Cussins makes the point that objectification is only antithetical to personhood in certain circumstances, and she argues for a notion of agency not opposed by but pursued in objectification. She shows how women in the fertility clinic objectified themselves in different treatment practises in order to achieve a particular type of subjectivity: 'the pregnant woman'. This constant shift between the subject and object positions is called an "ontological choreography"[16] (Cussins 1996). The term captures the logic of the opposing strategies of my own practise in the hamam; there, I subjugated myself to the heterosexual matrix, which made me into a subject only as a gendered being. By tying my towels so that they simultaneously concealed that which had to be hidden – specifically, my skin from the armpit down to just above the knee – and did not conceal that which should be on show: a relatively slim female body with a certain measure of bust, waist and hips. I subjectified myself by objectifying myself – by emphasising my female gender markers in the concrete form that the two roughly woven towels allowed. As stiff as the towels were after having been repeatedly wet and dried, the material–discursive possibilities were somewhat limited.

The ontological choreography that I undertook in the hamam consisted of simultaneously attempting to do two versions of myself, between different cuts: as both object and subject at the same time; as an attractive female body and as a research colleague on the same level as the men at the same time. The ontological choreography was an attempt to 'dance' between these two versions and cuts; to tie them together so that they did not exclude one another, but instead became entangled. The bodily

choreography involved simultaneously covering and revealing certain body parts and certain aspects of my intellect.

Versions, Cuts and the Resistance of Materiality

When I stepped out of the changing room ready to do at least two versions of myself, I chose a suitable set of slippers from among the many that were offered, and went from the cool anteroom through a smaller space and into the actual hamam of which the male participants had already taken possession. They were either in the shower rooms or sitting in a sauna-like room. I spontaneously avoided the small sauna's heat – mostly to ease gently into the bodily community we were now going to enact, but especially because, through the glass, one could discern that a physically close homo-social community was already established in this room. Here, I as a woman would have been totally misplaced. It would be like stepping into a men's locker room: a forbidden area for any type of woman because it would dismantle any smooth stabilisation of gender. Therefore, like the other women, I sat down in the hamam's central space, the walls of which were covered with gray marble tiles, and where daylight seeped in through the whitewashed dome's small stained-glass windows. The most pervasive element in the space was the moisture; the steam was visible on the walls, and the sound of dripping or splashing water coming from the smaller space with the showers was a continuous 'soundscape' in the central room under the dome. In the middle of this was a hexagonal marble platform, just as there were platforms in the four corners on which to sit or lie and receive the massage that is one of the hamam's main activities.

Eventually, we all gathered in this space, peeking discreetly at each other's bodies: shape, hairiness, rolls of fat, and the flesh's looseness and colour. In contrast to our daily and more individual clothing, the uniform covering of orange-checked towels emphasised each body's unique outlines and forms. The hamam-apparatus of bodily production drew new boundaries. We spread ourselves around on the marble benches in the room. Some sat in the corners, while we women were on one side of the middle hexagon alongside the speaker. He started slowly in the best Roman emperor-style, standing in the middle of the raised hexagon with the audience spread throughout the room. However, his voice rang out too strongly, and the sound jumped around and bounced under the dome and against the wet marble. This meant that we had to instead gather in two of the four corner niches. We four women in the front rows and the men alongside and behind us. If we were to hear the presentation, the space's acoustics demanded much more physical closeness between us than we had been accustomed to in the bank. We came close to each other's skin and sweat, and a new bodily intimacy was established while the speaker sat on the edge of the central hexagon and began the lecture.

Here, seated closely and with the reading of an academic analysis (which eventually found a quieter sound level), the conference's academic-apparatus was partially re-established. Calm fell upon us and we listened intently, but the material surroundings gave a completely different listening situation than in the cool bank. A

soundscape is also material-discursive. Although marble dominated the design in both the haman and the bank, there were big differences in how the sound travelled, and therefore in how we talked and listened. Here in the hamam, the strongest acoustic association was to a household bathroom, where one is not accustomed to attentively listening to others, but most often concentrates on oneself and one's body.

But also, we were all in different versions of ourselves. The academic gender's invisibility could not simply be restored. The presence of bodies disturbed and undermined the stable configuring of gender and academics that we had done in the bank and in the conference's other, more traditional material surroundings. In the hamam, the bodies could not be ignored – they 'were too noisy' in all their materiality. The cuts of the hamam-apparatus produced new gendered bodies of a new insistent character.

It was not all of the participants who were reconfigured in the conference version. Several went in and out of the central space, presumably in part because the theoretical basis for the analysis (Lacan, Foucault, Althusser) was not in their taste, but probably mostly because the heat and the weight of the immediate corporality in the haman seemed to bother them. In any case, one of them wore long, dark-blue boxers that were visible under the loincloth, and he had to constantly go under a cold shower. As such, the academic embodiment had to be done in completely different ways in the hamam's hot and humid marble landscape than in the bank's corresponding coolness. The point is not just that the heat made a difference; we had also had other sessions at the conference with high heat. There was not one single element that made the difference. The difference was made by the specific configuration that was comprised of the many material–discursive elements, which were intertwined in the hamam situation. In brief, the material–discursive setting was decisive for the versions of gender and academic in which we could enact ourselves.

In many ways, the hamam's central space resisted becoming conference space or conference-apparatus. Here, one can talk about material or distributed 'agency'. The first form of resistance was quite simply the heat that melted every attempt at full concentration. Any concentration ran out of us along with the sweat from our bodies. However, we were given plastic bottles of cold spring water instantly cooling our heated bodies and minds. The next attack on the conference-apparatus of our gathering was that one of the hamam's employees came into the middle of the lecture and rolled out a cushion on the centre hexagon to prepare to give us massages. Again, we had to intervene and make the masseur comprehend that, despite our visit to the hamam, we were not there for massages. Slightly offended, he rolled his cushion together again and left the space. The tourist cut of ourselves that we were doing as Westerners visiting a hamam in Istanbul thus became dimmed, and we attempted to eliminate it so that the presentation of the paper could continue.

But eventually the third form of resistance started, and this time nothing could be done, as the moisture and heat in all their non-humanity were too strongly allied. The 'paper' that was being presented

physically consisted of a manuscript printed on plain white paper with notes written in red ink. But the hamam's high humidity gradually made the paper disintegrate; at first, it was only that it was difficult to separate the individual pages from each other, and the finished pages gathered in a wet clump beside the lecturer. But soon the red-ink notes began to drip off the paper; they flowed out and down onto the gray marble – it was very appropriate that we had reached the final thematisation, which was about tragedy. The film analysis[17] of the classical Greek *Antigone* and the victim motif was not only present as a literary and discursive reference, but with the blood red ink as a material phenomenon. The academic 'paper' was simply dissolved in the literal sense, and a full academic discussion was 'sacrificed' on the altar of heat and humidity. The strict conference-apparatus that we had fought to re-establish was therefore also dissolved by general hilarity. The hamam-apparatus was reinstated, and the rest of the time we behaved as regular bath guests. We scrubbed ourselves with the special olive-soap sponges that were supplied, or were scrubbed by the employees, which is certainly not for delicate bodies because it left one with red and hot, yet smooth, skin.

I have repeatedly suggested that the corporality in the hamam also challenged several of the male participants. Where at least some of us female participants experienced a sexualisation of our presence, the situation had other effects on at least some of the males, which one of them brought to my attention in a shared reflection about the event at the closing dinner that same evening. "One day, a famous professor and body researcher; the next, just a short little man with a too-big belly," he said about what he, in the hamam, had experienced as his own precipitous decline in prestige. Among the men, the nearly naked bodies in the hamam also appeared to establish or accentuate other hierarchical logics than skills in English, titles, celebrity, etc., had established the previous day. The hamam-apparatus brought about new boundaries and cuts of masculinity in academia.

The new and more complex versions of femininity and masculinity were included and done in a single configuration that entangled many material and discursive elements: Architecture, marble, moisture and heat went together with us participants and the versions of ourselves (academic or otherwise) that we did. Likewise present were our more or less Orientalist-inspired discursive understandings of what a Turkish bath was and could be. The concrete forms of practice were added to this; they were partially culturally–historically inscribed in the building's materiality, and partially everyday practices among the employees and the visitors. It was thus not we participants and all our compounded intentions – nor the hamam itself, for that matter – that alone made the situation. The situated phenomenon was material–discursive, and tangled by all of the above elements, unfolded forms of practice and cultural–historical practices inscribed, as they were, in materiality and our discursive preconceptions. As already mentioned, Orientalism and its deconstruction were part of the reconfiguring.

Thus, the new phenomenon in which we were enacted cannot simply be reduced to the fact that we were more naked or unclothed than we were in the bank's

coolness. This is a matter of 'situated undress',[18] a new differentiating cut, that gave very specific situated experiences and insights, and which shaped a certain stabilisation of gender. The situated enactments of being undressed were done in different ways by every single participant; thus we human participants as well as the material elements were co-constituting elements in the hamam as an apparatus.

Multiple and Entangled Bodies and Selves

Our bodies had no inherent essence but were simultaneously enacted and produced in different apparatuses – they were multiple. They were cut as part of different phenomena according to whether they were enacted as either a discrete 'appendage' to a bright academic paper in a cool bank, or enacted as more undressed, wrapped in uniform loincloths and sweating their way through an academic lecture inside a hot hamam. Furthermore, the bodies were not in themselves, but cuts of multiple apparatuses of bodily production. A material–discursive phenomenon, at once "sign *and* flesh" (Haraway 2003). The specific versions or materialisations of body and gender are not essential, nor final, but always part of open-ended and dynamic reconfigurings of the world.

In the aforementioned article by Star, she writes about "multiple selves" and "multiple memberships" that arise from the many communities of practice in which we exist. This dimension is radicalised here by claiming that we did different versions of ourselves within the *same* academic community of practice. What I have emphasised is the significance of materiality and the situation. It is clear that we were different in the hamam – with towels wrapped around us and sweat running down our backs – than we were in the cool bank. A central point is that the different apparatuses of bodily production had no inherent "outside" beyond boundaries (e.g. Barad 2003:816); they were not separated, but rather entangled, ongoing and open-ended practices.

When we were finished scrubbing and rinsing ourselves in the bathhouse, we went back to our separate changing rooms. I briefly glanced in the little mirror on the wall and laughed to myself at the sight of my mascara, which was in complete disarray. One of the versions I had tried to perform had also literally dissolved and run down my cheeks. Dressed again, all of the participants met outside the hamam in the strong springtime sun. But this was not the only reason I was wearing sunglasses. A certain shyness was there between us when we met now, dressed and in versions that resembled the situation pre-hamam. A new intimacy had just been established between our bodies, we had got to 'know' each other in new ways, and we were a little hesitant in trying to re-establish or re-stabilise our old relationships and versions.

We were driven by bus back to the conference room in the bank, and re-took our usual seats in the cool marble hall. Yet something had changed. During the afternoon session in the bank – where we sat in two long rows on each side of the hall with just as good a 'view' of each other as in the hamam, but with a greater distance between us – I noticed that, for example, I had taken off my shoes and sat with my bare feet up on the chair in a somewhat more relaxed and at-home posture than I

had done the previous days. The versions of the hamam/academic-apparatus had become entangled with the conference-apparatus in the bank. A version where one could be both an attentive conference participant and, at the same time, sensually present in one's corporality. The hamam-situation was thus inscribed in the way my body was included in the academic version of myself from that point on. There was a reconfiguring, a transformation of the versions at play, a new intertwining of elements.

This entanglement of new and earlier versions of ourselves also became evident that evening at the conference's closing dinner. Here, our hamam bodies were 'present' in another way than before. For example, one of the male participants, who I had not previously known, introduced himself by saying: "Hi, I was the one sitting in the back row in the hamam, watching people's backs. You've got beautiful shoulders". In this opening line to a further conversation, I was thus enacted as 'naked back'. I experienced these transformations and new entanglements very strongly, especially how the hamam-situation had made our academic bodies present in new ways. It seemed to call for an analysis, and from the beginning, I felt particularly 'called' to do this.[19] Law analyses a similar situation, where a certain aircraft caught his academic attention in a 'bodily' manner, which gave rise to a larger study. With Law, as with Haraway, the role of the material is radicalised in such interpellations[20] or invoked processes (Law 2000, Haraway 2003). It is the non-human or material objects that call to us – also as self-evident analytical objects.

This was the case with the hamam-experience. We were not cultural analysts for nothing, and even in the hamam, some of us joked about what an ANT analysis would make of it all. But this academic humour was not enough. The experience was so strong, and so bodily, and so analytically insistent that I took it further. During the conference dinner on the same evening as the event, I began to explicate my experience of the increased importance of gender, and that which I considered to be a sexualisation of the female participants. I also received responses about this from several of the male participants, and I started to make the preliminary notes for this article. My explication of the analysis could certainly be seen as a way to re-establish myself in the version of a 'gendered but equal researcher subject'. I turned the significance of gender among us into an articulated phenomenon and an object of cultural analysis, and this made me into the researcher subject – in truth, this was an ontological choreography in which I enacted myself as subject by objectifying myself. The analysis was started in the situation itself, and therefore, it became a part of the situation, the transformation and the entanglements of our academic selves – just as the material setting also helped to create the new analytical and academic versions.

The fact that relationships between the genders in an academic context are complex can hardly come as a surprise to anyone. In Istanbul, the body, which had been stabilised by our research group as having an academic-neutral gender, became temporarily dissolved in the hot, damp hamam. One may say that the hamam-apparatus revealed that the academic ideal of gender equality in relation to research is

just one particular cut or stabilisation; a stabilisation that can be easily destabilised, and which was re-stabilised and re-formed by the hamam's insistent corporality and materialisation of us in new configurings. After the hamam trip, we sought to perform the academic gender in new configurings that could accommodate both the bank- and the hamam-apparatus cuts, rather than simply re-establishing the bank-apparatus by marginalising the hamam cuts. The academic viewpoint was one of several strategies in this new stabilisation.

Thus, the new versions were not only spatially distributed (in the bank and the hamam); they were also entangled with each other and mutually referential: In this way, our jokes about the hamam between presentations in the bank were related to our attempts to integrate different versions of ourselves into the hamam experience. The various versions of academic gender that were done at the conference by the women and the men were not only done in different apparatuses with help from the non-human, discursive, analytical and cultural–historical components – they were also done in a relational interplay between men and women. We made each other's versions as well, and in this way, we were co-creators of each other's multiple selves.

Of course, these insights about the complexity of the 'work' of doing gender are not limited to the Turkish bath. A range of components can be added to the performative understanding of gender with which I started this article, because the academic gender – in our daily lives at the university, as well as at the hamam – is material–discursively stabilized configurings by different apparatuses. Butler's heterosexual matrix must constantly be repeated, materialised or unfolded, or the performativity as 'iterative citationality' collapses (Barad 2007: 57, 63). However, the reiteration is neither unambiguous nor predetermined. We all have to improvise, and this means that the details are crucial – also in our everyday academic lives. But the laborious and detailed task of doing gender is invisible to us in our daily lives. It is only when we encounter variations, deviations, or even dissolutions that we realise that gender is not being performed as it 'should be'.

In this article, I have tried to illustrate how matter comes to matter, and how academic bodies came to matter in a hamam in Istanbul. The hamam served as an apparatus – as specific material practices through which local semantic and ontological determinacy were intra-actively enacted. "Apparatuses are material (re)configurings/discursive practices that produce material phenomena in their discursively differentiated becoming", states Barad (2003:820). In the hamam and afterwards, academic bodies and gender as material–discursive phenomena were destabilised and reconfigured in ongoing processes – and of which this article is a small component. The multiple selves we enacted during the conference in Istanbul may be regarded as specific configurings. But they can also be seen as entanglements, and more generally as components of one long ontological choreography with ever-changing scenery; a choreography that ensures the stabilisation of the academic gender, despite its momentary dissolution as in the Turkish bath. Thus, the differential sense of being and the do-

ing of gender are enacted in the ongoing ebb and flow of human and non-human, discursive and material agency.

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Notes

1 I wish to thank my colleagues Dorthe Gert Simonsen, Marie Sandberg, Morten Krogh Petersen and several anonymous peer reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this analysis.

2 The project group consisted of eight male and three female members, and most of us were associate professors aged 40 to 50. Only two female members took part in the conference in Istanbul. According to the special relational ethics involved in auto-ethnography (Ellis *et al*. 2011), which not only implicate my own personal experiences but also several others, I have tried to make my colleagues less identifiable, although they will be able to recognize themselves.

3 The full title is *Hamam: the Turkish Bath* (1997), directed by Ferzan Özpetek.

4 However, I did discuss my interpretation with several of the other participants while we were in Istanbul. And afterwards, I received comments on an earlier version of this article from some of the male participants, who are only discretely represented, according to the relational ethics required in auto-ethnography (Ellis *et al*. 2011)

5 This paper, by Carsten Bagge Laustsen and Bülent Diken, was most recently published as "Letters from the Turkish Bath: A Lacanian Approach to Orientalism" (2007). In *Peripheral Insider. Perspectives on Contemporary Internationalism in Visual Culture*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

6 Retrospectively and from the perspective of what followed, it may seem rather naïve that we thought this would work out smoothly. But this was the case and, because it was unexpected, probably one of the reasons why the experience came to matter so much.

7 Two academic participants, a secretary and the spouse of one of the male participants.

8 And probably also to test ourselves.

9 For a closer examination of the hamam and Orientalism, see Bagge Laustsen and Diken 2007. References to the Orientalist understanding of a hamam were thus a key element in the concrete material–discursive configuration.

10 Of course, a hamam was not an exotic destination for them as it was for we tourists, but perhaps the paper that was being presented could have coaxed them.

11 This dimension could be explored analytically in the same way as gender, but is not pursued further in this article due to the auto-ethnographic and thus subjective form, where the gender issue at the time made the strongest impression.

12 John Law argues (2002, 2004) that absent is co-constitutive for the present: "Manifest absent 'is that which is absent but recognized as relevant to, or represented in, presence" (Law 2004:157).

13 She further develops this point with a criticism of classic actor-network theory (as described first and foremost by Bruno Latour (i.e. 1988)) only taking the successful service-manager's perspective.

14 As mentioned we were two academic participants, a secretary and the spouse of one of the male participants.

15 Using Butler's terminology, one could say that I did not want to become an "abject" – neither subject nor object (Butler 1993).

16 Cussins's argument for choosing the word *choreography* is that invokes a range of dimensions: "materiality, structural constraint, peformativity, discipline, co-dependence of setting and performers, and movement" (1996:604).

17 See Bagge Lausten and Diken 2007, 132–133. The paper also addressed Orientalism discussions and 'othering', and these academic references were woven in and helped to make the situation in all of its complexity.

18 To paraphrase Haraway's points about "Situated Knowledge" (1991).

19 Since it was questions of gender and academic bodies in the hamam, that 'called' me in the first place, this is the dimension I have chosen

to concentrate on in the analysis. Although the ethnic segregation the hamam visit gave rise to also could have called for a deeper analysis.

20 Law uses Louis Althusser's classic interpellation concept in his analysis and heterogenises the concept, which for Althusser is the way in which ideology makes subjectivisation self-evident for the invoked subjects (Law 2000).

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The Museum Shop

Ideological Shifts in the "Miniature Museum"

By Britta Geschwind

A common understanding is that museum shops represent the opposite of mass consumption with their unique selection of beautiful and meaningful things. The copies in the museum shop are assumed to be more "authentic" than the ones found in the tourist shops of the old town of Stockholm, and the history books are supposedly more educational. Copies of archaeological artefacts are exposed in illuminated display cases, which imitate the great museum that encloses them. In many ways, the museum shop can be seen as a miniature museum in itself, reflecting the great, except that the coveted items here can be owned and touched (see Reinius Gustafsson 2008:89).[1]

The tensions between culture and commerce, education and pleasure, sense and sensibility, have a long continuity within museum institutions. This has been a constant balancing act since their blooming in the nineteenth century. The shop seems to be a good place to see these tensions played out and changing over time. This article will focus on the shop in the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm (SHM).

The museum shop is a public space that is peripheral to the debate about the museum's educational and democratic task. However, the organization of knowledge is not confined to exhibitions, which has often been the focus of museological interest. Knowledge is produced, negotiated and mediated throughout the museum body. Things that are taken for granted, perceived as unproblematic, nonetheless convey certain values and ideals, and thus lay the foundation for a lot of other work in the museum (Eriksen 2009:216). Functions, spaces and objects that do not explicitly aim at being educational may create learning and promote certain norms, ideological views, and approaches. The entrance is the first impression visitors get of the museum, but the shop is usually the last impression they get before they leave. For visitors, the shop has become crucial for the museum experience. This has also begun to be recognized in handbooks for museum professionals. Tony Kent has emphasized the role of the museum shop in *extending the learning experience* (e.g. Kent 2010; see also Kotler and Kotler 2008; McIntyre 2010; Theobald 2000). The museum staff visitors will meet are rarely either museum educators or curators. Everyone meets the entrance staff, most people encounter the museum guards and the employees in the museum shop. I will argue that the museum shop is a public space where learning and meaning-making take place, and a space that, just like exhibitions, conveys the museum's identity.

A majority of work on museums have focused on the public, educational role and outreach of museums, especially since the 1990s (Insulander 2006).[2] I see two general patterns in research on museums and learning that I would like to address. Firstly, a common feature is that analysis more often deals with the *results* of museum negotiations, such as problematization of exhibition texts and semiotics, than with how knowledge and mediations are shaped and change. Secondly, analysis of *exhibitions* predominates over other spaces in the museum. But what do I mean by calling the shop a public space for *learning*? Within the research field, as in museum practice and

cultural policy, there are a variety of concepts relating to the museum's outreach, educational practices and practitioners. How these terms vary over time says something about the change in perceptions and ideologies of the educational mission. In a Swedish context, the word *förmedling*, 'mediation', has increasingly been banned from museum discourse, as it often refers to a one-way transmission of knowledge. This mirrors the research in English speaking countries (see e.g. Falk, Dierking and Foutz 2007; Hein 1998; Hooper-Greenhill 2007, 1999). *Lärande* and *kommunikation*, 'learning' and 'communication' have become the terms most widely used and accepted. These terms are used to emphasize that learning is not (or should not be) a one-way communication, but instead about participation and co-creation (see e.g. Insulander 2010; Ljung 2009:11, 89; Petersen 2011).[3] The concepts of communication and learning thus have ideological, democratic and sometimes normative motives. However, my view is that the terms can be used unreflectively in museum practices and can actually hide, "black-box", and simplify the power relations between the individual and the institution (Latour 2005, 1999).[4] The museum still has the educational responsibility.

Eileen Hooper Greenhill's concept of learning defines in a broad sense what learning could be and identifies several ways of informal learning. Learning is not only about knowledge, she states; it is also about skills, behaviour, enjoyment and inspiration, attitudes and values. This is developed in what the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) has termed *Generic Learning Outcomes*, GLO, another buzzword in the museum sector today (Hooper-Greenhill 2007:52–56).[5]

> Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve increase in or deepening of skills, knowledge, understanding, values, feelings, attitudes and the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and the desire to learn more (Hooper-Greenhill 2007:32).

This view of learning offers ways to move beyond the usual framework of how and where learning and meaning-making occur. Spaces and tangible objects may promote certain norms, knowledge and approaches. Material spaces can be gendered as well as imbued with notions of race and class. The relations between human actors, material design and spatial dispositions play a crucial role in the formation of knowledge and power. Rooms are not static; they are social constructions, which can be viewed as *extended social relations* (see Massey 1994).

In Swedish cultural policy, as in other western countries, the attitudes regarding commercial activities in museums have changed over the decades. In the national cultural policy bill from 1974,[6] one of the main objectives was to "counteract the negative effects of commercialism within the cultural field". In the new cultural policy from 2009, this objective was removed. Instead it emphasizes that there is no given contradiction between commercial sustainability and artistic quality, and attention is given to the ability of culture to contribute to economically sustainable development.[7] Ideological sentiment of course shifts over time, but not even the museum building itself is quite as fixed

and solid as archival drawings and the strict façade appear. Architecture, objects and people are in constant rearrangement, which creates new contact points in the network of the museum, and cuts off others. Some changes occur quietly while others are more dramatic. As Suzanne MacLeod has shown, museum architecture cannot simply be viewed as the outcome of an architect. It is a product of social and cultural processes and is shaped by its use (MacLeod 2005:10, 20–21). Organizational schemes of museums constantly change, but what they mean, and what consequences they actually have, will often turn out in the form of shifts in materiality and space. Changing attitudes, mindsets and ideologies are interrelated to (and translated in) material changes and spatial shifts. Museum functions literally "takes place" in different ways, depending on how they are valued and assigned meaning. Shops, cafés, workshops and entrances swell, shrink, and move around in the house over time. Tangible transformations, like the spatial movements of the shop, which might seem trivial may be more important than they appear, and reflect the changing of views within the organization.

In the postmodern consumer society of today, a growing number of museum shops are being established. Today it is almost inconceivable that a museum would not have a shop, or some form of sale. Most museums also have some kind of café. Cultural historian Anne Eriksen talks about the museum shops as genre markers of museums (2009:15–17). In the Swedish museum sector, there is much talk about the museums' three K's, perceived as vital to consider in running a successful museum: *Kissa, Kaffe, Köpa*, meaning 'Pee, Coffee, and Buy'. In a slightly less cynical version, there is also a fourth K; "Kultur", Culture.[8] Museum shops live their own lives, often without coordination of statistics and education. Some are profitable and provide funding for museum activities, while others make a loss. Since the mid-1800s, restaurants, tearooms and coffee shops have had their place in or adjacent to the museums, although they were not included as obvious, taken-for-granted parts of the museum repertoire. During the twentieth century, museums often had some form of sales, at least of programmes and other written material, but the museum shop was hardly a genre marker until quite recently.

In recent decades, new and different expectations of museums together with reduced government funding have pressured museums to act as businesses (Kotler and Kotler 2008), and the museum shop has been elevated to an important element of the museum brand (Kent 2009:68). At the same time, these shifts have attracted criticism for their commercialization. The question of what museum shops are, or should be, has changed over the years. Should they be viewed as parts of the museum's educational activities, rooms for experiences, or competitive commercial activities? I will now give a brief history of the museum shop in the SHM.

What to Sell and Why?

When the new museum building of SHM officially opened in 1943 the man at the entrance desk mainly sold programmes, museum catalogues and postcards. It was a plain wooden desk, modestly positioned

to the right of the gates, in the darkest corner of the entrance hall and freezing cold in the winter. The museum did not have a cafeteria, despite the fact that there had been plans for one already in 1927. The building progress of the museum experienced two major setbacks. First the economic crisis of the 1920s, then the World War. Due to shortage of funds, the management did not prioritize the cafe and other planned facilities, including spaces for educational activities. Actually, a coffee machine for visitors, together with a cigarette vending machine, was not installed until the late 1960s. It was installed despite some internal protests from curators who did not think coffee had anything to do with museums.[9] During the 1950s replicas of prehistoric jewellery were developed from the collections, and the sales were moved from the entrance desk to a simple stand the entrance hall.[10] Now, it was instead the female museum attendant (*museivärdinnan*) who managed the sales in the entrance hall. Early in the 1970s, a more professional shop-like glass counter was added together with a bookstand. The supply of replicas and especially books grew steadily. Eventually, the working conditions in the often cold and draughty entrance hall were deemed impossible. After complaints from the staff, the activities moved to a room adjacent to the entrance where a simple cafeteria (without a kitchen) was also installed. The first time I have seen the word "museum shop" appear in the museum archive is in the late 1970s. This speech draft written for a meeting for museum shops in Stockholm in 1979 by the financial manager of the shop at that time is telling for views of the museum shop's mission and meaning.

> Why do we have museum shops at all? To make money, or because visitors want to buy souvenirs. The fundamental motive for [the museum shops'] existence on another level: they constitute *a logical part of the museum's educational task*. By purchasing something from the museum shop, the visitor brings something from the museum home – something to touch, look at, talk about, or pass on to a friend. The object becomes an extension of the museum visit.
>
> It can also be a book that allows visitors to learn more about what he has seen at the museum or in areas affected by the museum's exhibits. Therefore, the museum shops' assortment of souvenirs and books should be related to the museum's permanent collections and temporary exhibitions, and reflect the museum's image...
>
> Add another reason for the existence of the museum shops: if they make efforts to keep the requirements for both quality and taste in the items they sell, the museum shops can even help *strengthen people's sense of good quality and good taste* and even teach young people to gradually see the difference between the products of the museum shop and the ones offered in cheap souvenir shops.[11]

The Museum shop was primarily about service, to reflect the museums image, to be an educator and preceptor of good taste. Its economic function was considered secondary. In the 1980s and 1990s, the museum shop was generally called "the bookstore".[12] Between the 1970s and 1990s, the supply of books had grown steadily, and by 1995 the museum shop kept around 2,000 titles in stock. At that time, the shop manager was a woman with experience of – and contacts in – the publishing world. The large and specialized book supply was perceived as the unique niche. Museum professionals and students presumed that the shop would keep new theses in archaeology.[13] For a long time the museum had a strong connection to the Department of Archaeolo-

gy which placed part of the teaching at the museum. The shop kept all the necessary textbooks for the archaeology students. It also kept popular books and children's books in Swedish and English. A shop manager in the early 1990s compares the museum shop to a *library*. She explains:

> At that time, there were only simple signs [at the museum]. There were catalogues, but there were no videos, slideshows… It [the visit] built a lot on looking at an object and on self-understanding, to get what you were looking at. It is not certain that you do that, so then; you could sit and watch books at the shop, compare. The *Museum Shop becomes like a library*. I can go there to seek more knowledge, to immerse myself. I do not even need buy these things, but I can … and maybe I can ask them [the staff] if I want to ask anything (Taped interview, 5 October 2012).

The shop could not only be likened to a library by its range, but also in terms of its design and function. The shop had by then moved to a space of its own, called the "Red Room", behind a new cafeteria. In a photo of the shop taken in 2001, the analogy with the library is still understandable. The walls are bright and the floor covered with a light brown carpet. The impression is pleasant and a bit mundane. At a round table, central to the room, a person sits in a relaxed manner. Four chairs upholstered in burgundy fabric seem to invite visitors to take a brief rest. Behind the table, a woman in a wheelchair is inspecting the supply of postcards on a well-stocked stand. Bookshelves take up the left wall, where a few visitors are browsing and looking. Light flows from the windows on the right, between them are large posters and more bookshelves. Some promotional products are visible in the picture, blue ties, but there are no colourful textiles, eatables, T-shirts, toys or other small items that characterize the shop today. The educational task is evident. The shop manager describes the meeting with visitors in the early 1990s:

> I did not want them just to walk away with a necklace. I wanted them to get to know; what kind of necklace? Who may have used them? And how old are they? … and so on. Instead of just "Oh, I like red, I want this"… (Taped interview, 5 October 2012).

The shop's primary role appears to have been to provide an educational service to stray visitors, tourists, archaeologists and students. Again, this is emphasized over the goal of making money.

In 2005, large spatial rearrangements were launched. In connection with the construction of the museum's new permanent exhibition "Prehistoric Times" (*Forntider*), the shop had to move, since the plan at the time was to utilize that room for the exhibition.[14] Substantial investments were planned and carried out for the entrance and the shop. For the first time the shop would get a permanent, specially designed space built adjacent to the entrance hall (which also received a facelift with the help of an architectural firm). An objective of this placement was to create conditions for increased sales.

Before the shop moved to its current location, it had a temporary and obscure location behind the restaurant in the exhibition "Prehistoric Times". In a sense, the shop was in a liminal "in-between state" where the tensions between educational and commercial demands became more evident. The relatively novel female shop manager was strongly urged by management to operate more com-

mercially and reverse the shop's descending figures. At the same time, there was still pressure to live up to the educational role. Expectations that the shop would have the "right" supply to represent the museum coincided and collided with the fact that a new range of more "saleable" items had been brought in: for instance, inexpensive things appealing to children, such as fridge magnets, key chains, rubber skeletons, toys and quills. Sometimes museum professionals, archaeologists or museum educators gave feedback on book titles or other things they did not think fitted into the museum shop, things they perceived as too populist, low-quality or factually wrong. The push and pull between different ideological views and goals could be observed on the bookshelves. Books were still an important part of the supply and they "fought" for space on the most prominent shelves. Would a commercial book on Viking food, translated into several European languages, get the best space, the most recent archaeological dissertation, or perhaps an educational crafts book for children about the Iron Age?

After two temporary and relatively invisible placements in the house, in 2007 the shop moved to its current location adjacent to the entrance hall and in the passage to a room for temporary exhibitions. An architectural firm designed the new interior in exclusive materials with bookshelves around the walls. However, when the shop had finally moved to its new location, books had become just another product that needed to sell well in order to get a shelf. The shop was no longer perceived as a bookstore or library.

A new shop manager was hired in 2010. One of her first measures was to sell out old and niche books that did not sell, which she referred to as "shelf warmers". When I met her in April 2011, she described the problems she experienced with the shop's interior. She had to work hard to gain a "shop feeling" she said. With limited resources and ingenuity she tried to enable the exposure of various products although the interior, more suited for books than souvenirs, worked against her intentions. She struggled to transform a "living room" into a shop, she said.

Through time, the range of the shop has changed and it has become more varied. Today you can buy everything from books, replicas of jewellery, fabric and glass, to T-shirts, Dala horses, crispbread, toys, paper napkins, miniature runestones, and soap, to give some examples. The shop has much expanded its supply aimed at children. It evokes the senses of smell, touch and taste as well as sight.

In 2010, the question of whether museum shops are, or should be, part of the museum's educational activities, rooms for experiences or competitive commercial activities came to a head. EU competition rules generated a government decision to avoid unfair competition through state subsidies. It meant that museum shops were obliged to bear their own expenses, but could not make a profit. What the museum management primarily expected of the new shop manager was to get the shop to pay its own expenses in accordance with the government's new directives.[15]

The museum shop has moved into a new state. One could say that the shop has increasingly become a commercial shop,

and less driven by ideals of popular education. There is no financial room for narrow archaeological literature. Nevertheless, there are still more or less implicit expectations that the shop should be part of the museum's popular education assignments and public face. The shop manager talks about what visitors expect of the shop. She says they expect it to deliver authentic stories about the artefacts they are buying, or looking at. In that sense, visitors' expectations of the museum as "popular educator" or "library" still linger. Despite the fact that the management explicitly hired her because of her competence in commercial trade, and no requirements of experience from the museum sector were made, she described it as sometimes demanding to stand alone in the shop without this background. The manager and staff I have met have talked about the importance of knowledge: to provide factual knowledge about the archaeological replicas. With the help of little notes by the exclusive replica jewellery in gold and silver, the shop delivers information about where the originals were found in Sweden and from what period they are – just like the unique artefacts in the traditional museum display. The exclusiveness of copied artefacts is recognized. At the same time, product development based on the collections does not have to be sold exclusively at SHM, she says. To sell products developed by the museum to a retail chain was one of several ideas she had on how to achieve the goal of making the shop financially sustainable, a way to work around the fact that the profit of the shop is dependent on the number of museum visitors.

The Staff and the Status Change of the Museum Shop

When a former shop manager talks of the shop's symbolic positioning within the organization around 25 years ago, she describes it as "at the back, at the bottom". It might be relevant to add here that the staff of the shop have always been predominantly female. The shop's relation to the museum management at that time she describes as bureaucratic, and her position as rather weak in relation to the administrative manager and the management. She exemplifies the tensions between contrasting goals in everyday work: To realize a goal from management to reduce the shop's deficit, she planned to reduce the stock value in relation to sales. Her opinion was that the wide product range did not work financially in relation to the small turnover. However, she found that she had very little manoeuvring space to make changes. It proved difficult to lift something out of the assortment. There were more or less explicit expectations that the shop would constantly obtain objects linked to all the temporary exhibitions, she says. In this sense, the products of the shop appear to have had a similarity to the museum's other acquisitions; once incorporated into the museum's immortality they could not "escape".

Until quite recently, the staff of the SHM shop normally had a degree in archaeology, history or ethnology. Often archaeology students were recruited as shop attendants, young people who sought a place in the museum's renowned bastion. That the relatively low status and mostly female-coded work in the shop, as in the entrance and pedagogic programmes with

children, has been a stepping-stone for more prestigious jobs within the museum is consistent with other museums. According to the shop and entrance manager of Nordiska Museet, the national museum of cultural history, the shop attendants usually had degrees in ethnology or history before. Today, attractive competences are instead service orientation and experience from the tourism sector. However, an education in design is an advantage for getting a job in the shop at Nordiska Museet, the manager says. She was employed on the basis of her experience in the travel industry.[16] The present shop manager of the Swedish History Museum was also hired for her qualifications from the private sector, from a well-known fashion retail chain.

The shop has gained higher status within the institution today than 25 or even ten years ago. This can be illustrated by the museum shop's spatial relocations. While the shop has moved towards the entrance hall, from "inside out", the office of the shop manager has literally moved "from the bottom up". Until the 2000s, the staff and manager of the shop had what can best be described as a small closet-like room behind the shop, big enough for a coffee-maker. During the mid 2000s the shop manager got a small, plain office of her own at the back of the museum on the ground floor. A few years ago the present shop manager was given a big pleasant office in the upper floor, and as a result of a fairly recently implemented change in the organization, the office moved again. The department formerly known as "Media and Communication" (MK), to which the shop and the entrance previously belonged, merged with the unit "Exhibitions and Learning" (UL). The new department was named "Communication and Audience". The shop manager moved to a new big room, this time placed in the shared office spaces for exhibitions, education, public relations and communications. Marketing, sales, branding, education and learning were now placed under the same umbrella. This process had been going on for a while. A few years ago, MK and UL had their office spaces on different floors and had very little contact surfaces. The museum director was determined to change this.[17] MK moved from the ground floor to the upper floor, the same floor as UL, but they still had not much contact. The department's staff was moved together and are now placed intentionally mixed, side by side, in the museum's top floor. According to staff, this has had a major impact on the educational work. Another important measure by the museum manager was to build a large lunch room, where employees from different departments would meet naturally.

When the shop was perceived as a library and bookstore, when it was viewed as integrated in the overall educational task of the museum, and its commercial role was downplayed, its status within the museum was quite low. Now, when the shop is a shop more on its own terms, economy is in the foreground, and the staff are recruited on other merits, the shop has gained higher status.

The Shop as a Democratic Space?

In the shop it is possible to talk out loud, and the artefacts can be touched and weighed in the hand. As visitor, you can

try the mouth harp or put your hand into the colourful Viking glass beads, replicas of the ones you saw in the Viking exhibition. The shop could be viewed as a more forgiving space than the entrance and the exhibitions in the sense that there is no pressure to "act as a museum visitor", only as a consumer. In that respect, you might say that museum shops can provide a feeling of security, and are more democratic in a sense; today most of us are accustomed consumers regardless of social background. In the book *Museum Branding*, Margot A. Wallace describes the museum shop as a space where visitors can feel comfortable with speaking out loud, relaxing and sharing their reactions to the museum (Wallace 2006:84; see also Kent 2010:75). This is consistent with how the shop manager of the early 1990s describes this meeting-place quality of the shop, as does the manager today. The former describes the shop as a space where visitors do not need to prove that they know things, and a place where you can ask simple questions. "They did not see us as authorities," she says. The present shop manager describes the shop as a "centre".

> A thousand questions we get here. The entrance gets a lot standard questions, but the shop is a *centre*. When people have gone through the museum, when they've had coffee and then they come here… they have experienced a lot of things and have a lot of questions (Taped interview, 7 April 2011).[18]

The quotation above, and the previous description of the museum as a "library", reflects how the museum shop can be perceived as a "free zone" where it is possible to relax, talk and ask questions. In the shop there are always assistants to meet, and as a customer you are always right. In this sense, it can truly be viewed as a democratic public space.

However, it is important to note that public spaces can be both inclusive and exclusive, depending on who is perceived as the public.[19] Things which can be inclusive regarding class might at the same time create boundaries regarding ethnicity or gender. If we view the shop as an "extension of learning" (Kent 2010), what histories then is it possible to literally bring home from the museum? What experiences does the shop bring to the museum visit?

The selection of products in the shop has, to varying degrees, always been linked to the exhibitions and collections. However, certain eras get more space than others do. The shop connects to what I would like to call *emblematic time-spaces*, a few attractive spaces of time that have become emblems of a nation, group or region and circulates widely in various fields (see Hammarlund 1990).[20] The Nordic Viking Age can be viewed as such an emblematic time-space with a long continuity – a time-space which is coded masculine.

As the museum visit is included as a tourism activity which competes with other experiences in Stockholm, it is important to attract the many foreign tourists who arrive on cruise ships. Vikings are a selling brand for the museum at large, as well as for the shop, and the museum has recently worked on strengthening the Viking brand.[21] But as the museum teachers are actively working on problematizing the Viking Age, and work against masculine Viking stereotypes in museum programmes and exhibitions, the shop instead

needs to emphasize these well-known and desirable stereotypes.

In the last two years I have repeatedly studied the shop's products aimed at children: what they are, and how they relate to current exhibitions. Many products are linked to the Viking Age and the Middle Ages (increasingly, also to more recent history). Swords, knights' costumes, cardboard castles and plastic warriors are displayed separated from pink princess dresses, golden crowns, handbags and tinsel. The toys are clearly gender-divided.

The shop manager brought the gender-divided toys up as we walked around in the shop. She told me that there had been comments on the shop's products and displays from other museum professionals in the house. One thing that employees from the Unit for Exhibitions and Learning complained about, was precisely the gender segregation in the shops' products aimed at children. This choice had a thought-out purpose based on her professional experience of commerce. She explained that it simply sells better to divide the toys, and that one must make it easy for the customer.

> We sell … We cannot base [our activity] on values. We cannot have a gender perspective on girls' and boys' wear, pink and blue. I mean, our display is usually very divided. But we can definitely do some … Unisex display, because one can do that… (Taped interview, 7 April 2011).

She went on to explain that the objective of the shop is to sell products, not to comment on feminism, what party to vote for, or what God to believe in. This is ambiguous, however. At the same time, I noticed that the bookshelves in another part of the shop demonstrated examples of children's literature with a critical approach to normative gender perceptions.

Conclusion

With a changed perspective on the relation to museum visitors, switching from terms like "education" and "mediation" to "learning" and "communication", and with an increasing focus on the experience-oriented museum using words like "customer orientation", a previously sharp boundary between different public spaces and functions has become blurred, as between advertising and educational content (see e.g. Holdgaard and Ekelund Simonsen, 2011). This can be viewed in the organizational spatial changes mentioned above, where two departments previously separate, have merged.

During recent years, management have steered towards increasingly viewing the museum experience as a product to sell, and viewing visitors as customers whose demands and interests must be met.[22] The changes in the museum shop can be linked to what the historian Jonas Grundberg calls a transition to a new state of society, with a growing "consumption-oriented economic logic" with increasing commercialization of a cultural and aesthetic realm, as the previous (often sharp) boundary between a cultural and a commercial sphere is relaxed (Grundberg 2005:273).

The Swedish History Museum, together with other museums, was given a government mission during the period 2011–2012, to produce data and develop methods for new and better ways of working with gender issues in exhibitions (Ku2011/557/KA). Three million Swedish crowns were allocated to SHM, and

the project will be reported in spring 2013. This investment reflects a commonly held view (in museum research, education and policy) that the public work of democratic learning only takes place at certain designated places within the Museum. In the government decree or the museum's translation of the mission, there was no emphasis on equality in organization, or in other representations within the museum. My conviction is that the entire museum ought to be treated as a public ideological space. Learning takes place also in the periphery of museum education, in "the corner of the eye", so to speak. Organizing is not just top-down. It comes in different materials and spaces and is made throughout the whole organizational structure. Spaces that visitors move through cannot be viewed in isolation from each other (Massey 1994). To be a truly democratic public institution, giving visitors new views and understandings of gender equality, it is important to take in the entire museum with all its functions. The museum has gender-coded rooms and work functions outside the exhibitions (see e.g. Friberg (ed.) 2005, Levin 2010, Massey 1994).[23] The fact that toys for boys are aimed at "doing things" and toys for girls are aimed at "looking good" mediates messages about gender, not least to children, as does the fact that service functions like the shop, entrance desk and cafeteria are mainly managed by women (de Wit Sandström 2010).[24] When I did most of the observations in the shop in 2011, the space behind the shop was used for an exhibition aimed at children aged 6–11; today the space is used as a children's workshop. As a visitor, you walk through the shop with its toys on the way to the space behind. You can touch, smell and feel the heaviness of objects in your hands. Many things are placed close to the floor and attract little hands to touch, stroke and pick them up. The tactile sensuous aspects of the shop would be interesting to explore further, connecting to thoughts on the embodied character of learning (see Hooper-Greenhill 2007: 170–173). The shop might have a special influence and potential for learning in this regard.

We should take museum shops more seriously, not view them as superficial, additions to the "real" museum experience. The shops could be (and are often) viewed as the essences or the brand of the museum. They can be viewed as "miniature museums". What happens then when the shop is not in sync with the messages and perspectives conveyed through their exhibitions or educational programmes? In my research on the SHM it has become evident that different views of gender roles and equality are played out in exhibitions, educational programmes and in the shop.

The shop is constantly changing. Competing demands and expectations are negotiated in the shop's products, its interior and its location in the museum building. Tension arises here between the commercial and the cultural, the educational and the entertaining, sense and sensibility. The shop's physical location and movements in the house, as well as its location in the organization, reflect different ideals of what the museum shop, but in the extended sense, the museum can and should be.

The museum shop has rarely been treated as a meaning-making space. If it were

seen as a "miniature museum", comparable to the museum's exhibition spaces, it is reasonable to think that its special qualities as public meeting places could be used to make the museum more inclusive, provided that this is a goal.

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Notes

1 Gustafsson [Reinius] (2008) writes about the sensual dimensions of artefacts and how museum shops provide compensational access to the untouchable objects of museum displays.
2 In Sweden these perspectives have been discussed by Peter Aronsson, Cecilia Axelsson, Vaike Fors, Wera Gran, Eva Insulander, Magdalena Hillström, Lennart Palmqvist, and Stefan Bohman, to mention a few.
3 See Holdgaard and Ekelund Simonsen (2011), and Petersen (2011) for a similar discussion about the terms in Denmark.
4 Latour introduce the concept of "black box" in his work, *Science in Action* (1987). In his work *Pandora's Hope* (1999) Latour describes "black boxing" as "the way scientific and technical work is made invisible by its own success. When a machine runs efficiently, when a matter of fact is settled, one need focus only on its inputs and outputs and not on its internal complexity".
5 GLO has gained its popularity in the museum sector, not least because it offers methods to measure what was before thought immeasurable: the quality of museum learning.
6 Kulturpropositionen (The Culture Bill) 1974, Proposition 1974:28.
7 Regeringens proposition (The Culture Bill) Tid för kultur 2009/10:3, page 26.
8 The expression the three K's is borrowed from the tourism industry. I have come across the phrase in statements by many museum professionals. The Director of the Swedish History Museum called them "the whole three K's" when I interviewed him on 12 January 2012. The exhibition manager at Kalmar Läns Museum claims to work according to the model "kultur, kaffe, kissa, köpa". See the e-article "Nya sätt att locka besökare" at www.riksutstallningar.se.
9 The museum lecturer (*museilektor*) at that time. Taped phone interview, 13 December 2012.
10 Communications Manager (*informationschef*) in the 1970s and 1980s. Taped interview, 28 September 2012.
11 Notes for speech on meeting of museum shops in Stockholm, 29 November 1979. Antikvariska topografiska Arkivet (ATA), SHM Butiken (the shop) box 252, non-listed material.
12 Shop manager 1989–92, taped interview 12 October.
13 Exhibition producer, taped interview, 17 August 2011, former shop manager taped interview, 12 October 2012.
14 Head of security, taped interview 26 August 2011.
15 According to the 2011 appropriation directions from the Government, the Swedish History Museum shall, "as far as possible", cover its own expenses. Until 30 June the same year the museum had to prove to the Department of Culture how this would be achieved.
16 The shop and entrance manager of Nordiska Museet, Taped interview, October 2011.
17 Museum Director, taped interview, 12 January 2011.
18 Shop manager of SHM, taped interview 7 November 2011.
19 For an extensive, important and critical discussion of the term "public" in museums related to the public sphere and democratic public space, see Jennifer Barrett 2011.
20 The term *emblematic* I have borrowed from Anders Hammarlund.
21 See e.g. Marketing plan (*marknadsplan*) 21 december 2009.
22 This may be observed through Marketing plan, policy documents and benchmarks for profiling, and marketing strategies. see e.g. business plan and budget 2011:15. In December 2009 the museum developed a brand platform (*Varumärkesplattform*), and the docu-

ment "license for the brand – a checklist to use when selecting activities to identify the activity with the brand" (*Körkort för varumärket – checklista att använda vid val av aktiviteter för att identifiera om aktiviteten stämmer med varumärket*).

23 The term *gender-coded* is grounded in the significance of the room and space as physical, material, lived reality for how gender is made and reproduced, and how cultural notions, social practices and power relations are parts of this process.

24 SIMBA –Stockholms museibutikers förening, Focus group discussion, April 3.

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Interviews

Taped and transcribed interviews are in the possession of the researcher.

Feasting on Matter?

Material Culture, Teenage Boys and Doing the Right Thing

By Pia Olsson

I am sitting with my young interviewee in the school's meeting room. We are going to begin an interview which I have planned to deal with the meanings of material culture in the life and social relations of the boys taking part in my research project. On the big table between us I have placed my notebook, a small recorder and my mobile phone from where I can check the time (in the strictly scheduled life of secondary school the time for the interviews is limited as the pupils need to get back to their classes). Before I have had time to suggest the theme for the day's discussion the things on the table catch the interest of my interviewee Miro, an eighth grader: How much did I pay for the phone? Where did I get the recorder? Whose is it? How expensive was it? (Miro 13.10.2010). Technical devices and their value arose by itself as a topic of discussion, strengthening my preconceptions about the things that might be significant for boys in secondary school.[1]

The discussion I had about material culture with my teenage informant was part of my larger fieldwork I did in one secondary school in Helsinki during 2009–2012. I made observations and interviews in the school during three school years, following the path of one age group through the whole secondary school, in principle. My wider interest was in the way the young people experienced different kinds of differences in their social milieu in this one specific school. The themes we discussed in our conversations ranged from differences connected with cultural or ethnic background to different youth cultures, genders or learners. During the fieldwork process I also became aware of the meaning of material culture as one possible signifier of differences among teenagers, both through my own observations and through the public discussion that was taking place at the same time in the Finnish newspapers.

In this article my informants – schoolboys in seventh and eighth grade – are given the floor to argue about their relationship to material culture. The focus of my article is on the ways the boys positioned themselves with regard to both the material culture around them and to the discourses dealing with it. My observations here only give a background understanding of the ways I have raised certain themes for discussion, both in the interviews and here in this article, and my aim is not to contradict with my own observations the ways in which the boys articulate their ideas about their attitudes and practices concerning materiality.[2]

The school in question is situated in the wider downtown area of Helsinki. It has classes only for the secondary school grades, which means that the pupils in the school are mostly aged between 13 and 16. At the time, the school had around 400 pupils, of which some 20 per cent had a transnational background. There was also a class for pupils with learning difficulties whose pupils took an active part in the research. The starting point for my wider context was the viewpoint of intersectionality as I have tried to understand the formation of social relationships among young people. The idea of different kinds of differences affecting the situational and more permanent hierarchical relationships emphasizing the experiences of the actors seemed like a natural starting point for my research (see Lykke 2005; Nash 2008; de los Reyes & Mulinari 2005).

In the interviews analysed here it has been difficult, however, to find distinct differences related to the boys' background in their reactions to and articulation of the surrounding material world. This may be because of the relatively small group of interviewees – nine boys altogether – for this special theme. What their ideas represent here are the ways urban Finnish teenage boys may become conscious of the meanings of material culture. The interview situations have certainly been part of this processing; sometimes even the idea of speaking about material culture in the context of my wider research theme aroused some wonder. Also, the circumstances that the boys were responding to questions posed by an outsider (a female of roughly the same age as their mothers) and by a researcher whose research theme may have appeared still a bit hazy at the moment, and that the interviews took place at the beginning of the fieldwork process must all have affected the emphasis in the interviews.

Most of the approximately 30 pupils who took part in my research were boys, and this is why my focus here too is on the world of things seen from the viewpoint of boys. The interviews were conducted both individually and as group interviews. The aim in the group interviews was to create an atmosphere where the boys could discuss the themes between themselves from their own starting points, at the same time as they gave an opportunity to test the researcher's preliminary interpretations and impressions (see Ukkonen 2006:183). The idea of holding group interviews was a result of a negotiating process between me and the boys. For most of them it seemed to be a more relaxed and natural way of discussing the themes than the individual interviews we started with. It seemed that in the group situations they were more confident that they were talking about the "right" themes within a theme. This is typical of group interviews, as they are seen as situations that trigger new and unforeseen observations. What is interesting in analysing the forthcoming comments dealing with material culture is the way group interviews have also been considered as a method where the pressure to give right or normative answers is smaller than in individual interviews (Pietilä 2010:226–227; Valtonen 2005:241).

The dynamics in the group interviews varied both from one interview to another and between the different groups. Perhaps the biggest difference was in the ways the boys understood their own role as narrators. For some it seemed to be natural to take the main roles in the situations, while for others it was less natural to talk about their own experiences, condensed in these situations into a few words. In most of the meetings where material culture was discussed, however, the situation proceeded with me mostly being the active party questioning the boys, which might indicate that the theme itself was not the easiest one for the boys to analyse or to connect with the main theme of different kinds of differences.

Both my own preliminary understanding as a researcher and that of the public discourse about the possible meanings of material culture for the teenagers seem to be constructed on an understanding of the way young people's possibilities for consumption have changed in recent decades. Our contemporary environment is thick with things, and this is visible also in the

lives of the young. The increased free time, the consumption culture connected to it, and urbanization were all part of the process creating the modern consumption society in Finland from the 1960s at the latest. At the same time, youth as a group began to take shape as an independent target group for consumption and advertising. As economic resources started to grow, the supply in youth fashion, for example, grew. It has been estimated that in 1985 some 10,500 Finnish marks (about 2,100 euros in contemporary currency) per household was spent on youth consumption. All in all, in the 1980s the personal expendable resources of young people had increased by a third. Simultaneously, consumption habits became more uniform regardless, for example, of the place of residence. Even though the 1990s and its economic depression influenced also the ways children and young people were able to consume and, although the period labelled as the consumer fest also invoked resistance, the interest and the possibilities for youth consumerism increased towards the turn of the millennium (Heinonen 2003:456, 458, 469, 471–472).

How has this development affected young people's attitudes towards things and the way meanings are assigned to them? The viewpoint of material culture, emphasizing subject–object relations has its challenges with the "endless proliferation of criteria of mattering" when asking "which things matter to whom and why" (Miller 1998:15). In the end this cannot be the aim here either. Here the meanings represented are used to create an understanding of the way we – or more precisely the youngsters – see and feel about material culture in a society filled with material things more than ever before (Lehtonen 2008:83, 90; see Löfgren 1997), and the way they not only verbalize their relationship with the objects but also with the different underlying discourses about material culture in their comments.

The first impulse to take material culture as one of the indicators of the different kinds of differences in my fieldwork came from an article published in the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* in December 2009, right after I had started my fieldwork in the school. The story was headed "The Law of the Secondary School", and the idea was to list the different factors that could affect to the way one can be treated in secondary school, in means of either inclusion or exclusion. The factors ranged from clothes and music to hobbies and ideologies (*Helsingin Sanomat* 20.12.2009). In our meetings we analysed the story and the boys commented on its interpretations from the viewpoint of their own school environment.

Another piece of news that drew my attention towards youth material culture was a result of an inquiry that was published in October 2010. According to the inquiry made by an organization focusing on children's welfare, the teenagers who considered themselves poor felt they were left aside by the others. In this inquiry 1,162 young persons aged 13–18 expressed their opinions. According to the story the young are able to read the public signs of wealth, which were considered to be expensive clothes and entertainment electronics. Outward appearance affected the way the respondents felt they were acknowledged in their circle of friends (HS.fi 27.10.2010). After reading the sto-

ry we had another discussion with the boys about the material "status symbols" young boys might find important. However, the concept of "status symbol" was brought forward by me and not by the boys. All in all, reflecting now on the use of these newspaper articles as a basis for discussion makes me wonder whether they may have created a situation where the boys felt that they were put in a position to defend their generation – or at least themselves – against arguments indicating them to be materialistically oriented.

When things are considered as consumer goods they become symbols and indicators of social relations and values and as such they reflect the many aspects of our social life (Lehtinen 2005:200). The increased consumption can be seen in relation to the way we regard material culture. The social and symbolic use of things has been emphasized at the expense of their practical and functional use. This has also affected the way research on material culture has focused on things as signs, icons, symbols and performances. This has meant that the relationship between the object and its creator and the object and its user has also become an area of interest in research. The object can be seen as a factor in its user's identity formation and as part of his/her self (Korhonen 1999: 28; Miller 1998:17; Szarvas 2008:162).

Reading the following analysis, however, it is good to keep in mind that the aim of the interviews was to look for the differences that may be comprised in the social environment. This means that not all the aspects of material culture and its meanings are necessarily present here. For example, certain specific objects had other kinds of meanings than one connected to their social-symbolic value or consumption, such as a memento from one's other home country, a collection of cartoons, or sportswear used in an important hobby (Johannes 7.10.2010; Otso 28.10.2010; Jani 28.10.2010).

In contemporary research on material culture it has been emphasized that an item in itself is only a voiceless witness if we do not know the story behind it. In cultural research the material object is the third party, an instrument for interaction between the researcher and the interviewee (Lehtinen 2005:187, 189). However, in the interviews represented here, the material things themselves were not present except those the boys happened to have with them as part of their everyday belongings. In my article I will analyse how the narration of things and their meanings is formed when narration happens without the things themselves. In the end, the questions and conversation themes I presented in the interviews were woven into the boys' personal values and self-understanding even more than I could anticipate beforehand, and this was also reflected in the way the boys responded to the theme. This is why I first analyse the situation where the boys were put into a discussion about their material culture and then concentrate on the theme that received most attention in the conversations: their clothing and external habitus in general.

"Present-day Youth" and Objects as Status Symbols

In our discussions with the boys, the most surprising observation was how little meaning they wanted to give to the material world in their own social lives. They

connected the greater meaning of objects to the earlier years of their life, not to the time of the discussions. In many parts of the interviews the fact that in the primary school the newest and the most exclusive model of a mobile phone, a mountain bike or a games console might have been important was brought out (Arttu 6.10.2010; Johannes 7.10.2010). In the secondary school the situation was different, however. "I can't bear to feast on things", was the point made by Tuomas. The phenomenon of "feasting on things" was visible in the other phrases the boys used *(lesota*; *leijua*). Feasting referred here particularly to the way objects could be used to build social hierarchies. In the same interview situation Tuomas pointed out that it was important for him to express his hip hop attitude with his clothes – this did not, however, represent the feasting factor (Tuomas 6.10.2010). Expressing oneself and one's world of values was something that he did not want to see in connection with the function of showing off based on material values.

When we had the discussion about objects as status symbols the boys were in their eighth grade, and this may be one reason the age factor was emphasized so much. They were not the youngest in the school anymore and the pupils in the seventh grade were looked at with some astonishment:

Verneri: [W]hen I look at these new seventh-graders, that's the future. I mean, I'm too old-fashioned, I'm too old, I don't understand these present fashion things. I don't listen to contemporary music, I listen to old music, from the 80s, 90s… My style is old-fashioned, that way. So I wonder if this is present culture, what now? I just can't…
Johannes: It's just like you would have heard what I just said, I said the same thing exactly.
Verneri: I am not able to connect mentally with the culture of today's world, I mean with the youth culture. I think how it will be when I send my own kids to school… (Johannes and Verneri 7.10.2010).

I connect the tone of the discussions to the phenomenon Daniel Miller has called "the unhappy consciousness" (Miller 1987: 184–188). The boys recognize the "right" and "wrong" way to position themselves to material culture, and they see themselves developing in the moral scale of consumption. Another reason the boys gave for their decreased interest in material symbols was the way they experienced their status in their social surroundings. They felt there was no need to reconstruct the social hierarchies as they all knew each other:

Arttu: Perhaps it was more important in primary school but it's not visible here anymore.
Pia: Why do you think it was more important earlier?
Tuomas: I suppose in primary school everyone wanted to show who is who…
Pia: So you now know who is who or why don't you need to do it anymore?
Arttu: Or we don't need any objects to do it.
Pia: So it is the criterion for evaluation that has changed?
Arttu: Yeah.
[…]
Tuomas: I think it's the character; we look more at the people than at things.
Pia: Do you recognize at all from your surroundings this kind of meanings of things or is it totally strange?
Tuomas: Well, it is quite strange to me. (Arttu and Tuomas 6.10.2010).

Perhaps one reason for the dismissive tone of the symbolic values of things is the way the special items they referred to as status symbols had become a part of everyday life. The preconception I had about the im-

portant position of electronic devices started to wobble as I listened to these somewhat weary comments about them. This did not, however, mean that electronics would not have been in everyday use in the boys' routines. Furthermore, it seemed as if a certain basic level in the standard of these things was more or less a platitude. As instruments of exclusion these were not considered, however. The resignation from these material hierarchies was also a result of rivalry that had finally – at least according to these boys – reached a deadlock. For instance, when it came to mobile phones the eighth graders had to realize that the arms race had got out of their hands, as a phone recently acquired was quickly outstripped by an even newer model bought by someone else: "When the phone is broken there's automatically nothing to compare. I've had my phone now for two years and it wouldn't work to go into the comparison" (Tuomas 6.10.2010) or "there's new model every week; one's own will be old" (Johannes 7.10.2012).

However, when I asked what objects were the ones that were admired and compared, the unambiguous response was the mobile phone (Arttu and Tuomas 6.10.2010; Eemil and Saku 26.10.2010). The possibilities of new phones were analysed with something I considered half-sceptical, half-sarcastic: "I don't even know if it is a games console or a phone" (Tuomas 6.10.2010). When I as researcher reminiscence about my own childhood without any mobile phones, the interviewees here reminiscence about their childhood with mobile phones that gave totally new possibilities:

> Do you remember Nokia three-three-ten; it was a basic phone, black and white screen and… we had had only those. Then when the colour screens and games came it became quite an amazing thing. Then everyone wanted a new phone and so on (Johannes 7.10.2010).

The comments the boys made about the mobile phone reflect the fact that the evaluation of a consumer good is a relative process, as Heather A. Horst and Daniel Miller have argued. The evaluation differs according to the prevalence of the object and the way individuals or groups feel like insiders or outsiders in the comparative framework of a certain object. Also, when it comes to mobile phones, only understanding what it means to possess one enables us to see its possible functions (Horst & Miller 2006:59, 65).

Coming to the twenty-first century, a quarter of the Finnish young people's consumption was spent on the mobile phone, phone bills and the Internet. Furthermore, Finnish boys spent money on equipment for sports and hobbies and on technology (Heinonen 2003:473). This targeting of consumption was also visible in the way the boys interviewed here used to spend their money and what were their hopes in consumption. One of the commonly mentioned targets of hopes and admiration was the BMX bicycle. Here too the point was not only the possible lightness of the bike and the quality of its parts but above all the way the biker was able to master his vehicle. As it is, it is not the object of material culture alone that creates symbolic value but also the owner's ability to master it. This same effect can also be observed with mobile phones: to create the "right" kind of image of urban cool, it is not enough to own a certain kind of device but for example to be able to have a conversation and to text simultaneously – in a

casual manner. The phone can thus become a part of intelligent clothing communicating between the inside and outside (Horst & Miller 2006:78). At a more general level the phenomenon of experienced mastering of the material world is part of human interaction in a very neutral sense, and it should not only be seen as an instrumental exploitation (Lehtonen 2008:91; see Warnier 1999).

The objects were important also in the sense that many hopes for the future were connected with them. A new phone, a television of one's own and an mp3 player were all on the wish list of the boys. A new phase in the material world connected with age was reflected in the hopes of being able to buy a moped or light motorcycle:

> [T]hen when I'm fifteen I will get a moped […] it is quite a big decision which one I will get and as I like to make music […] I also want to get these devices at home so that I would gradually extend that repertoire as well (Tuomas 6.10.2010).

In a way, many of these material hopes were connected with the hope for more independence and personal space: with your own television you are allowed to watch the programmes you choose and with a moped you get the possibility to move more freely.

The discussion we were having about objects shifted quickly to clothes, however. In my first round of discussions about artefacts, when I had asked the boys to read and comment on the story published in *Helsingin Sanomat* about the secret law of the secondary school, the reactions were more of disapproval than acceptance: the criteria for being accepted represented in the story were considered too selective. The practices in their own school environment were seen as more tolerant and better at accepting differences than the story pictured.

At the end of our meeting I asked each of the groups or individual interviewees to create their own law for the secondary school as a guideline for those who know nothing about Finnish youth culture so that they could manage in school. I received lists of guidelines in life that undoubtedly would benefit anyone: it is best to stay strong – especially inside one's head; one had better make friends; one should not have too strong opinions and one should also accept ideas from others; one should have a sense of humour; it does not pay to take part in certain circles; one should not evade or be ashamed of differences. In addition to the characteristics and attitudes of life, advice dealing about appearance was also included in the lists: on the one hand, one should not stand out so much in the group as to be totally different from the others (at least in the beginning) or adapt "some kind of ultra dress style". On the other hand, one should not imitate anyone else either. Dressing "normally" would assure the best result (Eemil and Saku 4.5.2010; Johannes and Verneri 13.4.2010; Arttu 11.3.2010; Tuomas 13.4.2010).

The discussions we had about the laws of the secondary school also generally portray the difficulties I interpreted in connection with reasoning about and analysing the meanings of material culture. We know that we should not make judgements based on outward appearance and would not want to visualize or verbalize ourselves as doing so. On the other hand we recognize in our environment the perhaps hazy but still existing borders within

which we can express ourselves outwardly without attracting too much attention. To verbalize these borders for outsiders may be difficult but for those inside the group the rules concerning, for example, dress are not "a matter of skills" (Johannes 13.4.2010; see also Lönnqvist 2008:11–14).

One of the factors influencing the interaction in discussions made for the research was the possible expectations or ideas the boys may have had about the way I as a researcher would hope that they would react to the initiatives and also the way certain questions are viewed as possible or impossible to discuss in these situations. Sometimes these expectations and uncertainties are spoken, sometimes their influences on the formation of the interview situation can only be guessed at. The interviewees can aim to give an answer that is socially acceptable. Also, the teenagers here are social actors in an interview situation and they adapt to the situation, recognizing the conventions of interplay in a research situation (Alasuutari 2005: 148).

Furthermore, the composition of the group has its affect on the way and the kind of tone in which the themes are discussed. Our conversations about the material world were automatically affected not only by the age and gender of the participants but also their individual ways of consumption, for example, which presumably were familiar to the boys beforehand as they knew each other quite well (see Valtonen 2005:241). In the context of our discussions an answer considered acceptable may have been to underrate the meaning of things or at least their possible effects on the social hierarchies. Although the boys recognized the status value of material culture, money and clothes in general, most of them wanted to avoid them. This may have meant that the more positive aspects of material relationships the boys may experience were likewise omitted from these discussions.

I had defined the theme for the second round of discussions about material culture as the "status objects" of boys, and we usually started the conversations by defining what we meant by the concept of "status object". Judged afterwards, taking this concept as the starting point was not the best choice on my part. Not only did it turn out to be difficult to approach but it also defined the meanings of objects too much and too negatively. However, sometimes the very defining of the concept led to an analysis of the possible "status objects":

> Pia: So, does this word [status object] tell you, have you any idea…
> Miro: … You mean like clothes tell what a person, I mean you can tell about a person by his clothes, sort of, they make him notable…
> […]
> Miro: Usually it's mostly clothes; I don't believe any objects are shown around. It's the clothes, they are used. For example, if you have a really expensive belt you can make it visible and it tells something, for example if there is the Lacoste logo, it tells that it must have been pretty expensive and that that person must have had the means (Miro 13.10.2010).

This comment concerning the meaning of clothes made by Miro was also underwritten in the other discussions: "It's the clothes you can notice the status from" (Johannes 7.10.2010). This is natural because clothes are visible to the social environment all the time and in this sense a very effective way of expressing one's personality – status, if needed. Because of

the central role of clothes when brought into the conversations, I will next turn to the way the boys pictured the meaning of clothes in their own social surroundings.

The School Uniform of the Twenty-First Century

It is the last school day before Independence Day and class 8F has gathered in its own classroom to wait for the celebrations to start and to adjourn to the school's great hall. The teacher ensures that each pupil (especially the boys) leaves his woolly hat or cap, headphones, music devices and phones on the school desk. The boys remove the signs of their unofficial school uniform without arguments (Field diary 3.12.2010; see Gordon & Lahelma 2003b: 70).

This extract from my field diary reflects the way material culture is present in the boys' lives in the school and how it is also a subject of negotiation between the different actors in the class. Tuula Gordon and Elina Lahelma have divided the school environment into three levels of analysis: the official, the informal and the physical level. In this division the pupil cultures and the unofficial hierarchies within the school are part of the informal school. One part of the pupil's "professional" skills is to know how to act in the different situations in the school, for example how and what to wear on different occasions (Gordon & Lahelma 2003a:10; Lahelma & Gordon 2003:13–14). The informal school offers a possibility to challenge and test these official rules defined by the formal school: the headgear is (usually) removed when the teacher says so, but it is also kept on until the teacher says otherwise. Musical equipment is a constant object of negotiation between the pupils and the teachers – sometimes with better and sometimes with worse results from the pupils' viewpoint.

Clothing and the different devices as part of the pupils' habitus also had other meanings in the informal school than a reflection of the teacher–pupil relationship: in the story about the law of the secondary school the ninth graders list the clothes that might lead to exclusion in the school environment:

> Wrong clothes? Five-year-old clothes, clothes from discount halls [two halls particularly mentioned], childish clothes like Mickey Mouse shirt, Goth style, Lolita style, heavy metal style, Gant clothes which can label you as a homosexual, clothes from a fleamarket[3] (Nieminen 2009).

One can draw a conclusion from the list that the hierarchies based on clothing are much more subtle in the informal school than in the official school. When I asked Eemil and Saku to describe what the most trendy person in the school would look like, the list was made quickly: nice cap, nice shoes, Rolex (perhaps half joking), cool clothes, nice mobile phone and nice hair. To define what possibly could be a nice cap or cool clothes or where the line between appropriate and inappropriate dress would go was, however, more difficult to verbalize (Eemil and Saku 26.10.2010). In another context, however, I was given a very well-informed presentation about the hierarchy of different kinds of caps in the hip hop culture (Tuomas 6.10.2010).

At least according to the boys interviewed here it was also possible to break away from the hierarchies based on clothing. Even though – again – the hierarchies of clothing were recognized in general

("you can notice the status from the clothes"), this was seen as something that did not apply to oneself ("I don't try to express anything with clothes, I just wear them"). Furthermore, clothes were also seen in other respects as reflections of one's personality or attitude ("that one would do better not to bluster") (Johannes 7.10.2010).

The basic elements of the trendy person reveal that the evaluation is not based only on the clothing but that the whole bodily communication can be under observation – consciously or unconsciously. The theme of status objects that in the beginning seemed to be difficult and unfamiliar led to conversations about appearance and changes in it on a more general level:

Pia: Okay, what if I now force you to think about those objects that might be used to make distinctions from others, what comes to your mind?
Saku: Mobile phones, I guess. If someone has a new mobile, everyone's interested in it.
Eemil: Then you are in the focus of attention in a way. New shoes, those will be noticed, that's one.
Pia: Mobile, specifically shoes? […] If you think about clothes in general…
Eemil: Colourful ones, those will be noticed.
Saku: Or if someone has had a hair cut everyone will usually notice it (Eemil and Saku 26.10.2010).

Arttu: For example, if someone's had his hair cut they'll ask if his been run over by a lawnmower or by a harvester or…
Pia: Okay…
Arttu: Or they come and stroke [your head] or… (Arttu and Tuomas 6.10.2010).

René León Rosales has pictured in his research how, during his fieldwork in a Swedish primary school, he learned only little by little to notice the distinctions made by the clothing. The sporty general expression was created by t-shirts, sweatshirts, jeans and sneakers – as in Finland. What Rosales paid attention to was the different brands and the interest the pupils took in them. With the "right" brands the boys could strengthen the image of their features they considered positive in themselves in a heteronormative way, in relation both to girls and to the form of masculinity that was considered acceptable (Léon Rosales 2010:102, 104). This same kind of phenomenon is visible in the comments by the young people interviewed for *Helsingin Sanomat* (Nieminen 2009) when they connect one specific brand with homosexuality and as such see it as something negative in relation to the supposed acceptable form of masculinity.

We also discussed with the boys about their relation to different brands. When I asked what kinds of clothes a boy should have to stand out positively from the group, the first reduced answer was "brand clothes". When focusing on the question I received a long list of usable brands: Jack & Jones, Calvin Klein, WeSC, Under Amour, DC, Nike, Adidas, Puma, Dress Mann, Halti, Nordic, K2, Raw Blue, Blanco, New Era and so on. As we went over the specific brands and images connected to them, differences in status started to appear. When one of the brands was a sign of trendiness and fashion-consciousness, some other brands in the list might already belong to the past (i.e. to primary school) or label someone as a "fruitcake" or a "chavette". And although "everything goes", one brand can create an image of a "sporty" person and another of an "80s' athlete" (Eemil and Saku 26.10.2010). The "fruitcakes", "gangstas" and "hiphoppers" all had their own brand and style collections which

were evaluated by their own criteria. For example among those representing "hip hop culture" choices were said to be made in size, design and colours (Johannes 7.10.2010; Tuomas 6.10.2010).

The productization of youth subcultures became visible in Finnish marketing in the 1970s when youth groups started to separate from each other more clearly (Heinonen 2003:465). This development is still visible also in the youth cultures of the twenty-first century although in the interviews "normal" clothes are classified as the most secure choice. When one has adopted one's own style it can be justified both as a form of self-expression and for the sake of comfort: "Well, my style expresses pretty much what kind of music I listen and like what kind of a person I am. Pretty often it's also like it's much more relaxed to have bigger trousers […]" (Tuomas 6.10.2010).

To acquire knowledge about the acceptable – "cool" or "normal" – clothes and their opposites is part of the socializing process of the informal school. This process is not completed with the knowledge of general trends but is also affected by the local – and in this case school-based – perceptions (Léon Rosales 2010:114–115). This knowledge is good to acquire even if you want to break away from the active utilization of the meanings of clothes:

> Not everyone is trying to signal with their clothes […] the way they are. I mean, some of us just think that this looks good, I'll take it. I don't believe that many of us are trying, not everyone tries to signal with their clothes who they are (Johannes 7.10.2010).

The meanings connected to clothing are, however, visible in the way the boys pay attention to new purchases among themselves: "All new clothing is noticed…", and the conversation includes the place where the item has been bought as well as the price paid for it (Arttu 6.10.2010). The consumption of boys and men in the twenty-first century has features that are usually considered as feminine, such as the increasing amount of money spent on cosmetics and the growing interest in shopping and clothing in general (Heinonen 2003:473). These features were also visible in the conversations, although the interest in buying clothes for oneself varied greatly from person to person. When one of the boys estimated that he spent 80 euros a month on clothes, his mates said they visited clothes shops only a couple of times a year and declared that they were happy to wear clothes that previously belonged to their brother or cousin (Miro 13.10.2010; Arttu and Tuomas 6.10.2010).

In the "culture of shopping" I also include the way the shops where the clothes are bought are linked into the conversations. The shop can automatically reduce the value of the product or vice versa. To question the shop can create a negative status for the purchase: "Well yes, if you buy some really cheap clothes they don't much improve your status. […] sometimes you can be reminded that is that from some discount store or something" (Johannes 7.10.2010). Conversely, a high price can be used to create additional value for a piece of clothing even though the boys themselves deny this in their own conduct: "Well, there are those who can go on about how their clothes have to cost thousands and they don't [understand] that someone can really get a bargain for ten euros. I don't think it matters as long

as the clothes are good […]" (Tuomas 6.10.2010). The link between the place of purchase, the price and the quality seemed to be a difficult phenomenon to describe, perhaps because the practice and its experienced inappropriateness are recognized at least in principle:

Pia: Well then, we talked about whether there are some things that can decrease your status and you agreed that there aren't, but do you think that perhaps the price or the place of purchase can make a difference?
Saku: If you buy something for example from Prisma [hypermarket] or Tarjoustalo [discount store] people will look at you a bit.
Pia: Can you see it from the clothes?
Eemil & Saku: Yes, you can.
Pia: Where do you see it from?
Eemil: Well, from the quality.
Saku: From the price.
Pia: So you ask the price?
Eemil: No.
[…]
Eemil: You can notice it by yourself.
Pia: But you think you don't pay that much interest in it?
Eemil: Noo (Eemil and Saku 26.10.2010).

Conclusion

Not everyone thinks objects as so very important. At the end of the day, the most important thing is normally the person himself (Johannes 7.10.2010).

Daniel Miller has described how in semiotic research clothes especially have been held up as the most central example in the discipline: clothes have a function as pseudo-language according to which we can deduce who we are. Miller, however, carries this idea further and argues that clothes have actually made us what we are and that they do not just represent a thin covering layer on ourselves. Clothing is an active part in the process of defining ourselves. Furthermore, according to Miller, the globalization of styles and brands does not mean that the product has less expressive meanings for those wearing it. He argues that the study of clothes and dress should also be the study of emotions and that it should find out the emotional states that clothes create in us in different situations (Miller 2010:12–13, 40–41). Even though Miller has every reason to speak especially about clothing, his viewpoint can be extended here to cover the world of objects more broadly.

Clothes were only one, albeit crucial, section of the material culture that was touched upon in the conversations we had with the boys. A similar kind of phenomenon was however visible in all the different discussions about things: the possible hierarchies created by the objects were recognized but not underwritten as personal practices. The meaning of objects in creating the self seemed to vary from one extreme to another among the individual participants. On the one hand clothes were used to express one's attitudes and hobbyism and on the other hand their meaning was seen only from the viewpoint of practicality. Between these viewpoints there were the different shades of "normal" clothing were self was represented in the different choices of brands. Both styles and brands formed a code language for the others to create images – although sometimes stereotyped – based on subtle nuances (see Siivonen 1993:116). There was also one important point where the boys were unanimous: they did not see material culture as a means of exclusion in their own world of values – and this was articulated strongly.

The rules dealing with the material culture are different in the official and the informal school. In the official school they are clear, publicly expressed and also set by the official authorities. To obey or to defy these rules is simple and clear. In the informal school the meanings and rules dealing with material culture seem unpredictable to an outsider, and the limits of acceptability vague and situational. For the boys interviewed here it did not seem to be a problem to recognize and understand these rules. Nor were the rules of the informal school defied in this group. Conscious self-expression or rebellion against the generally accepted norms with the help of clothes or other material culture was seldom brought up, at least not at the level of conversation.

What then is the message when a teenage boy wants to argue that clothes or objects are not important to him? At least the comment shows an understanding of the discourses and courses of action that are connected with material culture (see Miller 1987:3–5). If one does not recognize these there is no need to breach them. The fact that clothes are not given any meaning as an external message is already a sign of the individual's way of reacting to them, as Miller points out. When refraining from signalling we actually signal something very profound about our relation to the material world (see Woodward 2005:27).

Even though the boys did not actively question the consumer society – on the contrary, they had material hopes for the future – fatigue with trends and keeping up with the most recent models was clearly expressed. It seemed that their material world was contradictory in the way the ideals clashed with reality. Furthermore, it sometimes seemed that the distinctions made through the material culture had become such a close part of their social life that it was difficult to recognize and verbalize it in our conversations. Daniel Miller has paid attention to the way objects simultaneously are both very visible and invisible. They are used and interpreted in our everyday interactions but at the same time they can be undetected in their self-evident quality. Objects form the background to life itself and the focus is on people (Miller 1987: 85–108).

Furthermore, the difficulty of analysing the meanings of objects is even more understandable when we see the different ways in which the connotations of objects sometimes are firmly implicated in them and sometimes radically alter although the objects themselves may stay virtually the same. Who is the active party at a particular time in presenting and representing these changing connotations is yet another question (Miller 1987:175). The boys seemed to be able to analyse the change in their attitudes according to their age. They themselves saw that their relationship to material culture had changed through the years towards more critical and perhaps more democratic outlook compared with the earlier years. In a way, this change of relationship could be interpreted as a sign of "growing up" through which the distinction was made from the childhood.

"Feasting" on objects was not accepted by anyone, which did not mean, however, that artefacts did not have positive meanings in their lives. It seems that in our conversations the challenge was to see which

of these meanings were generally acceptable and in that way also possible to share in a research situation. The idea of right and wrong ways to position oneself with respect to material culture seems to be strong for these boys. This positioning is affected by the social surroundings and the need to position oneself in the world of values based on the material culture.

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Notes

1 The first version of this article was previously published in Finnish in *Aineen taikaa* (Olsson 2011).
2 I have previously written about the "negotiation process" I have gone through with my informants about the way the researcher's observations and informants viewpoints may, at least on the surface, conflict with each other (see Olsson 2011).
3 The story was published jointly with a story headed "Young people are not cruel, violent, nor ruined". In this, an assault of a young girl was analysed. The story about the law of the secondary school caused a postscript after the comments published in the paper had invoked an active discussion in the paper's Internet pages. The pupils who had taken part in the story were accused of being intolerant. In the short comment published a week after the actual story the head of news emphasized that the pupils had only given "their own assessment of the reasons why someone might be bullied" (Ahtiainen 2009).

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Interviews and field notes

The material is in the possession of the author. After the research has been finished it will be handed over to the Helsinki City Museum.

Interviews

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Arttu and Tuomas 6.10.2010.
Eemil and Saku 4.5.2010, 26.10.2010.
Jani 28.10.2010.
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Writing History

Past and Future in Transforming Swedish Psychiatry, 1970–1990

By Lars-Eric Jönsson

To write history is to write about change. It deals with how it once was but no longer is, but also about how it could be. We can distance ourselves from the past or long for its return. However we relate, we always write history in relation to our own present time. History in this sense is always to be regarded as a commentary on contemporary life. But it is not just any comment whatsoever, nor should we be fooled into thinking that it is passive in nature. The historiography this article concerns was remarkably active and productive in its own time.

I will focus on the history of psychiatry, especially the kind written in the context of health policy studies and programmes in 1970s and 80s. The text (and images) treated in the article is part of a larger amount of psychiatric production of history in Sweden extending at least 200 years back. A common feature of the texts is that they played an active role in a desire to change. The past was used as part of an argument for a different psychiatry from the existing one. In the 1970s and 1980s, it was about leaving the old mental institutions.

It is unclear whether psychiatric historiography is more comprehensive than other medical specialities. My impression is that it is. Whatever the situation with respect to the matter, we note that psychiatry's self-produced history is extensive. Mark S. Micale and Roy Porter have indicated two possible objects of this production: to generate professional identity and to socialize young doctors (Micale & Porter 1994:4). A third reason could be to strengthen psychiatry's insecure and vulnerable position as one of several medical specialities. Writing history can of course also be a way to produce legitimacy by claiming a long past, especially if it contains great men with significant scientific achievements. However, in this article I will explore a fourth purpose for writing history. This object can be described as a desire to change.

The Usable Past

A vital part of psychiatry's own history is its evolutionary approach, which has been expressed in at least two ways. One was based on the contrast between the present day and the past, where the present is presented as superior, more efficient, brighter, and not least resting on humanistic values (Jönsson 1998:186). The past in these stories has taken shape as a dark time whose lack of science and humanism resulted in people being treated poorly. The other way to describe the evolution and the present has been to focus on scientific progress, and how every period has added its progressive contribution, a development whose goal has been the present. The present in these stories of progress is always superior to the past. In the former kind of story the shortcomings and imperfections are in focus, in the latter the good progress. No matter which of these two evolutionary perspectives you apply, the future will always appear bright and promising. Writing history in this way has not only aimed at understanding and commenting on the past. It has also been a way to understand the present and point to a possible and desirable future.

This way of looking at history and historical production revolves around the usefulness of the past. Such use is found in a variety of contexts. In psychiatry, we

note a heavy use of history as a way to argue for contemporary changes. When the Swedish modern psychiatry pioneers – Magnus Huss (1807–1890), Carl Ulric Sondén (1802–1875) and C. J. Ekströmer (1793–1860) – wrote about what ought to be done, it was as a reaction to the past treatment of the "insane".

In the mid-1800s Sondén and Huss made trips on the continent where they saw major differences compared to Swedish conditions. Above all Danvik hospital in Stockholm served as an intimidating example. The future was found in the new European institutions which, according to Huss and Sondén, could show a recovery rate as high as 70 per cent (Jönsson 1998:117). The references to differences in time (Danvik and the past failures) and space (the continent's exemplary institutions) led to an argument for a new mental health care based on humanity and science. What the proponents wanted to leave was described in terms of darkness, superstition and coercion. Restrained limbs trapped in dark cells or lunatic boxes belonged, or should belong, to the past (ibid.:262).

More than a hundred years later, a new radical reform affected Western psychiatry, including Sweden. This reform established powerful and concrete approaches to the past. In many respects the criticism of the institution system took its fuel from the past. The ideal was found in voluntary and outpatient care. A stance was taken against closed institutional compulsory care. There was vehement criticism stemming from both inside and outside psychiatry. R. D. Laing's *The Divided Self* (1960), Erving Goffman's *Asylums* (1961), Michel Foucault's *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (1961), Thomas Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness* (1961), and Franco Basaglia's *L'istituzionenegata* (1968) are only some important examples where arguments for a new psychiatry more or less explicitly were to be found.

It is apparent that the criticism included perspectives on the past. Michel Foucault's *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* is of course the most obvious example, but also other critics viewed the traditional institutional psychiatry as part of the past. A striking difference from the early psychiatry in the nineteenth century was, however, that in the 1960s and 1970s history was produced not only by a psychiatrists themselves but also by researchers and commentators from outside. Psychiatry's change, as well as its history, was not only an issue for medics but was given a broader social significance.

In this article I intend to approach a kind of historiography that does not belong to academic knowledge production, nor to the media debate (Ohlsson 2008). Instead, I have chosen to explore historical perspectives in texts formulated at central authorities of the medical sphere and the administrative field. I have chosen a few texts from the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen), the Healthcare and Social Welfare Planning and Rationalization Institute (SPRI) and Government Official Reports (SOU). The period includes the 1970s and 1980s, that is, when a substantial portion of the institutional psychiatry was criticized, investigated, and closed down.

My investigation has as its primary premise that all desire for change is based

on opinions and perspectives not only on the present but also on the past. This was not only evident when scientific psychiatry had its breakthrough in the decades of the mid nineteenth century. The past was also part of argumentation techniques used when the compulsory institutions were to be left and abandoned. But what history was written? What events were seen as essential? What was left unnoticed? And how could history be related to the proposed changes?

The Texts

When investigating problems, history was essential. In a long series of government reports contemporary relationships were described as a kind of residue from historical conditions. Anachronistic is a word used in several contexts, a word that suggests how something is out of step, belonging to another time and having no place in our own. In this sense the past is still, in an undesired manner, alive and active (Ricoeur 2005:468). The development has not gone unaffected from the past. The present has not overrun the past. The past not only affects but is active in the present.

Obviously, this was not really the case. But by describing the present as colonized by the past it appeared advantageous to argue against what was considered wrong and flawed. In modern society, the past should not be present, except in the museums and other cultural institutions.

The word anachronistic also suggested how the present was given meaning by its historicity. The inadequate or imperfect were history. Making psychiatry contemporary included coming to terms with history, clearing it away, and replacing it with … well, what? Was there anything in the descriptions of the history that showed the way to what was desirable? Was there in this sense a direction in history? Could the past be seen as a compass for today?

Psychiatry, Coercion, and Legal Security

In the report *Psychiatry, Coercion and Legal Security* (SOU 1984:64), the National Social Committee proposed new legislation on psychiatric coercion. The committee also presented viewpoints on cooperation between social services and psychiatry, particularly for discharged in- patients (SOU 1984:64:15). The report also delivered some thorough historical depictions. The investigators made comparisons between the perception of the eighteenth-century lunatic and the modern psychiatric patient. The similarities were found in viewing the insane from a distance and the authorities' right to lock him up for his own good (ibid.: 41). The report organized the description of eras with headings: "The Lunatic and God", "The Breakthrough of a New Era", and "Asylums Become Mental Hospitals".

"The Breakthrough of a New Era" began with a depiction of Philippe Pinel as the man who released the insane from their chains in revolutionary Paris. The insane would not be kept in iron but treated gently. For, "Human rights apply also to them" (ibid.:45).

The psychiatrists Carl Ulric Sondén, Magnus Huss, C. J. Ekströmer and Georg Engström took on the role of reformers and humanists. "The first reformers were

carried by a humanistic passion. It was with love and understanding one should encounter the sick" (ibid.:49). Especially Engström's and Sondén's influence was considered strong in the nineteenth as well as the twentieth century. "Their criticism of the past was relentless" (ibid.:44). Sondén's perspective on mental illness was exemplified with his suggestion that the fool was not obsessed but ill. And those who were sick needed help, "primarily from physicians. To become healthy requires treatment. For Sondén this meant isolation" (ibid.:46). The investigators themselves seemed to stand behind Sondén's demands of therapy. But his notion of isolation as healing, the Committee left to the past.

Implicitly the National Social Committee gives the impression of having a rather hesitant view of the institution. The patient's isolation from the community was considered negative. It was noted that Sondén's "idea about the institution was realized. But on a larger scale than he had in mind" (ibid.:58). What did he have in mind? Was the large scale the problem or institutional idea in itself? The National Social Committee gave no definite answer. As a psychiatrist and advocate of a medical perspective on social deviation Sondén was considered a kind of historical hero. At the same time he was misunderstood by institution advocates who would follow him.

No, the National Social Committee was strongly critical of mental hospitals. The Committee compared traditional mental health care with the prison system, where individuals were forced inmates and isolated from society. The love, understanding and humanity expressed by the early reformers when meeting the sick soon gave way to a scientific approach. Sondén, Engström, Ekströmer, and Huss were thus stripped some of their scientific status in favour of a universal human empathy. Around the turn of the century, when phase three, "Asylums become mental hospitals", began, psychiatry would be characterized by a scientific approach and an urge to approach physical medicine. The psychiatrists Bror Gadelius and Olof Kinberg were appointed the main representatives of this approach. The National Social Committee argued that a common denominator for these two was their sharp criticism of psychoanalysis and that they contributed strongly to keeping it outside institutional mental care. Kinberg's approach to crime as a disease was considered to be a major contributing factor to the increasing number of offenders ending up in psychiatric confinement. This widening of the concept of disease was considered together with the deviants' increasing difficulties to cope in society, the rapid social change and increased life expectancy were considered possible causes of the need for increased mental health care (ibid.:56).

The investigators found the ideological foundations of the laws in a charter from 1858. All care was then tied to mental hospitals and associated with coercion. Until 1959 the doctor decided whether the patient could leave the hospital, irrespective of whether he had gone there voluntarily or not.

The National Social Committee had an obviously ambivalent attitude to the past. It stood behind the early psychiatrists and what was seen as humanitarianism and

philanthropy. It disagreed with their ideas about the closed institution and the compulsory health care. Perhaps this could be considered as a desire to support Huss and Sondén as empathetic individuals but to distance itself from what the committee thought was their scientific, professional side.

Generally, these depictions rested on a history seen through the bright light of the present. In most cases, the approach to the past was based primarily on dissociation. We can also note how the psychiatric approach to physical medicine was placed in the twentieth century, although the late nineteenth century must also be considered in the light of psychiatry's quest to become real medicine. Why this is so is difficult to elucidate. Perhaps the nineteenth century appeared too anachronistic and distant to be able to harbour the origin of the close relationship between psychiatry and physical medicine.

The National Social Committee's own time was described as new and it was considered obvious that biological, social and psychological factors were involved in the onset of mental disorders. The Committee decided to use the term "serious mental disorder" instead of "mental illness" as it was considered to give a different and wider explanation than, as the investigators put it, an individually oriented disease concept (ibid.:64). The National Social Committee's rejection was therefore mainly aimed at the twentieth-century institutionalized psychiatry which had its greatest extent in the 1950s and 1960s, not only in the number of beds and patients, but also in biomedical focus.

Generally speaking, it was problematic to view the 1950s and 1960s with a historical perspective. On the one hand, several claimed that the new drugs had come to form the basis for the new open and activating psychiatry. On the other hand, there were others, not least in the patients' organizations, who argued that drugs were to be considered as one more straitjacket. That was the first thing. The second was that these decades of psychiatry seemed particularly anachronistic. The National Social Committee described interiors from the mid-1970s where patients were still in hospital clothes and had few personal belongings. Training apartments, short-term institutions and transitional apartments were missing. Just under half of the patients had their beds in rooms with four beds or more (ibid.:98).

From Mental Hospitals to Independent Living

In 1982 there were several reports published in Spri's series called *Psychiatry in Transition*. Report 109/1982 was titled *From Mental Hospitals to Independent Living*. Like *Psychiatry in Progress*, this was a significant title. Mental hospitals were already considered a key symbol of the old. Patients' own apartments, own homes, were presented as a contrast.

The "From … To" heading also implies a psychiatry "on the move", which was underscored by a couple of chapter titles. Chapter 1 was titled "From Hospitalization to Re-socialization". Here the Sidsjö Hospital from 1943 in Sundsvall functioned as a metaphor for the old. Hospitalization had occurred in the hospital, that is, the environment that in the institution era had been regarded as therapeutic. Its resocializing perspective was not only di-

rected towards the patient him- or herself but also towards the patient in the hospital. The patient would be brought back to the community from the hospital. This process took place at a nearby nursing home, Hamsta nursing home, equipped with training apartments for independent living.

The authors scoffed that Sidsjö had been called the Temple of Humanity. They wrote about long hospital stays, monotonous days, passivized and incapacitated patients. The following description could apply to many other mental hospitals.

> The wards were crowded and the majority of patients lived in halls open to the corridor. The toilets stood in a row without walls separating them. It was easy to monitor patients as they sat on the toilet together. Even the washrooms were open and had no walls to the corridor. In many wards, there was only hot water if necessary. In some departments the patients ate from copper vessels, and were only allowed to use spoons. The patients wore hospital clothes and had no possessions of their own.

The open wards, the open toilets and washrooms, the lack of hot water, the plates, cups and spoons, and last but not least, the hospital clothes. These elements of the actual hospital environments recur in a variety of contexts from the 1960s. They were justified. I cannot question that. But it is worth noting the consensus that it was precisely these things that were particularly anachronistic. I mean not only a consensus in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s about what was bad in mental hospitals. Toilets, overcrowding, the passivized patient, the lack of hot water and metal plates are found in the sources on psychiatry's past as important reference points when the degree of modernity in the institutions would be fixed. It is a landscape that certainly changed, but its features seem fairly constant in the institutional era. By screening the wards for these benchmarks, it was possible to assess where in time a ward or a hospital was located. Was it contemporary or anachronistic?

Chapter 3 was titled "A New View on Human Beings" and included a description of the so-called Hamsta model, whose aim was to reproduce the patient's self-esteem and dignity (Psykiatriiomvandling. SPRI rapport 109/1982:49). Patients were trained to manage their own finances, cooking, laundry, and cleaning.

The mental hospital set against one's own apartment was not just contrast between two rooms, a large compared to a small one, one outside the regular society compared to one inside. Based on these two rooms, associations ran in directions that seemed to talk about completely different ways to nurse, care for, and treat the patient. An important feature in the small room was its individuality. At home you could be not only *by* yourself but also yourself. You could have your own schedule. At the hospital, the patients in most cases shared rooms with each other. The hospital also had a schedule for each day. Patients got up, ate, worked and went to bed at a given time. The apartment encapsulated individuality as opposed to the institution which, although individualizing its patients, hardly took the individual's own wishes, identity, and needs into account.

The relationship between the apartment and the institution is a key element for understanding the changes that began in the 1970s. The institution appeared not only

as an anachronistic place but also a place for coercion and depersonalization of the prisoner. The apartment was, in contrast, a space of freedom, a space for the patient to live a normal life. Where the past seemed to talk about collective coercive isolation from the surrounding community, the present seemed to strive for individualized housing in the community.

The Images

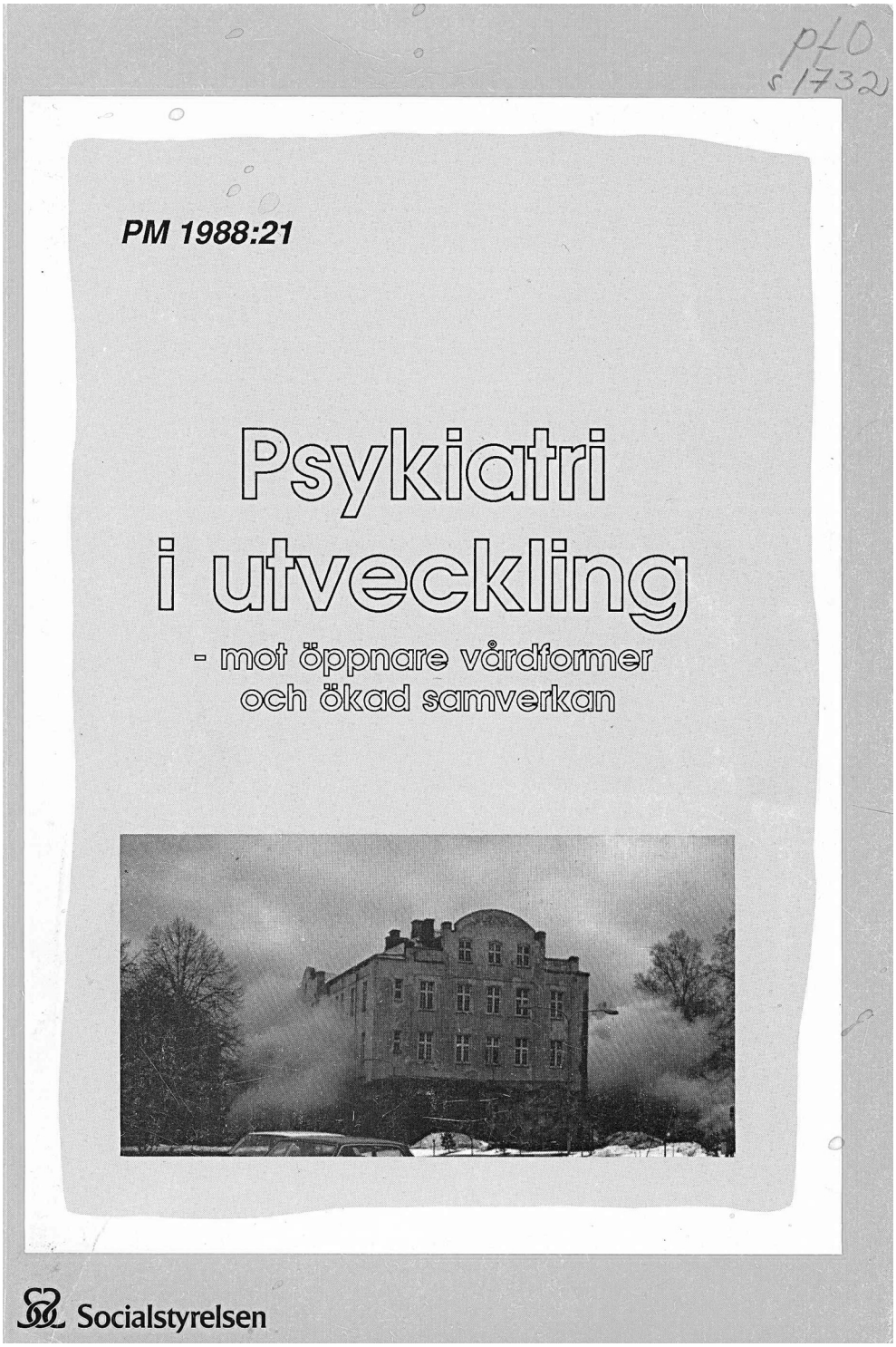
Perspectives on the past are most often expressed in text but the choice of illustrations also reveals obvious approaches. In the reports, memos and reports that I have examined in this study, the artwork – if there are any pictures – describe two main types: (1) general images of people and places from contemporary psychiatry, often uncommented, (2) images from the past, which explicitly or implicitly represent what the authors want to distance themselves from.

Psychiatry in Progress is not just the title of this article but also the title of a memorandum published by the National Board of Health and Welfare in 1988, i.e. during a time when the closure of mental hospitals was taking place on a massive scale. In this decade, it seems to me, psychiatry changed in several fundamental respects. The talk of reform and the disassembly of the institutions in the 1960s and 1970s now turned into action. The subtitle of the memorandum was *Towards Outpatient Care and Increased Collaboration*. The memorandum was related to two key processes of change that psychiatry was going through: (1) less coercive and institutionalized care and more open and voluntary care outside the institutions; (2) the incorporation of psychiatry into regular health care and with the municipal social services as a given participant.

It is no news that psychiatry's own history, like much other history of science, was written and meant to show a clear tendency. Where many sciences are characterized by what Mark S. Micale and Roy Porter (1994) call "a Hall of Fame approach" I would argue that psychiatry had a rather ambivalent attitude to its story. That is, the progressive perspective has remained constant but the generator of progress has been the conflict between the old and the new as much as it has been the cumulative constructive perspective.

Psychiatry in Progress exhibited one picture. You find it on the cover and it shows how one of the pavilions at Säter Mental Hospital was blasted in 1983. From a conflict perspective, the picture was well chosen. By blowing up the old we are moving towards the new. Development rests in this sense on destruction, in concrete terms. The picture also shows a metaphorical rejection. Of course it was not necessary to tear down buildings to reform mental health care. But the buildings, the mental hospitals, had been given status as a key symbol of the kind of psychiatry supposed to be left behind. History was blown apart, it seemed, both in practical terms and in a metaphorical sense.

In 1977 another SPRI report was published, entitled *Psychiatry in Transition* (i.e., which later become the title of the above mentioned series of reports from SPRI).[1] The publication argued for what was called sectorized psychiatry, that is, outpatient psychiatry and closed psych-



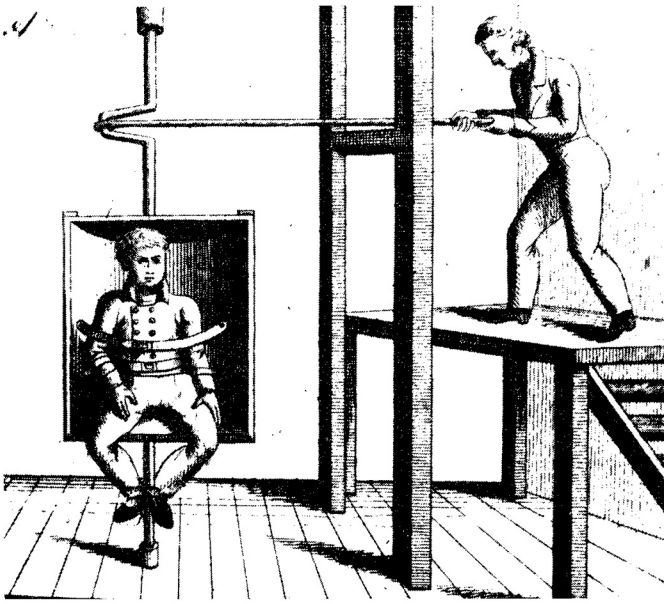
Psychiatry in Progress. PM 1988:21. Cover of the National Board of Health and Welfare's memorandum *Psychiatry in Progress* (1988). The photography shows the pavilions at Säter Mental Hospital being blown up in 1983. The old institutional buildings were torn down to make way for a new psychiatry in a concrete sense as well metaphorically. It was of course not necessary to demolish buildings to reform psychiatry. However, the hospital buildings had become a kind of key symbol of what psychiatry wanted to leave behind.

iatry in a well-defined and not too large catchment area. Parallel with a review of "the psychiatric concept of disease" were shown pictures of older psychiatric care and treatment. A German lunatic asylum from 1507 (Tollhaus with guard), a set of graphical images with treatments from the first half of the nineteenth century, a (perhaps) contemporary pillbox, a woodcut by the well-known Swedish painter Carl Larsson (1853–1919) picturing King Gustav III visiting the asylum of Danvik outside Stockholm. A similar arrangement existed in the following chapter 3 ("Some Problems in Today's Psychiatric Organization"). In a spread, there was an interior picture from "Southern workhouse" (later Rosenlund retirement home) in Stockholm and a picture from an outing for first-class patients in the early twentieth century (Psykiatriiomvandling 1977:22–23). There were also two dormitory interiors from Söderby Hospital in Stockholm (1910) and St Lars Hospital in Lund (1950) (ibid. 1977:24). Section 4 ("Trends in Psychiatric Services in General") was illustrated with two graphic images from the German psychiatrist Ernst Horn's book (1774–1848), *Das Bild des Kranken* (1818).

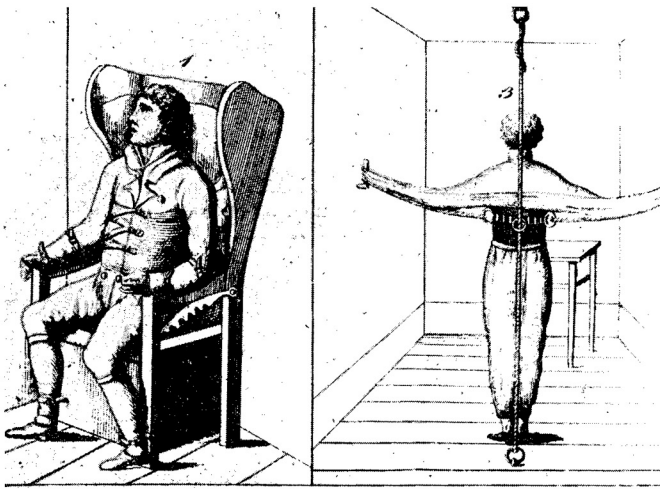
A spread (pages 28 and 29) presents pictures which contrast the past and the present. On page 28 we find a graphic image declared to show a swing chair used by the physician Benjamin Rush (1745–1813). Below these are two images said to represent a "Straitjacket, from E. Horn, 1818" taken from his book *Das Bild des Kranken*. The pictures depict people fettered to different objects – a rotating chair, an earflap armchair and a tensioned rope with solid handles on the walls. The person at the rope is locked into a particular posture, in a clearly defined space with a table in front of him. The man in the earflap chair sits alone, bound hand and foot in his chair with a straitjacket. In the picture of the swinging chair a staff member is visible along with the prisoner. The two have contact only via a rod and a shaft that make up the swing device. There appears to be no personal contact or relationship. All three inmates give the impression of being entirely in the hands of the treating institution.

Page 29 shows a picture of the new, contemporary psychiatry. Actually, it consists of two images – a map of the catchment area of the Nacka Project and outlines of five people in full figure. Thus, there are two perspectives – one directly above the map, one from the viewpoint of the people. Both perspectives suggest a context. The map represents not just a territory, but also all the people – up to 70,000 – that live within it. The outlines of the five people symbolize with even greater emphasis the context patients might come from, and should continue to be in. Is it a family of three generations? Or do they illustrate that psychiatry works with adults, the elderly, and children? But in a familiar context in which the sufferer should not be or become socially isolated?

What role did historical images have in this report arguing for a sectorized psychiatry represented by the Nacka Project? Apart from rudimentary captions of what the images showed, they appear here in an implicit contrast with the report's own time, that is, 1977. The captions contributed little to make the reader understand the situation from which the historical images



Svängstol använd av B. Rush. Han arbetade ungefär samtidigt och i samma anda som Esquirol.Hans hemland var USA.



Tvångsjacka ur E. Horn, 1818

28

Spri report *Psychiatry in Transition*. Past and present, old and new, meet on a spread. Page 28 shows a graphical image. It was said to display a swing chair once used by the physician Benjamin Rush. Below we find two pictures from the book *Das Bild des Kranken*. These two images depict patients fettered to different objects. The staff member handling the swing chair does not seem to have any personal relation or contact with the patient.

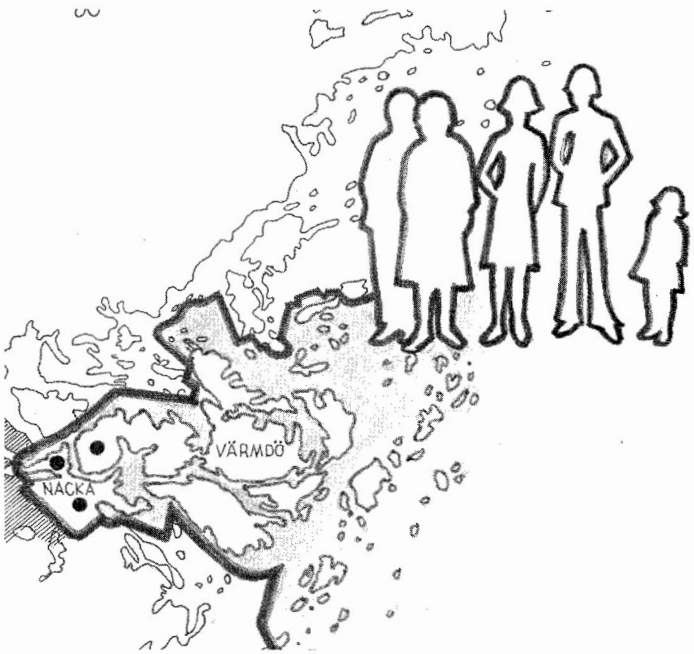
5 Några av de överväganden som utgör underlag för sektoriserad psykiatri

Med begreppet ”sektoriserad psykiatri” avses en speciell organisationsform där en organisation har ”total”-ansvar för psykiatrisk vård inom ett avgränsat befolkningsområde.

Riktlinjerna för sektoriserad psykiatri grundar sig bl a på erfarenheten att människan insjuknar respektive utvecklar sin sjukdom som en konsekvens av de sociala system av vilka hon har varit och är en del.

Minoritetstillhörighet, ekonomisk status, familjestruktur och andra grupprelationer är av betydelse för de enskilda människornas psykiska sårbarhet respektive motståndskraft, men också för sjukdomsbild, symptomatologi, försvarsmetoder och val av metoder till anpassning. Likaså är benägenheten och förmågan att utnyttja psykiatrisk service samvarierande med etniska, ekonomiska och andra sociala faktorer. För en strukturering av framtida service gäller sålunda att med organisatoriska och andra åtgärder skapa optimala förutsättningar för att samla och applicera kunskaper om de sociala faktorernas roll i såväl det enskilda fallet som hur de verkar inom grupper och befolkningssektorer.

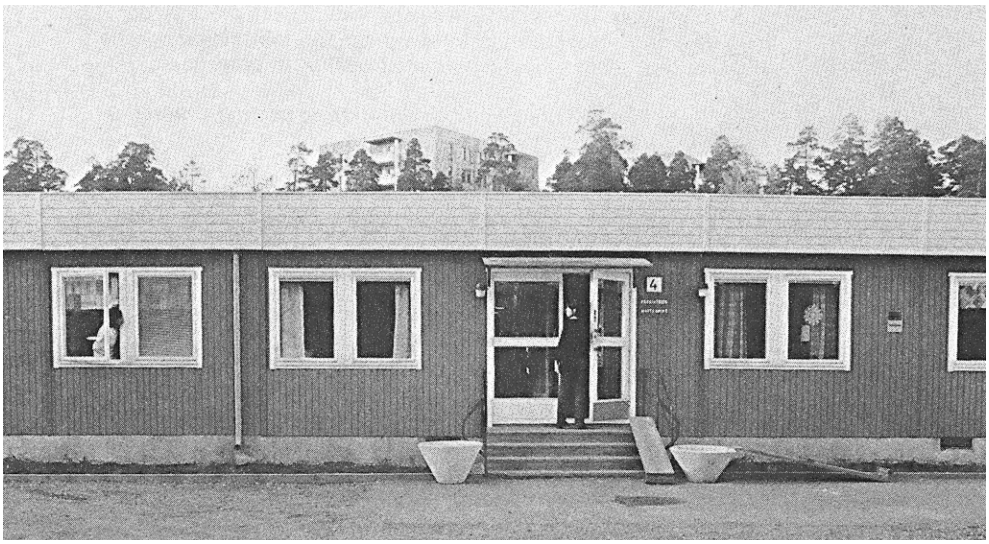
Sektoriserad psykiatri avser att skapa sådana förutsättningar.



Nackaprojektets upptagningsområde med såväl tätorts- som glesbygdsbefolkning — ca 70 000 invånare.

29

Spri report *Psychiatry in Transition*. Page 29 shows a picture of the new and contemporary psychiatry. The image has two perspectives – one directly above the map, one from the viewpoint of the people. Both perspectives suggest a context. The map represents not just a territory, but also all the people – up to 70,000 – that live within it. The outlines of the five people symbolize with even greater emphasis the context that patients might come from, and should continue to be in. Is it a family of three generations? Or do they illustrate that psychiatry works with adults, the elderly, and children? But in a familiar context in which the sufferer should not be or become socially isolated?



Spri report *Psychiatry in Transition*. Among the images in the report this shows a hut-like building for one of the teams in the Nacka project. The contrast to the old monumental institutions could not be greater. The architecture is strikingly anonymous and gives the impression of not only being prefabricated in large sections but also being temporary. Apart from a few small signs beside the entrance there was nothing to indicate function or content.

derived. They worked rather as a kind of contrast to the new psychiatry. In this sense one can say that the image editing expressed an evolutionary perspective.

The second half of the report was illustrated with contemporary images from the Nacka Project. The present appeared in obvious contrast to the past, which in itself was not given any clear trend. Instead, it seems that both the present and the past formed two homogeneous categories, which was emphasized by how the historical pictures were placed in the report's first half and contemporary images in the second. Exclusively in the spread – pages 28 and 29 – past and present met. Any talk about change, or even progress, was divided into now and then. It is a little surprising that the differences were not linked to the concept of science or lack of science, but rather to boundaries between the therapist and patient on the one hand and humanity and equal meetings on the other. Three of the contemporary photographs depicted three different kinds of meetings and conversations. One showed a hotline phone conversation. One showed a barrack-like building for one of the teams, and another showed a person entering a psychiatric reception, housed in a modern, anonymous and seemingly neutral functional brick building, architectural light years away from the old mental hospitals' monumental aesthetics.

Individuality–Collectivity, Isolation–Sociality

The use of history is present in a variety of medical contexts. I have pointed to passages in which history is explicit, where

you are writing history in the form of for example backgrounds. I have also given examples of how the past has acted as a more inarticulate and quiet background to the present.

History emerges in these texts as something to reject. The present and future, which investigators and report writers in my examples wanted to dwell on and come into, seemed to appear more clearly when it was contrasted with the past, whether it really belonged to the past or if it appeared to infiltrate our time in the form of anachronism. The past was, in this respect, a tool to clarify current psychiatric programmes. If you could be really explicit about the conditions that should be abandoned, then it was easier to argue your own aims, the model you believed in, and what you wanted to implement.

In this regard, it is not difficult to notice how the authors chose the history that suited their arguments. I have given examples of how the institution was contrasted to the home, a home of one's own. Here collective forms of care stood against individual forms, the big room's powerful psychiatry against the home where the individual was intended to manage by himself. The relationship between the past and present was slightly more blurred, but not less striking in the report *Psychiatry in Transition* (1977). Here it was mainly pictures that created the contrasts between then and now. The images from the past described individuals who gave the impression of being socially isolated, and subjected in the institution to – by our standards – weird and obviously painful treatments and coercion. The pictures from present were characterized by social interaction and communication.

The individual could in other words, be depicted in two different ways: in terms of the isolated institutionalized inmate who found himself at the mercy of institution arrangements and methods, and the – ideally – free individual who was in his own home, managed by himself and chose freely whether to seek psychiatric treatment. Similarly, the concept of collectivity was depicted. In the past it was an abomination, something to which the individual was subordinated by force and which appeared to wipe out an individual's identity, needs and desires. In the present and the future collectivity was considered positive social interaction, as an aid to the suffering individual. Imagewise, the old-fashioned, poor collectivity was symbolized by the mental hospital with its impersonal, levelling patient uniforms, daily schedules and spatial transparency, none of which was unseen. The general meeting was the most obvious and prominent image of the good contemporary collectivity.

Manifestos and History

The link between historical and contemporary changes and political programmes or manifestos is not limited to the type of texts to which I have dedicated this study. Of course, the relationships between academic historical research and contemporary society exist, although they are rarely as obvious as in the government and practitioner spheres. In this regard, all history is subordinate to the present. I have previously mentioned Foucault's *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* as one of the more obvious ex-

amples of how history has been influenced by contemporary conditions, and has returned into the present, affecting it in certain directions.

If we linger for a while in Swedish psychiatric history research, it is not difficult to notice how it can be seen as reflexive comments on the researcher's own societal present. During the 1980s and 1990s, we were several scholars who paid attention to the history of the institutions.[2] For myself and certainly for other researchers this interest was to a high degree based on an urge to comment on and provide a deeper understanding of what psychiatry had left or was about to leave – and for that matter, the temporal long-lasting components psychiatry had *not* left behind. Since 2000 we have seen a slight change of focus towards a greater interest in psychiatry's activities outside the mental hospitals and the interaction with the (local) community. This adjustment can be understood as a cultural-historical commentary on today's psychiatry where the question of the division of responsibility between the county and municipality is still under discussion (Berge 2007), and the sufferer's position in the local community and its relation to psychiatry (Riving 2008) is an open and difficult question for psychiatric care, whose trust and faith in outpatient care remains strong.

The academic historical research can or should not stand outside contemporary influences. It can and should also influence its own time. This is almost a given fact that sometimes needs to be repeated. That does not mean that research results are always, for better or worse, used as the researchers intended. Control over the results is obviously released as soon as they are published.

All history has a link and is influenced by its own time, whether it originates in an academic environment or – as I have noticed here – in a health-policy context. The differences between these two contexts are a matter of degree rather than kind. The health policy history is of course dependent on academic research but also affects the definition of the problems and issues of social relevance. My aim has been to explore how history can and has been used in health policy documents. I have given examples of how investigators and politicians used the past to argue for changes in psychiatry. You could say that the possibility of change went through a historicizing process. In this respect, history is the result of contemporary choices, a story that is given legitimacy and meaning through its relationship to the historian's own lifetime. I have argued for the great importance of differences in the history I have examined. These differences were a method to argue for change. Any continuity appeared to be quiet, not only because their usefulness was slight, but also because continuities and slow changes are generally more difficult to detect in the archive than the dramatic changes. The latter is surrounded by speech and texts in the archives and lends itself easily to a political and argumentative history to which one can relate quite critically.

History had at least two features of these current processes of change. To historicize meant to define and conceptualize but also to set something in motion. Everything that has a story is and has been the subject of a construction. Whatever

can be historicized cannot be fixed but must by definition be moving and changing (Hacking 1999). To historicize also means to take distance (Ricoeur 2005). In our view, such a distancing rather represents a desire to distance, that is, a desire to distance itself from something that *ought* be in the past but is not. The historical perspective on the present and the contemporary gaze on the past intertwined in an odd way together in this process of change, a braid that can hardly be reduced to cover mental health care; it is relevant to any history that is activated in processes of change.

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Notes

1 The authors of the report were chief physician Bengt Berggren, initiator of the Nacka project, and investigating secretary Börje Strand, Spri.
2 For example Qvarsell 1982; Sjöström 1992; Jönsson 1998; Eivergård 2003.

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Post-colonialism and Otherness Re-examined: Irigaray, Réunion and Decolonisation through Inclusion

By Karine Aasgaard Jansen

Introduction

Anglophile historical and ethnographic approaches to post-colonial studies and inquiries of decolonisation tend to focus upon processes of segregation from the mother country, and political ideas and movements of autonomy. However, the French construction of overseas departments (DOMs) challenges such perspectives. Instead of decolonisation through independence, previous colonies like Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guyana in the Caribbean, and Réunion and Mayotte in the Indian Ocean, have rather, arguably, been decolonised through inclusion into the French republic. Despite the islands' considerable geographical distance from the French mainland, this implies that French overseas departments are members of the European Union, and some are even discussing their prospects for inclusion within the Schengen Area. Their local currency is the euro, and the residents are French nationals.

The empirical focus in this article is on the island of Réunion (estimated total population of 802,000 [Rallu 2009]) where I spent a period of eight months conducting anthropological fieldwork in 2009 and 2010. Although the questions that I raise in this article are influenced by ethnography, I will in the following primarily explore secondary empirical sources concerning the historical relationship between Réunion and mainland France. This is because the purpose and contribution of this article to the wider field of post-colonial studies, is to illustrate how different strategies for decolonisation are subject to historical processes that influence their various political ideologies, practices and outcomes. The main problem that will be investigated is how decolonisation through inclusion may affect discourses of otherness otherwise primarily critically reflected upon within post-colonial studies of independence. My argument is that inclusion as a strategy for decolonisation has led to the exclusion of French overseas departments from the great post-colonial narrative of nationalist liberation struggles, and their confrontations with Eurocentric processes of orientalism. However, Réunion's inclusion into the French republic has not erased discourses of difference or local challenges thereof, but has merely shaped the ways in which otherness and its contestations are articulated.

To discuss this, I draw upon the feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray's ontological approach to sexual difference and gendered otherness by applying her perspectives to explore processes of post-colonial othering.[1] While post-colonial theories primarily conceive of othering as a process to establish difference in order to justify subordination of the other, Irigaray argues that otherness emerges from a Eurocentric expectation of sameness, i.e. similarity. According to Irigaray, otherness is the result of the dominance of a Western philosophical oneness-model upon our ways of thinking and relating to the world, and is produced as the other is absorbed into the same. As a result the other is prevented from establishing independent and equal subjectivity. Within this line of thinking, otherness is not understood to be primarily produced through a manifestation of difference as indicated by post-colonial theories, but is rather a result of its inclusion into the

same, and a loss of its difference. I propose this as a useful approach to the discussion of how processes of othering may play out in a post-colonial situation characterised by inclusion instead of separation, as in the case of Réunion's departmentalisation.[2] In addition, I argue that the employment of Irigaray as a supplement to traditional post-colonial criticism of otherness may broaden the understanding of the French post-colonial field for a predominantly Anglophile readership.

My First Encounter with Réunion: Research Background

When the plane from Paris made its descent towards the international airport of Roland Garros just outside Réunion's capital of St Denis on a very bright and early morning in May 2009, the island's misty but jagged peaks shot up out of the vast Indian Ocean like a jack-in-the-box. As the clouds parted, Réunion's secluded valleys, emerald-green fields of sugar cane and white pristine beaches bathed in sun satisfied all imaginings of an exotic destination. Once on the ground, the sultry smell of heat and humidity mixed with delightfully fragrant frangipani gave further testimony to the island's tropical location. The first encounter with French immigration officers left no doubt, however, about which country's national borders I was about to cross. Whereas residents of the European Union swiftly disappeared through the doors of the airport's terminal building, the queue of non-European travellers hardly budged at all. Upon leaving the airport, French supermarkets and petrol stations lined the immaculate but traffic-jammed highways, while signs with the familiar circle of yellow stars on a bright-blue background informed visitors and residents alike how the roads had been financed. In spite of the multicoloured Hindu and Tamil temples across the countryside and the multiracial appearance of the island's inhabitants, there was still no doubt: Réunion was French.

In contrast to more common or conventional descriptions of a first encounter with the Indian Ocean and its racial, cultural and religious pluralism, my initial thoughts rather centred on Réunion's noticeable "Frenchness". I have not been alone in thinking this. The French anthropologist Bernard Champion (1999:154) writes eloquently about how the "cultural shock" he experienced when he first came to Réunion in 1991 was actually the absence of one: the yellow cars of the postmen, the design of the dustbins and the selection of groceries in the supermarkets – it was all identical to that of mainland France. I had conducted fieldwork in Réunion's neighbouring island of Mauritius on and off since 2003, and was struck by how little the islands resembled each other. Where I expected to find sugar plantations and shantytowns, I found villas with gardens, an impressive population of sparkling new cars and a high density of shopping malls instead. This "discovery" marked the beginning of an investigation into how formations of identity and citizenship in Réunion had been shaped by, on the one hand, the historical movements of goods, people and ideas across the Indian Ocean islands, and on the other, French strategies for nationalism, for centuries.

An Overview of Réunion's History

Except for a few years under British colonial rule from 1811–1815, Réunion has been a continuous part of France. The island had no indigenous population and from its first occupation by French settlers and Malagasy slaves in 1664, Réunion, i.e. Île Bourbon until the French Revolution, was integrated into the French colonial empire (Hintjens 2003). The settler years were primarily marked by homestead settlement and household production, and it was first during the East India Company's enforcement of coffee production in the 1720s, that the island was finally created within a colonial image of geopolitical and economic expansion. From 1744–1749 a crop disease put an end to the island's coffee exportation, and sugar cane was introduced as a replacement (Hintjens 2003:103). The increase in demand for sugar eventually led to the development of large scale mono-cultural plantation systems which in turn encouraged a significant intensified importation of slaves (Vaxelaire 2009). Sugar thereby infinitely changed the island's economic and demographic profile (Chaudenson and Mufwene 2001).

After the French Revolution, Jacobinism ensured the formal abolishment of slavery throughout the republic in 1794. However, due to Réunion's recent sugar boom, large plantation owners refused to comply with its implementation and instead threatened Paris with a declaration of independence. Illegal slave trade into the island continued until the final end of slavery in 1848. By then Indian indentured labourers had started to replace the previous slave work force on the plantations (Hintjens 2003:105). From 1862 free immigration opened up and particularly Chinese tradesmen and artists followed the historical routes of sea-trade connections across the Indian Ocean to the island (Vaxelaire 2009:493). Historical patterns of immigration and exogamous relations thus led to the multicultural society Réunion is today. In addition, various cultural processes of creolisation, i.e. the cultural mixing of two or more formerly discrete traditions or cultures (Hannerz 1992: 264, 265) have led to linguistic, cultural and religious syncretism on the island (Chaudenson and Mufwene 2001).

Economic considerations influenced the island's demographical patterns, but also its geo-political developments. Réunion's status as colony was changed to that of an overseas department in 1946 when France started to loose its colonial grip in particularly Algeria, Indo-China and Madagascar. In order to uphold its strategic influences in the Indian Ocean, Réunion was made the republic's key military location within the region (Finch-Boyer 2010). As a result, Réunion was decolonised through inclusion instead of separation, and became one of the 101 main administrative divisions of the French nation state. Although most Réunionese today acknowledge that the island has its own regional cultural identity separate from France, they also consider Réunion to be a fully included part of the French Republic. Moreover, they intend it to stay that way (Finch-Boyer 2010:6).

Independence and Inclusion as Strategies for Decolonisation

Decolonisation is commonly taken to refer to the process in which former colonies become self-governing states. However,

this very broad definition only includes one form of decolonisation, i.e. the separation of a mother country and its colony as the result of national liberation. Although this type of decolonisation characterised the dissolution of the British Empire, French strategies for decolonisation were also influenced by strategies of greater inclusion into the mother country as illustrated by the case of Réunion. In broad terms, decolonisation can be perceived as being about the undoing of a colonial relationship whether it occurs through separation, inclusion or as a third alternative, free association. In spite of this, (Anglophile) post-colonial studies' primary focus upon the previous British Empire, has led to a "bias" towards independence, and thus ignored other forms of decolonisation. Already in 1968, the geographer Jean Defos du Rau who wrote about the social geography of Réunion, commentated that:

> the tragedy of the situation is this… that even if, in the total absence of fraud, eighty per cent [of the electorate] declared themselves in favour of remaining French, almost no-one would believe them (Defos du Rau 1968:77, in Hintjens 1995:29).

Although decolonisation through inclusion has been rare, it has still been formally recognised by the United Nations Resolution 1541 (1960) as a legitimate strategy on the condition that the outcome has been based upon self-determination through democratic election such as for instance referendums (Hintjens 1995:18). In the case of the former so-called old French colonies of Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guyana in the Caribbean, and Réunion in the Indian Ocean, their departmentalisation has thus been acknowledged by international law, and there has been no fundamental challenge to their status quo, at least not so far (Hintjens 1995).

However, in 1960 the United Nations' General Assembly adopted the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People". The declaration has had international precedence regarding colonial relations ever since. Consequently, the referendum leading to for example the departmentalisation of the previous French overseas territory of Mayotte in the Indian Ocean on 31 March 2011 was condemned by the United Nations' General Assembly.[3] Due to its national and geopolitical splitting of the four islands within the Comorian Archipelago, both the territorialisation and the departmentalisation of Mayotte has been highly controversial and the object of long-term dispute between the French republic, the Union of the Comoros and the United Nations.[4]

The case of Mayotte illustrates both how Anglophile and Francophile post-colonial ideologies may differ, and how various countries and international bodies may disagree on the issue of proper political strategies and outcomes of processes of decolonisation. Instead of being perceived as a strategy for decolonisation (through inclusion) as is claimed by France, Mayotte's departmentalisation has rather been internationally criticised as a subject of French re-colonisation (Sellström, unpublished paper, the Fourth European Conference on African Studies [ECAS 4], Uppsala 15–18 June 2011). Similar observations and comments have also been made regarding Réunion, e.g. that the island has never been decolonised (Vergès 1999) or that it has been "decolonised" into neo-colonialism (Médéa 2004). Nevertheless, to examine post-

colonial relations by boxing up decolonisation with independence, may limit our understandings of the postcolonial field. To simply assume that decolonisation is automatically equivalent to emancipation, explains for instance very little about the empirical causes and contents of the historical changes taking place in particular contexts (Hintjens 1995). As will be illustrated in this article through the case of Réunion, although colonisation was unilaterally initiated, local struggles for decolonisation did not only vary between, but also within, colonies.

The One-sex-model, the Oneness-model and Irigaray's Otherness as Sameness

Due to its non-autonomous status, Réunion's departmentalisation has often been described as an "alternative" strategy for decolonisation (Houbert 1992; Hintjens 1995 and 2003). This notwithstanding, the undoing of a colonial relationship, whether through separation or inclusion, did not automatically put an end to supremacist Eurocentric opinions of racial and cultural difference. As pointed out by post-colonial theories, discourses and practices of orientalist otherness still continue to influence European perceptions of previous colonies and their people. According to Irigaray (1985b) this is due to the dominance and omnipresent existence of the oneness-model within western philosophy.

The oneness-model has its origin in the medical and philosophical one-sex-model described by for example Laqueur (1992). In the one-sex-model female and male reproductive organs were considered to be the same except for their various anatomical morphologies, i.e. inside and outside of the human body. Due to their biological difference from men or their so-called "inverted", or even lack of (male) genitals, women were perceived as incomplete and inferior versions of men. Man and his body, or the phallus as described by Irigaray, thereby became the standard for measurement which everything else was gauged against. Women were accordingly only represented through their relations to men, e.g. as mothers, wives and daughters (Sampson 2008:59). As the one-sex-model served as a representation of a greater world order, it consequently also legitimised both the existent and continuing suppression of women.

According to Laqueur (1992:25) "the one-sex-model dominated thinking about sexual difference from classical antiquity to the end of the seventeenth century". Irigaray, however, claims that the reasoning behind the one-sex-model's establishment of unequal and hierarchical relations between the genders has informed the development of a Eurocentric oneness-model which still enjoys a universal, authoritative influence on all social representations of difference. As a result, both western language and thinking is represented and structured according to the oneness-model, in which women have been denied the opportunity to establish ontological existence as separate subjects (Sampson 2008; Irigaray 2004).[5] In Irigaray's opinion, otherness is therefore ultimately nothing more than the other of the same and only functions as an imperfect duplicate created within the oneness-model's reflection. A copy can after all not be created without the original from which it stems from, and which will always be considered superior to its reproduction. For

that reason, otherness is created within an image of possession similar to colonialism. As such it can also be applied to describe (post-)colonial constructions of racial or ethnic otherness. Due to the oneness-model's intrinsic inability to accept difference, inferiority replaces equality in post-colonial relations. Consequently (previous) colonial subjects share their second-rate situation with women, and do not, in an Irigarayan perspective, exist except as objects consumed by the dominating Eurocentric (hu)Man.

The Fight for French Inclusion and Assimilation

Irigaray's take on otherness as sameness ultimately leads to the other's complete absorption into the dominating part. Her descriptions of the oneness-model thus appear well-suited to explain French strategies for decolonisation through inclusion, and the creation of overseas departments. Réunion's inclusion within France in 1946, however, was not only an instrumental geo-political decision made by the French nation state, but was also the result of continuous local demands for assimilation. Anti-colonialists in Réunion did not fight for self-governing rights, but rather to remain French and obtain equal citizenship (Vergès 1999; Hintjens 1995). Assimilation as a universal value to ensure equality of citizenship is deeply rooted in the Jacobinism of the French Revolution, which was, due to the French civilising mission, to a large extent adapted by the political and intellectual elite in the colonies (Hintjens 1995). Many of its proponents were also educated in mainland France.

The Réunionese struggle towards French departmentalisation was first initiated by the Comité Républicain D'Action Démocratique et Sociale (CRADS) after the end of the Second World War in 1945. The party housed both right and left-wing interests. Two years later, however, Raymond Vergès, a medical doctor, an engineer, and a prominent figure on the Réunionese political scene, disbanded CRADS due to its lack of attention to labour union rights. During the height of the Communist Party's political power in the French Assembly, Vergès founded the French Communist Party's Federation in Réunion in 1947 (Finch-Boyer 2010, Gauvin 2006). In the years to follow, the Communist Federation came to have a very large impact on the political climate and its historical developments on the island. The fight for decolonisation through assimilation was for instance dominated by the Communist Federation, and consequently closely related to their struggle for workers' rights (Vergès 1999). Communism is after all based upon an idea of universal solidarity between workers, and represents as such a oneness-model in itself, centred on the issue of class. An underlying reason for the rapid establishment of the Communist Federation's strong position was also caused by the majority of the Réunionese population's dissatisfaction with the sharp economic and social class cleavages on the island at the time. Due to the island's sugar boom, colonial suppression was rather associated with the local plantocracy, i.e. the economical and political dominance of a small group of large-scale sugar plantation owners, than with the French republic. The Communist Federation in Réunion did for example not demand a trans-

Paul Vergès addressing the crowd at a political assembly. Source: *Témoignages* (online edition); "Image de notre histoire", photo no. 617, first published on 29.1.2013, and accessed on 19.4.1013.

formation of the relations of production, but turned instead to the French nation state for protection against exploitation from the local capitalists. Réunion's full inclusion into its former coloniser was thus argued to end local problems of suppression. Consequently, it was primarily the poor in Réunion who desired greater assimilation with France, whereas the plantation owners considered assimilation to be a threat to their economic and political interests.

In an Irigarayan perspective, the Réunionese fight for decolonisation through assimilation can be perceived as the result of colonial productions of otherness as sameness. As an integrated part of France since the arrival of the first settlers Réunion has after all only ever been defined according to its relationship with France. As a result the anti-colonial movement on the island may not have been able to articulate subjectivity outside of the oneness-model represented here by the French nation state. Local discourses of emancipation could thus only be expressed within the dominating vocabulary, i.e. as demands for continued inclusion. As a result, imitation or assimilation replaced liberation as emblematic tools for decolonisation on the island.[6]

The Struggle for Autonomy, and the Emergence of Irigaray's "Radical Other"

Nonetheless, the Communist Federation's fight to remain French should also be acknowledged as a highly instrumental

strategic move to improve the poor social situation in Réunion. Due to decades of failed mono-cultural reliance on sugar, the majority of the Réunionese population suffered from appalling economic and sanitary conditions at the time of departmentalisation (Vaxelaire 2009:61). The transfer from colony to department did not, however, lead to the French nation state's automatic recognition and accommodation of the people of Réunion as equal citizens of the republic (Vergès 1999:82). French social laws were for example not implemented on the island until the mid 1960s. By then tensions between France and Réunion had severely escalated. Despite the communists' assimilative struggles in the past, it had now become evident to them that shared French nationality did not lead to identical resident status. From the mid 1950s and under the leadership of Raymond Vergès's son Paul, only a claim to autonomy was considered necessary to put an end to colonialism on the island. In 1959, the Réunionese Communist Party was therefore founded as a compromise between the French Communist Party's insistence upon universal solidarity between workers, and Réunionese struggles for autonomy (Gauvin 2000).

On 19 May 1959, the Réunionese Communist Party claimed their right to self-determination for the first time (Vaxelaire 2009:622; Gauvin 2006). The radicalisation of the communists' political ideologies did not, however, occur in a historical vacuum. Particularly the atrocities of the Algerian war between 1954 and 1962 had severely challenged the colonised elite's hopes for equal French citizenship, and ultimately discredited inclusion as a strategy for decolonisation, and assimilation as a viable option for citizenship (Hintjens 1995). In order to make the Réunionese population "aware" of their historical, cultural and linguistic differences from France, the Réunionese Communist Party therefore started to look to nationalist struggles in Africa in addition to Russia in order to confront continued French presence on the island. Consequently, the struggle for a political right to self-determination became just as much a fight for the articulation of a distinct multicultural Creole identity as the result of African, Indian, Chinese and European influences, instead of "simply" a French identity.[7] In an Irigarayan perspective, the Réunionese Communist Party may thus appear to have come to the realisation that assimilation would only ultimately lead to continued French subjugation. In order to find and articulate their own subjectivity, they needed to break free from their adaption of the oneness-model's assimilative image of the island and its residents. To Irigaray, it is only through the recognition of the other's incommensurable and radical difference, that subjectivity can be articulated in its own right (Irigaray 1996).

Within Irigaray's understanding of otherness as sameness, lays therefore also the discursive potential for absolute liberation from for instance remaining colonial discourses of orientalism. Through the other's embracement of its difference, otherness becomes replaced by true autonomy. Otherness thereby ceases to exist as it can no longer be defined according to its relations to something or someone else (Irigaray 2004).

Instead a "radical other", or the "other of the other", finally comes to replace the "other of the same". Applied to the case of Réunion, the Réunionese Communist Party's effort to express and strategically use local historical and cultural differences from the French in their fight for self-determination, may thus illustrate the emergence of Irigaray's "radical other". Assimilative approaches to decolonisation based upon old or classic strategies of mimesis through masquerade or imitation was rather substituted with what Irigaray refers to as a mimesis of difference. Instead of mirroring the One, this type of mimesis is characterised by methodological strategic distortions and misrepresentations of the images of the other (as same) created by the oneness-model (Irigaray 1985a; Songe-Møller 1999; Sampson 2008). Through its claim to its Creole uniqueness and subjectivity, the Réunionese other can be perceived to have altered the oneness-model's colonial image of itself. Not only was French authority on the island thereby challenged, but also the historical validity of the population's shared French national identity, and desire for (equal) French citizenship. The language of the island was no longer solely French (or phallic), but just as much characterised by the voices of the Creole others.

Michel Debré and a Discourse of Dependence

However, the Réunionese Communist Party's ideological change from a struggle for decolonisation through assimilation to a demand for autonomy, did not go unnoticed by the pro-French political interests on the island. Although the assimilationist doctrine was primarily correlated with the revolutionary left rather than right-wing politics in France, there were also conservatives who fought for the island's assimilation, and who continued to do so throughout the 1960s. Their reasoning was that the "people of Réunion" (and not the Réunionese), had always been French. The island's lack of an indigenous population was for instance used rhetorically in order to claim that Réunion had never been colonised in the first place (Hintjens 2003:102). According to the conservatives, claims to self-determination only made sense for a people with a specific culture, language and history, which, in their opinion, the multicultural population on Réunion did not possess (Vergès 1999: 166). Without such common traits there

Campaign poster. Assemblée National (online). Accessed on 19.4.2013.

was therefore also no foundation on which to base a claim for autonomy. Instead they considered the Réunionese Communist Party's change to an employment of a "mimesis of difference" in order to articulate their right to self-determination, a threat to the very republican values of equality, liberty and fraternity onto which their French republican citizenship was founded.

In their fight to counter the increasing support of the communists and their demand for Réunion's autonomy, the conservatives turned to Paris for assistance. In 1963 the former prime minister of France, Michel Debré, responded to their request and arrived on the island shortly thereafter to lead the conservatives' campaign against Paul Vergès. Debré was an anti-communist, a Gaullist and a believer in French imperial grandeur (Vergès 1999: 128). When France lost the Algerian war of liberation in 1962, Debré even resigned from his post as Prime Minister (Finch-Boyer 2010:205).

With Debré on the frontline of the political barricades, the conservatives won the election against the communists in 1963 with a clear majority of the votes, i.e. 30,908 votes against 7,365 in favour of Vergès (Finch-Boyer 2010:213). As a result, Debré became a deputy in the French Assembly, and remained a legislative representative for Réunion for 25 years to come (Gauvin 2006). The success of Debré's electoral campaign was to a large extent based upon an employment of otherness as an argument against the island's separation from France. Autonomy, Debré argued, would lead to the "enslavement" of the island's population to communism, poverty, disease, death and the general hardship that he believed characterised other recently independent neighbouring countries like Mauritius and Madagascar. By including the Indian Ocean island of Réunion within the apparently civilised and democratic world of European France, Debré deliberately juxtaposed Réunion against its so-called "primitive" African neighboring countries (Vergès 1999). For the conservatives, it was therefore of uttermost importance that Réunion remained French in order to be "liberated", i.e. avoid the destitute destiny ahead of them if the island was to "become" African instead of European.

As a consequence, Debré was presented as a rescuing father who could "save" the Réunionese from separation from France, and thereby protect them from further or even greater suffering. In exchange for their votes, Debré promised for example the Réunionese electorate substantial economic and sanitary improvements to better the impoverished conditions on the island. If the Réunionese voted to remain French, they would not only be rewarded with material improvements, but also finally obtain their long fought-for equal rights to various social services, and full republican citizenship. If not, they would be punished with enduring hardship instead.

A discourse of dependence was thus deliberately created between Réunion and mainland France, in which the categories of sameness and otherness played central parts. The conservatives with Debré in front deliberately obstructed the Réunionese Communist Party's effort to, with the use of an Irigarayan vocabulary; develop subjectivity through their claim to a distinct Creole identity as a "radical

other". Instead they produced sentiments of gratitude for remaining French among the Réunionese population (Vergès 1999: 149). It was for instance claimed that the island's geographical isolation and lack of resources, would make it extremely difficult for the people of Réunion to either succeed or even survive on their own.[8]

Debré's campaign was highly successful. Even today it is very common to come across views on and of the island which continue to employ dependence upon mainland France as an argument against sovereignty. In addition, the 1963-election marks the beginning of a very long period of non-communist Réunionese parliamentary representation from 1958 to 1986 (Gauvin 2006:237). Nevertheless, the Réunionese Communist Party has still managed to hold much of the local political responsibility on the island up until today due to for instance directly elected positions in the Regional Council (Gauvin 2000). Paul Vergès served for example as the President of Réunion's Regional Council from 1998 to 2010.

The Role of Language in the Formation of French National Citizenship in Réunion

Despite the communists' and the conservatives' opposing political standpoints on the subject of a Réunionese right to self-determination, both of the camps grounded their views and the reasoning behind them on the same French principle for nationalism based upon jus soli or "the right of soil", rather than jus sanguinis or "the right of blood". While jus sanguinis accords citizenship on the basis of kinship and descent, citizenship is rather defined by one's place of birth according to the principle of jus soli. To the communists the very island and population of Réunion functioned thus as the key to their nationalist strategies for self-determination, whereas the conservatives utilised the exact same principle in order to argue for continued inclusion and assimilation with France, i.e. the island had always been French.

As the principle of jus soli is not defined within national, territorial boundaries, France has consequently claimed the necessity of a uniform, rather than a heterogeneous, national citizenship in order to ensure functioning democracy across its departments (Brubaker 2001). The key to France's so-called civilising mission and cultural nation-building throughout its colonies has been the establishment of the French language as a common denominator for republican citizenship (Forsdick and Murphy 2003; Lebovics 2004; Thomas 2007). In Réunion, this has been mostly visible with regards to the Creole language which is by and large excluded from public, i.e. media and educational, use (Médéa 2004). In an Irigarayan perspective, the issue at hand may be interpreted as yet another example of the oneness-model, or the French nation state's denial of the other's development of independent subjectivity. As creoleness is heterogeneous, it may after all threaten the French republican value of a homogenous national citizenship as the foundation for democracy. As a result, the Réunionese's "lack of language" has left them unable to gain ground in which to express their "radical otherness", i.e. their Creole identity.

This notwithstanding, in February 1991

riots broke out in the low-income neighbourhood of Le Chaudron in Réunion's capital St Denis, when a very popular local pirate television station by the name of Télé FreeDom (note the Franglais pun), which broadcasted largely in Creole, was shut down by the French government. Eight people were killed and several hundred were injured (Pontus 1995; Lionnet 1993). However, while studies of the riots inspired by critical Anglophone post-colonial theories describe the incident as caused by pro-independent and anti-government demonstrations (Weinstein and Ravi 2009; Lionnet 1993), FreeDom's creator Camille Sudre, rather claimed that the motivation for the establishment of the station was to criticise the reigning "Parisianism" in favour of freedom of speech (Pontus 1995). Whereas the state monopoly on television broadcasting had been lifted in mainland France by the mid-eighties, the same had not occurred in the overseas departments. According to Sudre, FreeDom was thus not about the liberation from France as such, but rather freedom from continued French control of television broadcasting in Réunion. Once again, the Réunionese demanded "no more, no less", i.e. equal, French citizenship, and not autonomy (Simonin 2010:217).

Post-colonialism, Francophonie and their Paradoxes

Although both French and English strategies for the formation of national citizenship presume some kind of internal homogenisation, their approaches to the questions of (post-)colonialism has been differently dealt with. The French equivalent to the post-colonial field, francophonie, is for instance generally less occupied with critical inquires of continued processes of neo-colonialism, and criticism of constructions of otherness, than with emphasising cultural and linguistic links between the motherland and its previous colonies. Indeed, the direct translation of the term francophonie means the ability to speak French (Hargreaves and McKinney 1997:3-4). Francophonie gained its current meaning in the immediate aftermath of decolonisation, i.e. at a time when the republican Jacobin values of homogenous citizenship was severely contested throughout a large number of the French colonies. According to Hargreaves and McKinney (1997), (Anglophone) critics of the concept tend to perceive francophonie as a sustained assertion of cultural, and sometimes even political, hegemony over former colonies. In comparison, post-colonialism rather appears as a critical undermining of the colonial condition, and its current reproductions such as discourses of otherness. However, to presume that francophonie, and not the least decolonisation through inclusion only represents forms of neo-colonialism, may cause a failure to acknowledge the variety of local struggles for decolonisation, c.f. Réunion (Hintjens 1995). Despite its lack of emancipatory practice, assimilation nevertheless represented an anti-colonial ideology to the conservatives in Réunion. In addition, although post-colonialism represents a vital theoretical and empirical perspective, it has sometimes had the effect of reifying, in discursive terms, established colonial structures of power instead of challenging them:

> In its own way, the "post" in post-colonial often connotes a political assertion akin to, or rather in

contradiction with, that underlying francophonie: to speak of a post-colonial condition is to affirm the right to political and cultural self-determination. Yet by defining cultural projects in terms of a common reference to an earlier period of colonial domination, there is a risk of ensnaring formerly colonized peoples within the very hegemony which theorists of the post-colonial condition are concerned to break (Hargreaves and McKinney 1997:4).

As such the post-colonial condition may at worst represent a contradiction in terms or a theoretical paradox which instead of deconstructing otherness, rather unintentionally emphasises it. Moreover, the French overseas departments appear in many respects to cut across the binary logic in which (post)-colonial constructions of otherness traditionally apply. Local struggles for inclusion and assimilation were, after all, also a type of confrontation of otherness based upon the idea that departmentalisation and French citizenship would ensure the Réunionese equal social rights, and thereby ultimately erase colonial differences.

Concluding Remarks: Irigaray's Intersubjectivity

As illustrated throughout this article otherness has played changing roles, and has had various impacts, on Réunionese identity and citizenship formations at different historical and political moments on the island. Constructions of and reactions to otherness is not static, but is rather formed by various contextual discourses and events. In my opinion, Réunion and its residents neither fit the description of a post-colony nor a neo-colony. Instead the island can be taken to represent both categorisations simultaneously. In order to understand the concept of otherness and its implications, its empirical manifestations and the reasoning behind them therefore needs to be taken into account.

In comparison, Irigaray (2000 and 2004) argues that in order to overcome the problem of otherness, subjectivity must be articulated and understood inter-subjectively, i.e. in the space between the categories of otherness and sameness. Liberation from otherness (as sameness) is not simply achieved by the other's recognition of its incommensurable difference as a "radical other", as this will, in Irigaray's opinion, only lead to a reversion of positions and thereby continued dichotomisation and reproduction of hierarchical relations (Sampson 2008). The other must avoid becoming a new One, something which can only be achieved when subjectivity is established through the relations between the two dichotomies.

Irigaray does therefore not speak out for cultural fundamentalism, but rather recognition of difference as a foundation for equality. As such, otherness can become a subject for mutual respect, and not subjugation. Irigaray (2004:xv) points for instance out that it is through the establishment of a culture of two subjects that one finds the "liberation of humanity", something which she claims is a task which is "especially appropriate in a multicultural era as is ours if we intend to reach a pacific and democratic global society and culture". Although this part of Irigaray's philosophy is often taken to be utopian, I believe that it still offers, at least theoretically (and maybe ideologically), an insight into how one may overcome the analytical short-comings and paradoxes of both conventional Anglophone post-colo-

nial theories, and francophonie. By allowing the possibility for the empirical existence and analytical inquiry of post-colonialism and neo-colonialism together, it additionally recognises the wide variety of interchanging strategies for decolonisation, and constructions and confrontations with Eurocentric otherness, in different times and contexts.

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Notes

1 Irigaray does not question biological sexual differences, but rather uses biological difference as a starting point to investigate how the woman is produced as the other (Irigaray 1991). Irigaray's understanding of sexual difference relates therefore to both nature and culture. She claims that the association of women with nature and matter within Western thought has led to women's subordination to men at the expense of a female subject position as different, and not other.

2 It should be noted, however, that this is an opinion which is not representative for the field of post-colonial studies. Instead one of the principal voices of post-colonial criticism, Gayatri Spivak, criticises French post-structural feminism, Irigaray included, for Eurocentrism. Spivak argues for example that French feminism tends to reproduce rather than deconstruct imperialistic reasoning through its continued insistence upon non-western women's otherness (Spivak 1988). Spivak also questions French feminism's lack of empirical usefulness, e.g. its occupation with the symbolic suppression of women through language instead of lived experiences. Nevertheless, she still acknowledges Irigaray's (1985a) criticism of the Eurocentric oneness-model and its dominance within western "thinking".

3 From a juridical and administrative standpoint French territories and departments differ considerably. Whereas territories are semi-autonomous, overseas departments are fully integrated parts of France and have the same status as mainland departments.

4 In December 1974, the French government organised a referendum in which the Comorian population could opt for national independence or continued attachment to France. Whereas an overwhelming majority of the electorate, i.e. 94,4 percent voted in favour of sovereignty, Mayotte, with less than 10 percent of the total number of registered voters, voted in favour of remaining a French overseas territory with 65 percent of the votes. As a result, the Comoro islands were split internally, and from 1995 and onwards France introduced visa requirements for Comorian citizens to visit Mayotte (Sellström, unpublished paper, the Fourth European Conference on African Studies [ECAS 4], Uppsala 15–18 June 2011).

5 Irigaray's critical approach to the oneness-model's continuing effect on western thought, is a direct response to the psychoanalytical theoretician Jacques Lacan's statement that women do not exist (Irigaray 1985a). Due to girls' identification with their "castrated" mothers, Lacan argues that women never manage to overcome the imaginary, i.e. the unconscious, pre-oedipal phase which is characterised by the child's non-verbal relationship to its mother. As language functions as the key into the so-called symbolic order which is responsible for the development of human subjectivity through cultural socialisation, women, in Lacan's opinion, consequently never enter it (Mortensen 2008; Sampson, 2008; Jansen 2010).

6 Vergès (1999) who is a native to Réunion, describes the relationship between the island and the French republic through the use of an image of colonial and republican "family romance", which, in my opinion, resembles to a large degree Irigaray's criticism of the Eurocentric oneness-model. Vergès claims for instance that when slavery was formally (but not empirically) abolished as a result of the French revolution, family romance led to the replacement of the white slave master with a novel, symbolic authoritative figure repre-

sented by the French republic, or "La Mère-Patrie". The republican image of family thus implied that the colonies were still in need of guidance from their older European brothers, something which led to the development of relation of dependence between Réunion and the French republic. This argues Vergès, ultimately resulted in the so-called "castration" of the colonised Réunionese with regards to their potential to envision and organise political counter-movements for self-determination.

7 Creole is commonly used to describe someone or something local in Réunion, and functions as a common denominator between various ethnic and religious differences on the island. Nevertheless, I support Finch-Boyer's (2010) claim that the term Creole should not necessarily be perceived as a contrast to French. Instead Creole represents both a distinction and concurrence of identity categorisations and strategies that was encouraged by the economic and political climate of the post-departmentalisation years. Although the contents and meaning of Creole and French are constantly negotiated in various situations, they are not a priori dichotomous identities.

8 Centuries of sea-trade connections among the islands of the Indian Ocean were conveniently ignored.

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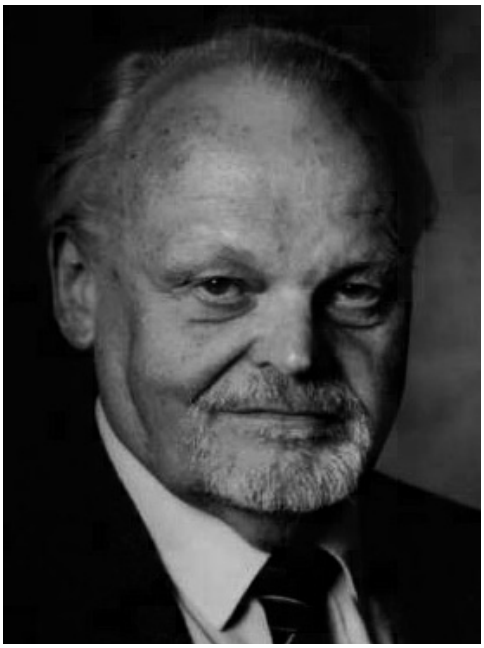
Bjarne Stoklund, 1928–2013



Bjarne Stoklund, professor of ethnology at the University of Copenhagen 1971–1996, died on 3 May at the age of 85. He will be missed at the department, because Bjarne always remained a valued part of the academic environment at the Department of Ethnology, where he appreciated having his emeritus office, writing, and joining in debates. His interest in current conditions in the university never flagged, but as a pensioner he saw it as his duty and his privilege to avoid influencing the debate with his own opinions. When visiting colleagues asked about Bjarne, it was always a confirmation of the value of our academic environment to be able to say that he was still active and present in the department. Now his scholarly work has come to an end.

Since he became professor of material folk culture in 1971 and renamed it European Ethnology, generations of ethnology students have benefited from his commitment and his vast knowledge. Bjarne was not afraid to tackle new things, but was also able to maintain the qualities of earlier research and knowledge. It was not without good reason that, when he gave his inaugural lecture in 1971 as professor of European ethnology, the title was "Between Scylla and Charybdis"; he portrayed his subject as one which has to find a considered balance between the synchronically working but holistically oriented side that is anthropology and the historicizing but element-oriented aspects belonging to cultural history. This balanced outlook was something he had learned as a student assistant with Svend Jespersen in Department 3 of the National Museum, where Bjarne was an assiduous participant in the annual trips in the 1950s to record material for the large-scale farmstead surveys. Here he was transformed from the young student to the fully qualified researcher who found employment at the Open-Air Museum (Frilandsmuseet) in 1958. There he had the opportunity to pursue farmstead research in close association with the moving and re-erection in the museum of buildings from the pre-industrial age. Several of his books take the point of departure in the study of these houses to tell about the history of rural culture as such, and thus anticipated more recent attempts to integrate micro- and macro-perspectives in cultural history. Another outcome of the ethnological research at the National Museum, where local studies were delegated to young staff members, was that Bjarne came to tackle Læsø, the island from which his father's family and the surname Stoklund originated. The study of Læsø from the Middle Ages to the present in complex interaction between the locality and the surrounding world followed him from his student days, via his years at the Open-Air Museum and as university professor, and remained central right up to the end. At his death he was busy finishing a book manuscript with the results of the many years of studies of transformation processes in the ecology and culture of Læsø from 1500 to 1900. Bjarne Stoklund also made use of his retirement to finish other studies from a long life of ethnological research, of which the most important were the publication of *Tingenes Kulturhistorie* ("The Cultural History of Objects"), the studies of medieval fisheries in Denmark, and of the Faroese house.

When Bjarne Stoklund acceded as professor the subject was in transition, and together with younger Swedish colleagues he contributed to its modernization, introducing students to new directions and interests in Scandinavian ethnology. It was thus he who brought American cultural ecology into the subject and encouraged semiotic analyses of costumes and other forms of communicative objects. Family and household, nature and culture, ecology and peasant ecotypes and finally nation formation were some of the topics that are now inscribed in the

canon of the discipline. It was also Bjarne Stoklund who worked tirelessly to ensure that the only Danish university with the subject of ethnology remained in close contact with sister departments in the Nordic and other European countries. In that connection Bjarne Stoklund was the Danish member of the editorial board of *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1988–1996 and editor in chief of *Ethnologia Europaea* 1984–2004. Both nationally and internationally Bjarne Stoklund secured recognition for Danish ethnology. In 1991, for instance, he became a member of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and in 1997 for a period he was guest professor at the University of Edinburgh. In 1994 the president of SIEF (Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore), professor Konrad Köstlin, Vienna, invited Bjarne Stoklund to become a member of the executive board of SIEF, in order to intensify the contacts between SIEF and the journal *Ethnologia Europaea*.

Bjarne Stoklund's publications are characterized by a fluent and effortless style of presentation and a sense for the importance of empirical diversity and detail. He did not make a big thing of theoretical work, which is instead implicit in his works. Added to this was his keen eye for connections across time, place, and national borders, and this brought him into cooperation with researchers from many scholarly traditions all over Europe and Scandinavia, where the North Atlantic was of particular interest to him. Wherever one went with Bjarne Stoklund, he had friends and colleagues who received him (and his younger colleagues) with open arms. He will also be remembered by his students for the fantastic journeys and excursions that he arranged in Denmark and Europe.

Throughout his time as professor, Bjarne Stoklund wrote his own version of the history of the discipline, and, as is usual with historiography, this was also intended to set a political agenda for how he hoped the subject would develop. Bjarne was thus engaged right up to the end in continued discussions of what was right and wrong about the direction of ethnology. Now Bjarne Stoklund himself has become a part of the history of the subject, and we will be glad to cherish the memory of him as a warm human being, whose contributions and opinions are still worth debating, because their quality will last far beyond the human life that is so much shorter than that of ethnology.

Staff of the Department of Ethnology, Copenhagen University

Brita Staxrud Brenna, Professor in Oslo

Brita A. Staxrud Brenna, born 1963, was appointed professor of museology in 2011 at the Department of Culture History and Oriental Languages at the University of Oslo. She took her Master's degree in the history of ideas in 1994 and a PhD in 2002. She received her academic training at the interdisciplinary Centre of Technology, Innovation and Culture (TMV, later TIK), where she worked as a PhD candidate, post-doc and researcher for more than ten years. From 2008 she held the first post as senior lecturer in museology at the University of Oslo.

Thematically Brenna worked for many years within science and technology studies. Her main field of interest was the cultural understanding of technology and science, with special focus on feminist perspectives as well as on the nature–culture dichotomy and the relationship between science and politics.

Brenna's PhD dissertation deals with the world exhibitions (*Verden som ting og forestilling: Verdensutstillinger og den norske deltakelsen 1851–1900*). This is a very comprehensive and learned treatment of these gigantic events, where Brenna shows her qualities as a historian and historian of ideas. Her lucid discussions of classification regimes, exhibition history and techniques, representation and observer positions, outreach policies and the power of definition, all point forward to her later interest in museums, collecting and material culture.

Her scholarly production in the early 2000s is marked by a broad range of approaches to science and technology studies (STS). Brenna has been an important mediator of the feminist theories of scholars like Donna Harroway, as well as an ambassador of the actor-network theories (ANT) of French and American scholars. Co-edited books like *Technoscientific Cultures: The Politics of Intervention* (2007 [2001]) and *Temmet eller uhemmet: Historiske perspektiver på konsum, kultur og dannelse* (2004) give broad insight into these fields. Another important co-edited book is *Ærnula Lauri: The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters 1760–2010* (2009), where Brenna appears as a prominent historian of science.

In later years Brenna has published extensively on collecting, historic exhibitions and material culture, with a predilection for the Enlightenment period, in addition to more general texts on New Museology. A recent field of interest is how perceptions of the landscape changed during the eighteenth century and how nature is represented in museums and in exhibitions throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Brita Staxrud Brenna has an unusually varied and multidisciplinary background – the history of ideas, science and technology studies, cultural history – and a pronounced interest in the history of collecting and collections, exhibitions, museums and material culture. I think the institute and the University of Oslo have found the perfect person to develop the newly established Master's degree in museology.

Bjarne Rogan, Oslo

Line Alice Ytrehus, Professor at NLA

Line Alice Ytrehus, now professor of intercultural understanding at NLA School of Religion, Education and Intercultural Studies in Bergen, represents a broad and all-round approach to culture studies. She has an interdisciplinary orientation, describing her academic profile as being based on humanistic methods, but taking an interest in the social sciences. In empirical terms she has worked especially with migration and multicultural issues with the emphasis on identity, but she has also published in the fields of theory of science and research ethics. In recent years she has been involved in a research project with the focus on development projects in Bolivia.

Of her many scholar and popular works, I would highlight two in particular. First her doctoral dissertation from 2004, *Intellektuelle i eksil* ("Intellectuals in Exile"), an important contribution to understanding the new cultural complexity in the Nordic countries. Since the dissertation is about intellectuals, that is, articulate and knowledgeable immigrants (often refugees), it has a strong touch of dialogue and is based on a more equal relationship between researcher and subjects than most of what is written about immigrants. Before, during, and after the work on her dissertation, Ytrehus has been widely engaged, as an author, researcher, lecturer, in defining the new Norway. Her background in feminist and postcolonial theory has helped to make her perspectives on the new Norway both original and critical, and this applies not least to her critical analyses of cultural relativism.

The second publication I would emphasize is the edited volume *Forestillinger om "den andre"* ("Images of Otherness") from 2001. With essays from all the Nordic countries, this book was an innovation in the understanding of forms of exclusion and cultural boundaries. Since the book appeared, Norway has turned in a xenophobic direction, so it is needed even more today than when it originally appeared.

Line Alice Ytrehus is an exciting researcher who plays an active part in a number of networks and also develops research environments around her. She is theoretically broad and analytically consistent in her exploration of the interfaces between cultural worlds and symbolic power. Her chosen field is actually somewhat overpopulated, but with her interdisciplinary approach, where she is equally likely to quote from literature or philosophy and sociology, she has delivered a series of original contributions to it. Now that she is doing research on problems associated with development in South America, we can look forward to future publications with the same analytical acumen and multidisciplinary openness as her previous work, but applied to a new field.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Oslo

Maja Povrzanović Frykman, Professor in Malmö

Maja Povrzanović Frykman studied ethnology at the University of Zagreb and received her doctorate there in 1997. Since 1999 she has worked in Sweden, most of the time at the Institute for International Migration and Ethnic Relations, Malmö University, first as a research associate and later as a lecturer. Today she is professor of ethnology in the Department of Global Political Studies at the same university.

Her dissertation *Culture and Fear: Wartime Everyday Life in Croatia 1991–92* (in Croatian) maps a field that she has continued to develop in several studies. Using an extensive corpus of interviews and life-histories she has discussed how war experiences shape everyday life, from a number of perspectives. She shows that ethnic hatred was a product of the Yugoslav wars, not as often is argued a pre-condition for violence.

In her insightful article "Violence and the Discovery of Place" from 2000 she analyses how civilians coped with the long siege of Dubrovnik. She shows not only that wartime involves trying to reorganize some kind of everyday life, but also how the longing for normality may even take on strong symbolic forms: getting hold of a fresh loaf of bread from the baker in a lull of bombardment creates an almost sacred moment of bliss – everyday life as it used to be or perhaps will be – again.

Her ethnographies of war experiences made her engage in the discussion, or rather lack of dialogue, between local and international ethnographers. She shows how many visiting anthropologists were too quick in dismissing (in a rather arrogant way) the research of local ethnologists as partisan or pedestrian – a confrontation that occurred in many other Eastern European settings after the fall of the communist system.

From war experiences she moved on to questions of migration and diaspora with a focus on the handling of transnational movements and identifications. Her fieldwork among Bosnian and Croatian immigrants and refugees in Sweden gave her an important opportunity to compare different generations: the labour migrants to Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s and the refugees that arrived in the 1990s. The totally different experiences of these two cohorts gave the diaspora in Sweden a marked complexity and internal tension.

Her work on transnational movements made her aware of a striking lack in migration studies. In this tradition there has been a strong emphasis on identity constructs and discourses, often neglecting the intense physicality of transnational movement. Immigrants rarely travel business class through the world; their movements are full of friction: aching bodies and anxious waiting. This she demonstrates in a brilliant way in her ethnography of bus journeys with Croatians in Sweden travelling back and forth between the old and the new homeland, *Bodily Experiences and Community-Creating: Implications of Transnational Travel*. Her focus on "doing the transnational" has made the material dimension important – not only the material infrastructure of bus interiors or transit spaces but all the objects carried back and forth, gifts for relatives back home and stuff that one simply must bring back from the old homeland after the vacation. This strangely neglected dimension of migration studies is explored in the paper she presents in the current issue of *Ethnologia Scandinavia*.

For many years Maja Povrzanović Frykman has worked in multidisciplinary settings and has been very active in international networks. One of her many ethnological contributions to these exchanges has been to constantly demonstrate the importance of intense ethnography and sharp cultural analysis of the practices of everyday life in a transnational world.

Orvar Löfgren, Lund

Kerstin Gunnemark, Professor in Gothenburg

In 2012 Kerstin Gunnemark was appointed professor of ethnology at Gothenburg University. She defended her doctor's thesis *Hembygd i storstad: Om vardagslivets praktik och den lokala identitetens premisser* in 1998 – the result of a long process of research together with women in the Gothenburg district of Kortedala. This started out as part of an action-oriented project in the eighties instigated by renewal planning for the district; the need to get access to local knowledge, experience and symbolism got a women's writing group started, which eventually raised the question of starting an apartment museum that would show (and be the backdrop for narrating) living conditions in a home when the district was built in the fifties. In this process which is covered in the thesis, Gunnemark served as a resource for the local community rather than a leader – and this may be seen as characteristic of her work in general, where a strong sense of democratization is always present.

She has used the knowledge gained from the thesis in several subsequent similar projects, each giving further methodological insights as well as pedagogic innovations. She has, for instance, recently written on possibilities and problems with writing groups as a strategy for interaction and as a research asset. Furthermore, the roles of things and milieus, as well as of memories and narration, in interactive processes of production of cultural heritage are recurring themes in her output. One of her books on being young in the fifties has been most appreciated by the public and is used in the popular adult education movement. The greater part of her research falls within the field of urban studies, but she has recently started to do research on archipelago summer living – a return to the field of the inter-Nordic Kattegatt-Skagerrak Project which she took part in during the eighties, thus exploring the possibilities of making a longitudinal study.

In teaching as well as in research, she has for long time taken the responsibility of maintaining strong bonds between the university and museums and to keep this relation dynamic and under constant renewal, while at the same time addressing questions of contemporary relevance to the public. She is generous and inspiring which has contributed to keeping ethnology in Gothenburg going during a period of harsh conditions, and her appointment as professor is a welcome strengthening of the discipline's position and future there.

Alf Arvidsson, Umeå

Bo Nilsson, Professor in Umeå

Bo Nilsson was appointed professor of ethnology in 2012. He defended his doctoral thesis at Umeå University in 1999, became lecturer at the Department of Ethnology in 2003, and was promoted to docent in 2005. Meanwhile he had several assignments, among them head of department.

He has long experience of research and lecturing. Masculinity, victimization, urban studies and new social media play an important role in his scholarly writings. They seem different at first glance, empirically and theoretically, but they fit together.

In his thesis on the representations, ideologies and rhetoric of masculinity, Bo Nilsson sought a more profound understanding of masculinity. The empirical data, collected from the early scouting movement and from trial proceedings on the subject of fornication and arson, represented a new genre of cultural investigations. The analysis of the lives of single men is a prominent part of his study. Bo Nilsson carried out life-history interviews via oral meetings, to use his words, with colliding experiences of work and life between him and them.

He successfully went on from his dissertation to analyse people who have experienced violence and abuse. The result was an impressive book on the rhetoric and ideologies of victimization. Once again Bo Nilsson chose to collect his material from life-history interviews. The situation, he says, is defined by media, institutions and experts. The individual relates to the event and the offender, but also the self-imposed or ascribed role of being a victim. Victimization often overrules other social experiences. A new track in his career is urban studies. In his book on Kiruna, a modern mining community, he demonstrates the interplay between the ideologies and mentalities of the town. According to him, they are challenging the main roads of economic, social and historical reasoning.

Many contributions to national and international periodicals and edited volumes give further proof of Bo Nilsson's scholarly skills. Questions emerging from gender and discourse theories as well as the complexity of cultures represent his endeavours in ethnology. From another point of view, he is an independent and innovative scholar. He belongs to the well-known names in Swedish ethnology and his writings are familiar to many students, as they are used in teaching. He performs his investigations with a critical view of the sources and the nature of qualitative methods.

Gösta Arvastson, Uppsala

Helena Ruotsala, Professor in Turku

Helena Ruotsala has been appointed Professor of European Ethnology at Turku University for the five-year period 2012–2017. She has taken all her degrees at Turku University: MA in 1989 and PhD in 2002, and received the title Docent at the same institution in 2003.

Helena Ruotsala started her university teaching career as Research Associate in 1990 at Turku University. Since then she has been teaching and doing ethnological research, becoming a prominent name in European ethnology in Finland. In 2007 she was appointed for one year as Acting Professor of Cultural Heritage at the School of Cultural Production and Landscape Studies at the University of Turku. In 2009–2012 she was an Academy Research Fellow and in 2010–2012 Acting Professor of European Ethnology in Turku. She has also been affiliated with universities abroad: In 2012 she was DAAD Professor at the Department of Finno-Ugric Studies of the University of Hamburg, Germany, for five months. In 2005–2006, she was Visiting Adjunct Professor at the Institute for Cultural Studies and European Ethnology at the University of Basel, Switzerland. She has also actively taken part in the Erasmus-programme, and has been a Visiting Socrates-Erasmus exchange teacher at the Departments of Ethnology at the University of Szeged, Hungary, University of Zürich, Switzerland, and Tartu University, Estonia.

Ruotsala has published on a rich variety of themes, including theoretical studies and wide geographical patterns. Her PhD dissertation about reindeer herding families in one area of Finnish Lapland (Kittilä) and in the Kola Peninsula (2002) is a well-written and well-read ethnographic study; it has since deservingly attained the status of a classic. The study shows a deep understanding of the circumstances of northern areas, and is based on extensive fieldwork in two locations. It also includes theoretical discussions of the change of paradigms in European ethnology. Ruotsala describes the livelihoods of reindeer herders today, and pays special attention to roles of women and family. The latter makes the study exceptional and innovative in the rich literature on reindeer herding. Reindeer herding has been a constant topic for Ruotsala since then, but studied from new perspectives.

Gendered spaces are another general theme on which Ruotsala has published. She has successfully used the same theoretical framework in three studies of three locations, all based on fieldwork: in Finnish Lapland among reindeer-herding families, in Russia among the Mari people, and in a small town in the Alps celebrating Shrovetide. The main issues in the studies – respectively the question of room for women in the reindeer forest, power among Mari women, and whose festival the Schleicherlaufen actually is – are analysed in fruitfully, with a command of theory as well as material and method. Ruotsala has also contributed to the history, role and purpose of European ethnology, and has co-edited several textbooks.

Currently Helena Ruotsala is leading several research projects: “Living on the Border: An Ethnological Study of Transnational Everyday Life and Identity Construction in the Twin City of Tornio-Haaparanta (2009–2013) financed by the Academy of Finland, and a research project about consolidation of municipalities funded by a private foundation.

Hanna Snellman, Helsinki

New Dissertations

Interpretations of the Experience of Ageing

Åsa Alftberg, Vad är det att åldras? En etnologisk studie av åldrande, kropp och materialitet. Lunds universitet, Lund 2012. 176 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7473-341-9.

■ Åsa Alftberg's dissertation *Vad är det att åldras?* ("What is it to grow old? An ethnological study of ageing, body and materiality"), which was presented and accepted at Lund University in September 2012, was carried out at the Swedish Institute of Health as a part of the research project "Elderly Persons in the Risk Zone". In this multidisciplinary research field, Alftberg outlines her ethnological focus on the day-to-day life of the aged – its routines and places – as a part of the ageing process.

From the vantage points of both health research and the public debate on medical issues, the elderly tend to be regarded as a risk group. Such a perception of the elderly has also determined their social status, placing them in the "at-risk health status" group. Alftberg's research seeks to challenge this rigid cultural definition of the elderly. In keeping with the title of her work, Alftberg pursues her fascination with ageing as a bodily experience, a process of change taking place within a material environment and day-to-day settings. The study is within the framework of the theoretical debates in phenomenology and the phenomenology of the body, upon which Alftberg establishes her aim to study the ageing body as a lived identity. According to her approach, the condition of the body and its experientiality provides orientation in day-to-day life. Furthermore, the changing body also changes a person's orientation to the material world in which he or she lives. Although the body primarily emerges in the study as an experienced and narrated phenomenon, it is also a body that acts and moves under the observation of the researcher.

The study is based on a hermeneutic approach whereby the researcher aims to increase her understanding of her research object by placing herself in close proximity to the people in her study. In this way, the minutiae of daily life, often invisible and out of reach to the outsider, are made accessible. The research data consist of the researcher's semi-structured interviews conducted in 2008–2009 with eight women and four men, in addition to the researcher's observations of the daily lives of her interviewees. The elderly people taking part in her study were between 80 and 90 years of age; they all were leading relatively independent lives, for they lived at home and none of them received any assistance from the municipal care services. Of the women interviewed, six were widows; of the men, one was a widower. In addition to these ethnographic interviews, the researcher engaged in participant observation by joining a couple of the interviewees in their daily lives. Thus the researcher became concretely acquainted with them in everyday conversation and situations. Taking part in their lives, she saw them as they faced day-to-day physical and material challenges.

Alftberg manages to combine an admirably clear theoretical framework with a rich corpus of ethnographic data. Her work respectfully and sensitively sheds light on the day-to-day bodily experience of her subjects. Alftberg's reflections on her own role as researcher, the complexities involved in the project and her detailed and insightful discussion of questions related to research ethics make for a fascinating starting point for this study.

The analysis and interpretation of the data is constructed through the five main chapters, beginning with an examination of how everyday and familiar objects change their meanings during the ageing process. At the same time, Alftberg attempts to make the quotidian life and its materiality visible, providing reflections on their meanings for the aged. In this connection, the research also highlights the attitudes of the elderly person's close kin when it comes to housekeeping. Family members are often quick to equate an unkempt home with an elderly person's need for care. In her investigation of how daily habits and routines are formed, Alftberg makes interesting use of Julia Twigg's concept of *bodytime* and how it gives rhythm to daily life. In addition, the research makes use of a little studied, though important matter – the practices that bring joy and comfort into the day-to-day lives of the elderly.

Alftberg also examines how the elderly conceptualize and ascribe meaning to time. She accomplishes this task by observing the ways in which the elderly pace themselves, how they define time as useful or wasted, and how they relate it to materiality. One of the key themes in the study is the elderly person's

home and other day-to-day places, and the travel to and from these locations. Even though the perspective of corporeality pervades the entire study, it is given additional focus with the examination of how the body is spoken about, and on the other hand, how the changing body leads the elderly person to establish new bodily routines and activities to replace those lost or to create new bonds to the material and social world.

Alftberg's research is full of thought-provoking observations and interpretations. Her study shows how the ageing process renders visible the previously self-evident material environment; thus the world calls for reflection as the changing body compels the elderly person to orient him or herself anew to the environment. During this process, the ageing person is also expected to be flexible and prepared to change learned habits and routines as he or she finds that the longstanding structures of daily life can no longer be relied upon. Correspondingly, the elderly person's relationship to various places is plainly reflected in the process of ageing and is thus related to the elderly person's lived and experienced identity. Cultural definitions of old age, ubiquitous outside the home, have less significance in the home when the home serves to strengthen the person's identity and subjectivity.

Alftberg's key contribution to studies in cultural gerontology can be found in her capacity to get close to the subjects of her research, her ability to understand with sensitivity and subtlety the meanings of corporeality and materiality in the day-to-day life of the elderly. Even more broadly, this study paves the way for an interpretive approach to culture that skilfully uses theory to link the material environment to experientiality and corporeality.

Sinikka Vakimo, Joensuu

Life-mode Concepts in Play

Jesper Graubæk Andresen, Formbegreber i spil. En vidareutvikling af livsformsanalytiske tanker. Det humanistiske fakultet, Københavns Universitet, Copenhagen 2010. 175 pp. Diss.

■ I might be the wrong kind of reviewer for this dissertation, which for me has been both a puzzle and a challenge, since I am what the doctoral student in question, Jesper Graubæk Andresen, might call a postmodern, relativistic cultural analyst (or in my case folklorist). On the other hand, I think it is important as a researcher to leave your own comfort zone as often as possible – and that is why I have tried to come to grips with this book, and not only the book, but the whole tradition of analysis and theory called life-mode analysis, a theory with a peculiarly Danish and structuralist-dialectic bent, which, to put it bluntly, feels quite at odds with the main tradition of cultural analysis today. The mainstream in cultural analysis has in my view moved more and more towards forms of analysis acknowledging the subjectivity of the researcher and at the same time letting loose the play of concepts in a way not possible maybe only a few decades ago. I am thinking of books such as Mieke Bal's *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities* (2002), Vincent Crapanzano's *Imaginative Horizons* (2004), Doreen Massey's *For Space* (2005) and Nigel Thrift's *Non-Representational Theory* (2007), to name but a few examples of such theoretically influential books within this field of theorizing.

Viewed from this angle, the Danish life-form analysis tradition can be marked out as an oddity, working its way the other way around, so to speak, not inductive as most cultural analysis is these days, but deductive, not a fusion but a fission theory, not bottom-up, but top-down, starting from a few or even just one concept at the top of a hierarchy, not working with small bits and pieces of cultural evidence and contexts as micro historians, for instance, tend to do, but instead creating or trying to create a coherent theory around certain conceptual set pieces, which are thought to reveal a deep structure or maybe superstructure of a given society, a theory not interested in discussing a classic dualism of structure and agency as in e.g. interactionalism of the kind associated with names such as Goffman, Barth, Jenkins, Cohen and others, but establishing and developing a type of research which of course has a history of its own and quite an interesting one for that matter, one which it would be tempting to look at from a cultural-historical point of view.

The building blocks of this bold and far-reaching theoretical complex consist mainly of a tradition going back not only to Hegel and Marx (who might be considered materialists and/or idealists, depending on the tendencies underlined in an assessment of their work), but as far back as Aristotle, and above all the Danish structural linguist Louis Hjelmslev and the French structuralist thinker Louis Althusser,

and as to newer tendencies in its internal theory build-up, the war theorist Carl von Clausewitz. Especially the variation on Althusser's theory of interpellation seems to be important to life-mode analysis, as is also evident in Andresen's thesis. A central concept in the theory's building process of life-form analysis – of which the ethnologist Thomas Højrup is the main exponent (the other being his compatriot, physicist Anders Boserup) – is what this tradition calls "an intensional terminal concept", that is a conceptual endpoint (and maybe also a starting point) which has the important objective of locking the free play of concepts in the theory, or as it is often (or almost compulsorily) practised in life-mode analysis, in a concept laboratory in which the main concepts of the theory are set up to be cleansed from a historicist or relativistic background into one in which the concepts are tested as to their potential value for the theory. To cite Højrup (in *State, Culture and Life-Modes* (2003): "The solution offered by life-mode analysis to the paradox of the culture concept demands an unusual mode of thinking. This solution, although building upon the 'mode of production-social formation' concepts of historical materialism, also transcends it. Life-mode analysis combines ethnological fieldwork with concepts from the theory of science to elaborate a new concept of class. From being a classificatory concept, 'class' is transformed into what philosophers call an intensional terminal concept."

As he explains this kind of development work, as with the example of the concept of class, it transforms group, subculture or class analysis into a dialectical life-mode analysis. Instead of classifying empirical data, the analysis elaborates structures of theoretical relations and their conceptual end-points or "intensional terminals", which indeed is a term derived from the theory of science. So, as the theory goes, for each mode of production, life-mode analysis develops distinct life-modes, each containing a conceptual world and praxis (another central concept in the theory). Although, as Højrup notes, these life-modes contrast with each other culturally, taken together they constitute each others' conditions of possibility in a self-reproducing social mode of existence.

An important question in my way of thinking is concerned with how these kinds of macro claims made by the theory can be validated, if they can at all, and what kind of explanation value that kind of conceptual building process might have. And when the next logical step in this research process is the understanding of the different life-modes identified being in principle blind to each other, then I begin to wonder if such a world view is comprehensive enough and feasible at all. And to start with a very simple question, how many might the life-modes in a given society be? Are there any terminals concerning such a question, might there be an endless chain of life-forms emerging and declining, or are they rather few and easily identified? Højrup leans towards this latter alternative. In his classic written in this tradition, *Det glemte folk*, from 1989, there are two main life-modes in a preliminary phase of the analysis: the rural and the urban ones; after that four distinct life-modes are identified: the independent life-mode, the employee's life-form, the career life-form and the bourgeois life-form. In a later Swedish revision of the life-mode theory, called realistic life-form analysis, more emphasis is put on concepts such as gender and love, and the life-modes are multiplied to eight, divided evenly between male and female life-forms. In Jesper Andresen's thesis there are eleven life-modes to be reckoned with. These are the wage worker, the employer, the independent entrepreneur, the career person, the clerk, the housewife, the full bourgeois, the feudal peasant, the nobility, the shepherd and the hunter/gatherer.

What is central to Andresen in the life-modes analysed is not how they are represented in the concrete world or in the myriad of possibilities and challenges of everyday life. A life-mode does not in his opinion have a precise size such as e.g. an institution, an association or a state. What is important for Andresen in the theory is how thoroughly and coherently the singular life-modes are constructed. The main idea is that every life-mode can be read as having a relation to the state, which in the system is the interpellating, sovereign power or subject, while the other subjects are dependent on this "ultimate force" which grounds its status on its ability to defend "its" subjects against attacks from the outside, quite literally in matters of life and death. This is then part of a newer phase of the theory and is related to a reading of the German war theorist von Clausewitz.

The pivotal moment in life-mode theory for Andresen is whether the life-mode in question is able to form a whole with an everyday praxis of its own,

and with a permanence which can be secured and when needed defended, in order to be what in this respect is central, a permanently recognized subject. And vice versa, if the life-mode in question is not able to defend itself, then from a life-mode analytic point of view it is just a matter of time before the worldview which the life-mode represents has vanished.

The rereading Andresen performs in his thesis as to the question of the interpellation relation leads him to the conclusion that this relation can be understood in a most consistent way as an interpellative praxis relation of recognition, if one understands it not as a relation between the state and each and every individual, but between the state and the different life-modes, which are then seen as primary recognition relations. Although the interpellative recognition relation in life-mode analytical thinking is seen as a relation to an individual subject, this subject will in Andresen's reading consist of the life-modes themselves as the recognized part.

Interestingly enough, Andresen notes that life-mode analysis has its shortcomings. It has for instance not up to now been able to capture the general rules which could be applied to specific and rather permanent constructions such as a city or a religious sect, or, I might add, a language group. Being myself a Finland-Swede I might wonder how a group such as the one I belong to fares in this kind of analysis. It is difficult for me to see how the question of language could be theorized in this context. In my own research on Swedish and Swedishness in Finland, I have used a concept borrowed from Gregory Bateson, namely double bind, as a way of understanding the sometimes rather psychologically strained relations between Finnish and Swedish in Finland. From a life-mode analytical point of view such a concept might be seen as a kind of psychologization which has no room in a structural, materialistic, dialectic and holistic model as the one life-mode theory offers.

At the same time as one might be able to look upon Swedishness in Finland as in many ways a mirror image of Finnishness (and vice versa), there are also traits which make the two groups quite different. Does that mean that in a country and a state with two official language groups such as Finland one should expect to meet a redoubling of the number of life-modes?

In the penultimate chapter of Andresen's book the author offers an outline of a life-mode analytical cultural analysis of developments in Greenland, starting from the concept of a hunter life-mode and moving into a discussion of recent trends in the problematic concerning independence in Greenland. Studying Greenland from the point of view of life-mode analysis in the shape it has taken lately (starting from Hegel, Clausewitz and the idea of "the survival of the superior defence", as it is called in life-mode theory) will in my view lead to a transposition of the theory in order for it to fit into a framework concerning a society which did not previously have any enemies to speak of (other than nature!). Andresen's chapter on Greenland is interesting reading, especially seen as a cultural-historical essay on specific Greenlandic predicaments and belief systems. On the other hand, my lack of knowledge about Greenland makes it impossible for me to evaluate the relevance of his study in this respect.

In the concluding chapter of his thesis Andresen notes that life-mode analysis stresses that the only thing a science can be judged by is its simplicity, its thoroughness and its lack of internal contradictions. Andresen says that his work primarily concerns the search for a greater internal coherence of the theory, which must be understood from the point of view of how it manages to order the rules of the concepts of the theory. His conclusion is that the intensional terminal concept cannot so much be about a sovereign state subject as of different forms of reciprocally connected relations of recognition, i.e. a model building upon a reading of Althusser's interpellation concept.

The central task of Andresen's thesis seems to be to study how the three fields which can be said to emerge within the theory – what he calls the theory laboratory, the model laboratory and the fieldwork – are made to influence each other reciprocally. In practice the field must always depend on an enormous variety of ambiguities, despite the researcher's theoretical gaze in the first place. The kind of ordering and cleansing taking place in the middle category, the model laboratory, is decisive for Andresen's analysis. Here the model analysis of the theory laboratory meets the heterogeneity of the field. What remains problematic in my reading is that the field in life-mode theory cannot have an independent status of its own, but must be seen as a kind of conceptual realism in the sense that the field consists of, as Andresen puts it, the pressures which the coherent

(theory) puts upon the non-coherent (the empirical).

My main objection as regards the relevance of the life-mode analytical model offered here and in Højrup's many books concerns something which I find is forgotten or repressed in the analysis: the question of destabilization, of the possibilities and complications of a future, a utopia, something which also concerns reading and an understanding of ontological complexes such as sovereignty (a central concept in life-mode theory) and coherence/uncertainty.

Reading these texts on life-mode analysis with a deconstructive intent as I have done, I cannot but ponder on something Jacques Derrida writes in the second volume of his books on the theme of *The Beast & the Sovereign* (2011):

"In spite of this identity and this difference, neither animals of different species, nor humans of different cultures, nor any animal or human individual inhabit the same world as another, however close and similar these living individuals may be (be they humans or animals), and the difference between one world and another will remain always unbridgeable, because the community of the world is always constructed, simulated by a set of stabilizing apparatuses, more or less stable, then, and never natural, language in the broad sense, codes of traces being designed, among all living beings, to construct a unity of the world that is always de-constructible, nowhere and never given in nature. Between my world, the 'my world', what I call 'my world' – and there is no other for me, as any other world is part of it – between my world and any other world there is first the space and the time of an infinite difference, an interruption that is incommensurable with all attempts to make a passage, a bridge, an isthmus, all attempts at communication, translation, trope, and transfer that the desire for a world or the want of a world, the being wanting a world will try to pose, impose, propose, stabilize. There is no world, there are only islands."

So, when read through this lens, focusing on the instability of signification, something which might be seen as a product of the metaphorical nature of signs, the life-mode cultural analysis becomes a rather problematic attempt at creating a kind of scientific stability which in the end is impossible, although the theory itself seems to be open to endless variations on its central concepts. At the same time, though – and this also applies to Andresen's thesis – it is not open for debate as to the internal logic of its quite distinct form of analysis and implicit world view.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, Vasa

Dancing for an Audience

Gunnel Biskop, Dansen för åskådare. Intresset för folkdans som estradprodukt och insamlingsobjekt hos den svenskspråkiga befolkningen i Finland under senare delen av 1800-talet. Åbo Akademis förlag, Åbo 2012. 368 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-951-765-640-5.

■ Gunnel Biskop's dissertation is an interesting and thought-provoking text, above all for scholars with an interest in dance, both as folk dance and as a performing art, but also for those working with the growth of associations or for those who study nation-building efforts. The title means literally "Dance for spectators: The interest in folk dance as a stage product and an object for collection among the Swedish-speaking population of Finland in the latter part of the nineteenth century".

This is a detailed empirical close-up study using newspaper material such as articles, reviews, and advertisements. It concerns a phase in history that has seen very little research into the dances of the people and the processes that led to today's situation where we can, and should, talk about both popular dance (*folklig dans*) and folk dance (*folkdans*) and distinguish them as (at least) two different genres. The dissertation fills a void when it comes to knowledge about these processes and this period.

Biskop's theoretical framework is most clearly seen in the references to Peter Burke's use of Robert Redfield's ideas about the great and the little tradition and the relationship of folk culture to elite culture. Some of Biskop's own thoughts and conclusions are also theoretical touches, where she puts forward new interpretations and hypotheses about the how, why, and what of folk dance for spectators.

The dissertation deals with the emergence, or rather the predecessors, of the twentieth-century movement of folk-dance clubs and highlights the individuals who were important in the first phases during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The role of individuals as actors in history and their social background is crucial, since nothing happens by itself or in a historical vacuum.

It is also possible to see how it was the elite that forced the people and their dances into the Finnish national context and later also the Finland-Swedish context. My reading of Biskop suggests that the people danced and performed for spectators the dances that they did for pleasure, without worrying about whether they were Finnish or Swedish-Finnish dances, or both.

It is evident from the dissertation that several of the dances that the elite, the representatives of Swedish culture, used as national folk dances were choreographies of indigenous, Swedish, or Swiss origin. According to Biskop, this can be regarded as a sign of the difficulty of moving dances from the people to the elite, from the little to the great tradition. The people's simple dances were just not exciting and interesting enough for the bourgeois spectators, but the "pure" choreographies where much more happened rectified this. Another important factor was that the dances for spectators had to be performed in costumes, national dress, or folk dress, not in the clothes that people actually wore at the time. Moreover, according to Biskop it was the costumes, rather than the dances, that the arrangers wanted to show off.

Dances and dancing did not occupy any prominent place in the nineteenth-century folkloristic and ethnological documentation of peasant society, and Biskop says that the reason for this was that the dances could not be described; there simply was no notational system by which the dances could be recorded so that others could dance them. The only way was to learn them first and use this bodily experience to find words for the movements. Biskop also points out that the dances and the music went separate ways, so to speak, which had consequences well into our own times. The melodies and the songs – the folk music – were documented and performed to a much greater extent than the dances.

The soirées, lotteries, and similar events that included dance in some kind of costume (national dance, folk dance, costume dance) were usually arranged to collect money for some worthy cause such as popular enlightenment, schools, the poor, building a clubhouse, and the like. Finance took priority over Finnish nationalism, over the Swedish-speaking people, and definitely over folk culture, according to Biskop, even when the collected money was used to achieve idealistic goals as part of the national or Swedish-language efforts.

Biskop shows that the Finnish and national endeavours, but also the Swedish-Finnish ones, did not come from below but from above, from the circles dominated by Fennomania and by cultural Swedishness (*kultursvenskhet*). The interest that was taken in the other Swedish movement, local Swedishness (*bygdesvenskhet*), the culture of the common people, was more an instrument than an end in itself for the Swedish-speaking elite in their efforts to build a bilingual Finland.

Theoretical elaboration in the dissertation is sometimes relegated to the footnotes instead of the main text. This way of managing the note apparatus is not so common today, but I do not find it disturbing. I occasionally have a different opinion, or at least I have doubts about the way Biskop thinks, for example, when she uses and equates the great tradition and elite culture, or when she writes that the little tradition becomes a part of the elite culture in this connection. I would have preferred to use and develop the "middle culture" that Burke hints at but does not develop either. I may be wrong; this is a field that has seen relatively little research.

The strength of the dissertation is the dense empirical material, and that goes a long way. Today theoretical texts have a higher status than empirical ones, but this does not mean that the empirical ones are unnecessary. On the contrary, they are as important as ever. What other foundation could we have for theories in the world?

Mats Nilsson, Göteborg

Life Stories of Heroes and Seamen

Erik Nagel, I dialog med muntliga och skriftliga berättartraditioner. En undersökning av svenska sjömäns levnadsberättelser. Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Stockholm Studies in Ethnology 6, Stockholms universitet 2012. 222 pp. App. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-86071-90-5.

■ Erik Nagel has written an unusually entertaining doctoral dissertation in ethnology. He studies Swedish seamen's life stories and how they have been influenced by both oral and written narrative traditions, from Homer's *Odyssey* to Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* and texts by twentieth-century Swedish storytellers like Harry Martinson and Vilhelm Moberg. Nagel has taken inspiration from Bakhtin's idea of the importance of reading a given text in re-

lation to the entire history of literature through the centuries. The author also examines how the life stories have been affected by folklife studies and the contemporary public discourse about Sweden.

The material for the study consists of seven life stories written by Swedish seamen in 1953. The stories, which were called reports, were a result of an appeal by the Nordiska Museet in the Swedish specialist periodicals to build up a collection of seamen's memoirs, both life stories and photographs. The appeal was part of the museum's collection of various workers' memoirs, and the museum had already arranged thirteen similar collection drives among other occupational groups, the results of which had been published in part in the series *Svenskt liv och arbete*. The seamen's memoirs comprise a large body of material, about 80 contributions filling more than 4,000 pages of text. The seamen's memoirs were never published, however, an interesting fact that Nagel also tries to explain.

For his study Nagel selected seven life stories, five short and two long, written by seamen on steamships in the first half of the twentieth century, most of them qualified engineers. The primary selection criterion for the study was war, that is to say, all the studied narratives contain memories of either the First or the Second World War, or both.

In the first two chapters of the dissertation Nagel deals with the theoretical frames of reference for his study, while chapter 3 looks more closely at the original collecting drive. Chapters 4 to 6 present the different narratives, with generous quotations and explanatory comments by the author. The closing chapter sums up the analysis.

Nagel's intention has not been to analyse a representative selection of seamen's memoirs; instead he has "chosen to highlight contributions that are so different from each other that they demand very different readings". His aim is thus not to arrive at any general *truth* about the occupation of seaman; he is interested in the individual people as narrators. Nagel points out that there are several different ways to read the texts, but his own attitude is hermeneutic. This means that the reading is perceived as a never-ending dialogue, and the method requires frequent rereading "where questions are asked and developed from the reading itself". He borrows concepts from classical poetics and from folkloristic studies of oral tradition. The texts he examines show that the writers had varying degrees of schooling and some had read more widely than others. In a couple of cases Nagel enlists the assistance of "ethnopoetic" transcription for texts that have a more oral idiom. By breaking up the text into lines of poetry, what is read becomes audible, the rugged character of the text disappears and a broad scale of verbal competence is exposed. Even if the narrator perhaps did not have such fluent written language, he can demonstrate great familiarity with literary motifs and narrative traditions.

The life stories use oral and written traditions as rhetorical strategies. Nagel finds that the seamen's narratives are not just structured by the Nordiska Museet questionnaire. There are also compositional allusions that can be ascribed to traditional heroic narratives and folktales, for example, the frequent use of triads. In the life stories one can find a great many genre conglomerates, motifs, and structures from classical heroic tales in European, Asian, and Semitic traditions. The often laconic, report-style language, according to Nagel, can be linked to the conventions of writing logbooks.

The main theme of seamen's narratives, as Nagel sees it, is the transformation from a country of poverty to a modern industrialized welfare state. He also sees the two world wars as a main theme, but subordinate to the narrative of the welfare state. The narrator lets his hero endure and survive difficulties in retrospect, but the events during the Second World War were no more than ten years back in time. Nagel rarely comments on the truth or otherwise of the gripping yarns, nor is that his task. Yet as a reader one is curious to find out. I would like to know whether the daring adventures and all the hero's hardships really happened in the way they are described in the narratives. But perhaps the main thing is that they *could have* happened, and that the seamen chose to tell them in this way.

In the analysis of the seamen's life stories, Nagel has allowed himself to be inspired by previous scholars, including Johan Georg von Hahn, Otto Rank, Vladimir Propp, and Albert Lord, who have studied classical heroic narratives and folktales. He also uses the structural model devised by Bengt Holbek for the "development" of the hero in his *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*. The plot in the seamen's life stories is structured around a complex of motifs, the most important component of which is the Cinderella motif. It is about the poor boy who sets off into the world to make his fortune. The plot is then

embroidered with different motifs, complications, intensifications, and episodes, as described in classical poetics. Some of the motifs that Nagel singles out in the seamen's narratives are: the messenger motif, captivity and return, deception, recognition, and experiences of war.

Nagel's conceptual model divides the main characters in the stories into three heroic types: *the hero by destiny*, *the hero by action*, and *the hero by tradition* – a development that the same person has to undergo. The hero by destiny comes to the world and survives in complicated or extraordinary circumstances, dictated by fate. Often it is a matter of an incomplete family, where parents or siblings leave the home because of poverty, illness, or death. The hero by action arises when the leading character makes a crucial decision; he may rebel, leave home, and serve some "foreign" master. The hero thus assumes responsibility for his own life, and according to the Homeric heroic tradition, the storyteller can then confirm his leading character's status as a traditional hero.

Frequent motifs here are *homecoming* and *return to the alien*. The hero's social status has been transformed from poverty to prosperity, and the community has undergone a parallel transformation. Unfortunately, it still cannot be taken for granted that the community will show its appreciation for the hero's efforts. In narrative terms the changes in status are mediated through different obstacles, or *test conflicts*, that the leading character has to overcome.

Nagel's own narrative style is influenced at times by the ability of his study objects to dramatize. Sometimes he rounds off his sections in such an exciting way that one cannot but go on reading. What happened next? Did the hero manage to escape from the tight spot? Was he able to save his ship and his comrades? It is a skill to captivate the reader like this, especially in an academic dissertation.

Knowing that the author has previously been successful in analysing seamen's photographs, it would have been fascinating this time too to see some of the collected pictures. In the dissertation only one pictorial contribution is really included in the analysis. The collection drive resulted in just under 400 pictures, a surprisingly small number. Perhaps some of them could nevertheless have been used to illustrate and supplement the seamen's narratives?

The bibliography contains an impressive number of both old and new folkloristic studies of narrative traditions of different kinds, written by Nordic, European, and American scholars. Given the fact that the life stories studied here deal with the sea, one may wonder why Nagel has not taken a greater interest in the literature on maritime ethnology. Researchers like Henning Henningsen and Knut Weibust could no doubt have shed light on the seamen's culture and life aboard ship that these narratives concern.

Erik Nagel shows in his research how the seamen in their life stories carry on a dialogue with Homeric heroic epic and modern literature, but also with folklife studies, by providing detailed accounts of the environments where they grew up and worked. Finally, they carry on a dialogue about the world wars and how Sweden was transformed from a poor country to a welfare state. An interesting conclusion drawn by Nagel is that the narratives clearly signal that Swedish industry profited from the two world wars, which helped to create the security of the People's Home. Neutral Sweden actually engaged in flourishing trade with Nazi Germany, thanks to its well-functioning merchant navy. Many of the seamen were critical of the way they had been treated by Sweden, and insisted that the People's Home was indebted to them − the heroes who had risked their lives for their country at sea during the war. Nagel therefore believes that their life stories did not fit at all well into the accepted narrative of the People's Home, which could be why the seamen's narratives were never published.

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Teaching in Museums of Cultural History

Mette Boritz Pedersen, Museumsdidaktik – et kulturanalytisk studie af undervisningen på danske kulturhistoriske museer. Det humanistiske fakultet, Københavns universitet, Saxo-institutet afd. for etnologi, Copenhagen 2012. 304 pp. English summary. Diss.

■ Teaching at museums of cultural history is a widespread and high-priority pursuit in the Danish museum world. Yet despite this, it is not a field that has seen much research. Mette Boritz Pedersen's dissertation, the title of which is translated as "Formal Education in Museums: A Cultural Analysis of Learning in Danish Cultural Historical Museums", is an effort to bring a focused research perspective

into this field in order to gain a greater understanding of what happens in connection with this teaching, including the intentions underlying it and the knowledge that the museums appear to be passing on to the pupils. The dissertation pays particular attention to how the museums bring the museum materiality (buildings, exhibitions, and artefacts) into the education, and what this can contribute.

Not counting the introduction and conclusion, the dissertation consists of four main sections (each divided into two to four chapters): *Starting Point* provides an introduction to the field of museum education and presents the theoretical and analytical foundation of the dissertation, along with the methods and the empirical material. *Aims* describes the cultural-historical traditions in the field of museum teaching and the intentions behind this teaching today. *Knowledge* focuses on the special knowledge that museums of cultural history are expected to convey through the teaching, and the form of knowledge this entails, as well as the way in which it can be related to exhibitions and artefacts. *Performance* focuses on concrete museum teaching in relation to how the pupils are actively involved in it and in relation to the problem of a not infrequently experienced opposition between intentions and practice in reality.

The theoretical basis of the dissertation is a combination of a didactic starting point and recent research on materiality. Briefly, this emphasizes materiality as something more than just silent or purely mediating instruments of cultural insight. The empirical material consists of 53 observations of how teaching is actually practised at different class levels at nine different museums of cultural history, and of 20 interviews with people involved in the museums' teaching practice, either teachers themselves or responsible for the teaching at a particular museum or at a higher level in the administration.

In the *Starting Point* section Boritz Pedersen describes her research field with the focus on materiality in the light of recent studies of materiality and positions herself in the area that examines what materiality does to people and how it affects them. The theoretical and analytical platform is described with relative brevity. Materiality in museum teaching should be understood as a network of influences. She regards the teaching as a process in which the action is created by the interplay between a number of different influences. She regards the teaching as a network involving both human and non-human factors. This is based on Bruno Latour's network theory. Boritz Pedersen seeks to explore how influences and networks mutually belong together. Influences seem to be more useful than Latour's "actors", which lead one to imagine that things have intentionality of their own. To perform the analysis of what the influences do in the network, she constructs a model that she regards as her analytical tool. The model consists of everything that can be envisaged as influencing what people do and is therefore not analytically stringent – just as one could easily add several other factors that could influence the teaching situation. Boritz Pedersen asks herself what is new about the model and answers that it makes the teacher conscious of what happens in the teaching situation, which is not a convincing demonstration of its analytical strength.

What is new and interesting in her analytical perspective, however, is the focus on the significance of the senses. Her use of the communication researcher Massumi's concept of affect is particularly good, since it seeks to grasp what influences people unconsciously. The many sound observations in the dissertation turn out to be particularly good at yielding relevant knowledge about what is to be understood, namely the meaning of the sensuous and the material. Her own role as part of the field she is studying leads to excellent reflections both on what it means for the credibility of the research and for the well-executed thick descriptions. It is less obvious what the interviews have contributed to the analysis, since they are rarely about materiality.

The section on *Aims* examines and elucidates museum teaching and consists of two chapters: In the first, "Traditions", the author gives an account of the traditions that have steered the work and the forms of practice that have been developed. In the next chapter, "Intentions", the emphasis is on examining the absolutely central didactic question: Why should a particular matter be learned or taught, what is the purpose? Boritz Pedersen begins with a description of the extremely sporadic sources for this. She has taken a broad approach, and the bibliography reflects her thorough work. The chapter on "Traditions" gives a nuanced and reflective account of museum teaching from the 1840s to the present day, but the historical matter is more of a cursory survey than a true frame of reference for analytical use. It ends by bringing in T. Nettke's categorization of

conducted museum tours according to four methods, but it is only used to illustrate the point that the tour is far from being a uniform concept. She concludes that the most widespread form of museum teaching is still the monological guided tour, although it is well documented that dialogues, activities, and dramatization, all involving the pupils, are better learning tools.

The chapter "Intentions" documents how few teaching sessions proceed from the pupils' conditions, because the museums put most emphasis on knowledge and content. Schools often do the same, since many teachers want the pupils to meet an expert with a passionate interest in his or her subject. Boritz Pedersen demonstrates an important problem that all museums must relate to: Should the museums act like schools where the teaching does not just proceed from the pupils' conditions but shifts the emphasis from the communication of specialist knowledge to the pupils' involvement and performance of activities? Or should the museums stick to the same practice as hitherto, giving priority to the knowledge content? The 20 informants who were interviewed are largely in agreement that the aim of the museums should not be "to become a school". But it is surely not enough to claim that the museums are good places for learning if the potential is not utilized, and the many participant observations show that this is not the case.

The section on *Knowledge* consists of two chapters: In the first, "Content", Boritz Pedersen tries to capture the characteristic features of the matter that is taught by the museums, and the different ways in which this matter is presented. Conveying content and knowledge is a crucial element in the museums' self-understanding and positioning as knowledge institutions. She therefore tries to reveal *what* is understood by the term "knowledge" and *how* this understanding is communicated. Based on the museums' websites and interviews with 20 centrally placed museum employees responsible for mediation, she is able to set up three categories of topics in museum teaching: one proceeding from time, one proceeding from geography, and one with a thematic approach (p. 136). The latter category ranges from tours aimed at stimulating debate, to letting pupils try their hand at old work processes such as churning butter, to focusing on historical events and personalities. But the division into these three categories is not used to characterize what distinguishes the different types of tours, so it is not particularly useful.

Far more fruitful is the subsequent discussion of whether knowledge about the past is relevant for the life we live in the present. Many museum workers give priority to specialist knowledge from a firm conviction that history is interesting in itself. But through her extensive fieldwork the author is able to document that it is often difficult to create a link between the museums as temples of knowledge and the reality in which the pupils live. In the museums' hierarchy of knowledge, a high value is ascribed to the superior history, at the expense of small and local histories (e.g. the observation from the Workers' Museum, p. 151). The pupils therefore do not perceive the museums as a relevant part of the present. To achieve *transfer* between the two worlds, there must be points of identification, and here it turns out that local history has special potential. When the past has taken place in the pupil's neighbourhood and has had some significance for present-day conditions, it does not feel so distant in time or place. The geographical proximity gives a sense of nearness – in other fields as well.

Proceeding from the works of the German educationist Wolfgang Klafki about material and formal education, the author points out a new trend in museum teaching, the main purpose of which is formal education, that is, the development and maturation of the individual pupil. The trend is exemplified by participant observations at the Vasa Museum in Stockholm and the Museum of Copenhagen. It is a particularly important problem that is exposed here, so it feels like an omission – as elsewhere in the dissertation – that she does not actively adopt a stance on the fundamental problems that she describes so well.

The chapter "Knowledge, Exhibitions, and Artefacts" analyses how the objects are actually used in the teaching situation. What knowledge is expressed in the teaching in relation to the museum materiality? It is only now that Boritz Pedersen returns to the theories presented in the introduction. In the observations she noticed that rooms and artefacts often have unexpected meanings, and now she links up with the previously introduced researchers Falk and Dierking, who underline that it is the sensuous and physical things in the teaching situation that the pupils remember best. But above all, the field observations show how unplanned, affective things are ex-

pressed in the teaching, which forges a link with Massumi's concept of affect, which is likewise developed sensibly, along with the concepts of intensity and presence.

To clarify the significance of presence, the author elaborates the reasoning with the aid of the literary scholar Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's presence theory, which gives the insight that mere presence can be significant. Boritz Pedersen shows, for example (p. 198), what a stick can do with the pupils. In the section on theory she claims that it is not only the theories that are presented there that are used but that others can pop up where they are relevant. This is how Gumbrecht comes in, just as this analytical part of the dissertation also brings in Annesofie Becker's analytical distinction between presentative and discursive ways of using exhibitions and artefacts. It is slightly confusing that were are not acquainted from the beginning with the analytical approaches that will be used, but it is made clear here that it is the observation studies that called for these concepts, so that the analysis is actually taken further, forcing new perspectives that contributed to our understanding as we proceed. This chapter in the dissertation is one of the best, adding a great deal to our understanding of the significance of materiality in museum teaching, even though it does not use either the influence model or the network analysis.

The section on *Performance* continues the study of how teaching is done in practice at the different museum institutions, and particularly – in keeping with the special focus of the dissertation – on the extent to which the museums' materiality is brought into the teaching, how this is done and with what results. Here, as elsewhere in the dissertation, the extracts from the observations work well as illustrative references in relation to the argumentation and analysis. We are given fine examples of how this practice of letting the pupils hold an object in their hands, put on a garment, or get actively engaged in a processual activity forces new dimensions in the teaching situations; the pupils are brought into a different state through this involvement of the senses of touch, smell, and taste, and thus – the assumption seems to be – elements of the teaching will be remembered in a way that would not otherwise have been the case. There is scarcely any reason to doubt this assumption, but the next question that follows naturally must be about the character of this change, and what fields of knowledge could benefit from the use of these forms of learning. As already mentioned, Boritz Pedersen herself says that it is elements of affect and presence that promote this deeper assimilation of an experience, but one might have wished that she had followed up the question about whether there is a straight line from here to an increased understanding or a transformative experience, as she calls it in one place (p. 257). Affect reactions such as shudders or rapture over a materialized, embodied experience could also be claimed to keep consciousness within an already known universe. As she says herself in another context (pp. 182f.), the shudders provoked in many pupils by the smell in the damp farms of the Open-Air Museum (where, as she stresses, everything is far from being handed down from the past) merely confirm the children's pre-existing ideas about country life in the old days. In a case like this, affective reactions can surely be claimed to conserve existing knowledge. In this connection, moreover, it would have been desirable to have a discussion of whether there is reason to differentiate between topics that are very close to the senses – such as food, clothes, work processes – and topics of a more abstract character, with no immediate connection to the human body.

In addition, it would have been desirable if the dissertation had more consistently pursued the problem of, on the one hand, the museums' role (cf. the chapter "Intentions") as institutions recognized and funded by the state with the aim and duty of conveying a particular kind of knowledge, and on the other hand the task of being successful teaching institutions. The challenge is not just to provide experiences for people to remember – a purpose no different from that of other activities in which young people can engage – but to convey a special knowledge content (in itself, of course, a highly controversial problem field, although it is beyond the scope of this dissertation). It is precisely the communication of this specific knowledge as a teaching endeavour, including the museum materiality, that is to be researched. Boritz Pedersen comes back to this challenge again at the end when she brings in the distinction made by Rømer, Tanggaard, and Brinkmann between "reminder" (the museums' specially handed-down contents) and "genesis" (the encounter between these "reminders" and new groups learning and transforming them). It would have been

natural here to relate these concepts to the discussion of education in the first half of the dissertation, in order to link didactics and the problem of materiality to the specific content that the museums constitute.

The dissertation is well written, nicely ordered and with scholarly exactitude. Clear connections are made between the empirical material and the special didactic and materiality-oriented interest throughout the dissertation. After reading the dissertation one is left in no doubt that using the museums' materiality has considerable potential and hence that the materiality *can* do something and actually *does* it. Also, and this is something the dissertation seeks to point out, many teachers do not make sufficient use of this potential. On the other hand it does not seem obvious to view this as some kind of epistemological watershed, where the materiality – and the sensuous, affective experiences that it is appropriate for fostering – should be understood as an independent entity. It seems more logical to conclude from the cited examples that the materiality is highly dependent on the (con)text and that it is at this intersection that the challenges of using museum materiality should be seen. Perhaps materiality lends itself to some things better than others, but it can never stand alone – unless the purpose is merely to provoke an affective reaction. In several places (e.g. pp. 218 and 263) Boritz Pedersen considers the different contexts in which materiality can/should be put to use, but she does not consistently pursue this problem.

Despite the various objections above, we think that Mette Boritz Pedersen demonstrates a good overall grasp, an ability to structure, and an analytical flair, and that the dissertation is an important contribution to research on teaching and learning and the field of materiality.

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Darkness and Masculinities in Finnish Black Metal

Mikael Sarelin, Krigaren och transvestiten. Gestaltningar av mörker och maskuliniteter inom finländsk black metal. Åbo Akademis förlag, Åbo 2013. ix + 208 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-765-682-5. http://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/87571/sarelin_mikael.pdf?sequence=2.

■ Mikael Sarelin's doctoral thesis, *Krigaren och transvestiten: Gestaltningar av mörker och maskulinitieter inom finländsk black metal* ("The Warrior and the Transvestite: Portrayals of Darkness and Masculinities in Finnish Black Metal"), is the most recent contribution to the small but growing body of scholarship on extreme metal. The thesis adds to existing studies, most importantly the monograph-length treatments in Thomas Bossius' *Med framtiden i backspegeln. Black metal och transkulturen: ungdomar, musik och religion i en senmodern värld* ("With the Future in the Rear View Mirror. Black Metal and Trance Culture: Youth, Music, and Religion in a Late Modern World", 2003), Keith Kahn-Harris' *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge* (2007), and Marcus Moberg's *Faster for the Master! Exploring Issues of Religious Expression and Alternative Christian Identity within the Finnish Christian Metal Music Scene* (2009), by its focus on constructions and performances of gender. Along with this main focus the thesis also aims to provide an overview of Black Metal in a Finnish context and to examine the roles and functions of darkness within it.

The thesis is divided into eight chapters, the first and last ones being the introduction and conclusion. Chapter two presents the objectives and also discusses theory of relevance for the study of Black Metal, primarily subcultural and post-subcultural theory. The author particularly highlights the concept of "scene", as presented by Kahn-Harris, while classic subcultural theory and post-subcultural theory-alternatives such as "lifestyle" and "neotribe" are discarded. Theory is the topic of the third chapter as well, this time in the form of feminist and gender theory. Judith Butler's theory of performativity along with critical masculinity studies, particularly Raewyn Connell's work, are given special attention. Chapter four presents the materials used in the study, consisting primarily of eleven in-depth interviews with active and leading members of the Finnish Black Metal scene conducted between 2001 and 2010, and discusses critical issues relating to the methods of data collection and analysis. Chapters five to seven constitute the main analytical parts of the thesis, aiming to answer the three objectives of the study. In order, they provide a historical overview of heavy metal music and culture in both transnational and Finnish contexts, analyse darkness as the integral ideological component of Black Metal,

and examine masculinity performances in the Finnish Black Metal scene.

The thesis is very ambitious in its attempt to deal with a large number of highly complex theoretical frameworks and perspectives. Unfortunately, the ambitions are set a bit too high. The concept of scene is indeed a very useful analytical tool in the examination of complex transnational music cultures such as Black Metal, but the problem is that the author does not utilize the construct in its proper analytical capacity. This means that the introduction and discussion of it in such a lengthy and detailed fashion seems superfluous. There also appears to be some confusion as to whether "scene" is to be used as an insider (i.e. inter-scenic) description or as a scholarly (i.e. "etic") tool, further indicating that the author may have misunderstood the analytical framework. The lengthy discussion of post-subcultural theory and its critique of subculture studies also seem superfluous as it is not of major relevance for the treatment of the three objectives of the study. While the treatment of post-subcultural theory is superfluous but competent, the treatment of gender theory is of central importance but less competent. The large number of different theories discussed appears list-like at times, with many simplifications and a lack of critical engagement. It is unsure where the author stands in relation to the different and at times contradictory theories discussed. For example, while Queer theory and its deconstruction of natural and stable gender and sexual identities is given much space, the discussion of masculinity studies appears to present an essentialized view of gender. Also, the discussion of masculinity studies itself somewhat confusing, as the author presents hegemonic masculinity both as monolithic – apparently constructed by a ruling elite of men attempting to control the larger populace – and as plural in the form of several hegemonic masculinities in different contexts. Similarly, protest-masculinity is discussed both as identical to hegemonic masculinity and as a revolt against hegemonic masculinity. The different perspectives which exist in critical masculinity studies and cultural studies are woven into each other, which results in an entangled thicket of theoretical confusion that is hard to push through.

The analytical chapters are interesting, and in many ways contribute greatly to the understanding of Black Metal culture. There are, however, problematic aspects as well. Chapter five mostly provides a history of extreme metal in a transnational context, largely as a review of previous work in this area. Finnish metal is discussed, but mostly in its earlier developments and not much in relation to Finnish extreme metal in the 2000s, and thus the first aim of the thesis, to present an overview of extreme metal in a Finnish context, remains unresolved.

The second analytical aim of the thesis, the examination of the roles and functions of "darkness" in Black Metal, is competent in itself. Undoubtedly "darkness" is a central rhetorical device in much Black Metal, as is the critique and reversion of Christianity in satanic and pagan frameworks which the author presents as the core of it. The problem is, besides choosing the Swedish bands Dissection and Watain as representatives of the rhetoric when both bands have a direct connection to each other and to a particular religious "anti-cosmic" stream of Black Metal, that "darkness" is not solely analysed as a rhetorical device. The author appears to present it as something of an analytical concept as well. "Darkness" is a very vague analytical concept, and an analysis of "transgression" would have been far more useful. It would also have been easier to connect to the analysis of gender performances in the Finnish Black Metal scene, introducing more depth to both analyses.

The third analytical aim of the thesis, an examination of different masculinity-performances in the Finnish Black Metal scene, is the most important and also the most innovative and interesting one. The author discusses two forms of masculinity performance; the "warrior" and the "transvestite". The former is a form of protest-masculinity exaggerating masculine gender codes and highlighting, among other things, aggression, honour, and the need for respect. The latter queers gender boundaries and acts as a critique of both hegemonic masculinity in Finnish society in general and the dominant "warrior"-masculinity of Black Metal. The author highlights aspects of Black Metal which have not been properly dealt with in previous studies. Gender might easily appear to be a non-issue in Black Metal due to love, sexuality, and sexual relations rarely being explicitly explored in lyrics. Further, Black Metal is a heavily male-dominated milieu in which women rarely actively participate as band members, fanzine creators, or concert organizers. While this double absence of women may make gender invis-

ible, it also encourages specific masculinity constructions and performances. The author treats these themes capably, but, as discussed above, if he had introduced transgression as a central keyword the analysis of masculinity performances in relation and opposition to societally and culturally dominant masculinity ideals could have been deeper, and also more closely connected to the analysis of ideological components of Black Metal.

Krigaren och transvestiten is an interesting read. The thesis has many problematic aspects, but its shortcomings are for the most part compensated by the treatment of previously neglected aspects of Black Metal, by way of a novel and interesting theoretical framework. It is the first work on this scale to examine Finnish Black Metal, and the first in an international context to specifically focus on gender issues, and certainly brings new perspectives to its field of study. The impact of the thesis in the international scholarly community is bound to be limited due to its being written in Swedish, but it is my hope, and suggestion, that the author will publish parts of the thesis in English, while also correcting some of the flaws discussed above.

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Book Reviews

Swedish Jazz Seen as a Class Journey

Alf Arvidsson, Jazzens väg inom svenskt musikliv. Strategier för självständighet och erkännande 1930–1975. Gidlunds förlag, Möklinta 2011. 317 pp. English summary. ISBN 978-91-7844-841-8.

■ The new book on Swedish jazz, with a title meaning "The Path of Jazz in Swedish Musical Life: Strategies for Independence and Recognition 1930–1975", by the leading Swedish music ethnologist Alf Arvidsson, is a book on the way jazz as a form of music and a concept, went in a surprisingly short time from being the cause of moral panic in parts of the Swedish population to become a musical language and a musical formation with a status in Swedish society which made it in several ways into a privileged form with several advantages. It became well-established both as a high (or semi-high), serious form of music competing with so-called classical music (both older and more modern) and in a certain affinity with popular music, both rock and pop (although this latter, more popular form tends to be largely lost, if one follows the script of Arvidsson's book). The whole point of his immensely ambitious enterprise – recording the cultural and social changes Swedish jazz has undergone in this comparatively short period – is to show the reader that jazz, from being a popular form mainly associated with dance and entertainment, of feelings of courtship and a materiality of bodily expression, in the crucial period of the 1950s and the 1960s in Sweden turned into a new, more radical form of music and at the same time an exponent of respectability, modernity and a cultural critique which was allowed and indeed boosted as a musical and cultural form of expression. This is the main thrust of the story in Arvidsson's book. The thought figure of a collective class journey is applied here to jazz, which in my view makes the book rather odd as a description of jazz, and at the same time very "Swedish", by which I mean that the book is written as if Sweden was more or less an island of reason and compassion, handling the unique qualities of a music with its origins in Afro-American culture as a form of gift, perhaps, to a country in search of musical and cultural forms which would suit its rapid development into the most modern of nations, "Folkhemmet", the modern Nordic Welfare state, which in Sweden had its most thorough expression in the period discussed in the book.

But oddly enough, the larger social and political context of this class journey of a whole musical formation is not dealt with in any great detail in the book. There are interesting notes and quotations about the convergences of politics and music, above all in the Swedish Social Democratic Party which rather soon understood that jazz might be a useful ally for a party bent on changing the society from the inside out in a peaceful transformation concerning not only the economic aspects of life but, as the historians Henrik Berggren and Lars Trägårdh have put it in their survey of the history of Swedish society in the twentieth century, *Är svensken människa? Gemenskap och oberoende i det moderna Sverige*, a history combining both the most intimate sectors of life, feelings of love, trust and belonging, and the strong overall structures of that same society in a direction which emphasizes both freedom and equality, i.e. a certain control from above which leaves its citizens in a state both dependent on the institutional orders in society and free to elaborate their lives in the spheres of intimacy, although the interest of welfare society, as the writers conclude, is also to a certain degree directed towards the more intimate sectors of society, the family and the individual's place therein. Sweden is in their view an example of a society applying the theory of love as a sort of collective order or remedy.

The paradox confronting such a conception of man and society as that put forward by Berggren and Trägårdh is a peculiar mix of individuality and collectivity, what they call state-individualism. And my question in reading Arvidsson's book is precisely one concerning this contested field involving two central conceptions of modernity and cultural change, from the birth of modernity including the French Revolution onwards, namely freedom and equality, and how to make them balance in a given articulation, such as jazz in the Swedish Welfare State in, say, the 1960s.

What one may be excused for forgetting about that era is that it was a tremendous exercise in a radical questioning of all kinds of established truths, and at the same time an era of great technological, economic, social and cultural change. I know of no other society, with the possible exception of the United States, in which this change is made more

explicit than what was happening in Sweden in the sixties. It is a general sea change concerning older institutions and "bastions", as Arvidsson calls them (recalling, perhaps unconsciously, the storming of the Bastille in the French Revolution). For me the questions which unfortunately the book only hints at but does not discuss more comprehensively are questions about the value of jazz in this sea change. In which ways did jazz contribute to the transformation of Swedish society in a more radical vein in the sixties? Was it mainly as an outlet of feelings, of emotionalism, or maybe also of rationalism, or even nationalism (the Swedes of course being proud of the very high standard of jazz in their country, also noticed on an international stage)? Or is it a combination of these and other values? Certainly, reading Arvidsson's book, there was a dismantling of old power structures and traditions, such as bourgeois society at large, especially the church, and to a smaller extent the established high arts.

There are at least two related fields which were at the forefront of the cultural change in this period in Sweden; one is the medium of cinema, which in Swedish society too was a cultural, transforming force of an even more pronounced status than jazz at this time; the other was "the sexual revolution", the forms of free or uninhibited sex which in these days became something of a brand of Swedish society. Arvidsson does not address these adjacent fields in his book, which I think is unfortunate, because they might have opened up the field he is discussing more and given some interesting notes of comparison as regards the flows of changes, both in its narrower passages and in the ways in which it can gather momentum. He mentions the cinema as a kind of cultural sister or brother of jazz, but he does not actually discuss it. The Swedish system of state-financed film has had an important role as a model for the European film industry at large, perhaps even to a greater extent than what can be said of the country's contribution concerning the means of promoting jazz as a musical form, a profession, a way of getting people to express themselves and become socially and culturally engaged in society. It should be added, however, that in another book, *Musik och politik hör ihop: Diskussioner, ställningstaganden och musikskapande 1965–1980* (2008), Arvidsson is far more explicit and elaborate on questions of intersections between music and politics.

For me as a Finland-Swede it is both interesting and somewhat consternating to read about the Swedish conception of jazz, with its many different modes, its rich and fertile soil, the many fine musicians and eloquent activists in Swedish jazz, in a tradition which in my view must be one of the most lively in Europe in this particular cultural space. But my own position and the position of the country in which I live can at least make me see something which a strict focus on a national jazz history read as a class journey will not show. This indicates that the questions of resistance to and ignorance of jazz in a country might also have something to do with the longer-standing traditions of cultural protectionism vs. openness, which in Finnish society have tended to rotate more towards the protectionist pole than was the case in Sweden. Why this is so is not something Arvidsson's book answers, but at least it makes the reader in this case ponder upon such a question.

Something Arvidsson, strangely enough, almost totally omits from his description of a steadily forward-moving jazz formation are the war years, a period which in a country such as its eastern neighbour Finland put extremely heavy strains on a musical form such as jazz. And come to think of it, when Arvidsson, in a chapter concerned mainly with texts in the Swedish jazz paper *OrkesterJournalen* from 1933 to 1939, discusses questions of resistance to jazz both from the traditional high cultural circles and from people otherwise positioned, including arguments of racism, exoticism, primitivism and the like, there might have been a case to be made for a comparison with how jazz fared in a country with which Sweden traditionally had rather close relations, not least in musical terms, namely Germany. Nazi Germany of course in the thirties was highly antagonistic, to say the least, to not only jazz, but to groups which had contributed significantly to the development of jazz: Afro-Americans, Jews, Gypsies and so on. What repercussions might that country's treatment of jazz have had on the Swedish case?

And another observation which stems from the experiences of several countries on the fringes between Western Europe and the Soviet Union is the one on jazz, especially American jazz, as being the voice of the free world, and this not only something which may sound like a strictly American Cold War propaganda trick but something which contained

some truth in these countries. A Finland-Swedish jazz enthusiast, former European Ombudsman Jacob Söderman, listening to both Swedish and American jazz on the radio in his youth, makes a point of this aspect in a chapter about popular music in a book he wrote in a Finland-Swedish context. A radio show such as the one by the American disc jockey Willis Conover, broadcast by the Voice of America, was important not only to jazz enthusiasts in Finland but more generally to jazz listeners in the Eastern parts of Europe. As Söderman puts it, in Europe jazz since World War II has been experienced as a music of peace and freedom.

What then are the main results of Arvidsson's extensive, if rather stiffly written analysis of the strategies used to elevate the status of jazz in Sweden? He concludes his book by noting that these efforts were conducted in several different fields, they concerned social identities, musical forms and contexts and more generally the public society as such. The first of his findings is an identification of a special jazz musician's role for musicians who embody jazz.

The second of his findings is concerned with the cultivation of a male-dominated form of elitism and professionalism. As to the questions of male dominance in jazz, he addresses the inequality between the sexes in a separate chapter on women in Swedish jazz, an instructive exposition which still does not answer the question why the rest of the book is written in a form which does not problematize the strong male dominance to be seen in the other chapters of his book, concerning musicians, pedagogues, jazz writers, journalists and so on.

There is a tendency in the book to avoid questions of cultural theorizing, although the book is heavily indebted to Pierre Bourdieu's theories of class, distinction and various forms of capital. Arvidsson's way of applying Bourdieu, in my view, leads to a form of determinism that is quite problematic. Things here just happen in a certain way, they come to be this or that, and no further attempts to understand these changes are made, which makes for a reading experience underlining the deterministic character of the formation of jazz in Sweden. As to the rich detail of the book and the myriad of names in it associated with the promotion of Swedish jazz in these years, one could ask, following the British cultural theorist Dan Laughey, whether the emergence of networks or collective activity for social worlds to emerge is not to a considerable extent to be seen as contingent, relying more perhaps on tactics than on strategies. As Laughey, drawing on de Certeau, writes about carnivalesque activities within the urban structures, these can be seen as tactics depending on time rather than space, i.e. the complex ebbs and flows of everyday schedules.

It might be that Arvidsson's main metaphor of journey makes him see a landscape which in another reading might have something to do with the temporal aspects of jazz. In such a view the tactical elements come more to the fore, thereby reducing the deterministic quality of a text. Laughey talks about pluralistic interpretations made by individual readers, as opposed to literal interpretations authorized by professionals and intellectuals.

It is this other side of jazz, the jazz of the cultural and social outsider, which is missing from Arvidsson's book, something which I find rather odd, when thinking about how jazz in the first place was a marginal place for outsiders, who of course later often also became insiders, blacks, hipsters, cultural transgressors, bohemians and so on. Reading Alan Sinfield's survey of British literature, politics and culture in post-war Britain, I find jazz to be something altogether different from the forms Arvidsson describes in his book. Key words in Sinfield's book are precisely those missing or underplayed in Arvidsson (and maybe vice versa): non-conventional, transgressive, defiant, bohemian. The other key aspects of the emerging jazz formation in Arvidsson's analysis are: forms separating jazz from other adjacent musical types and genres: concerts, records, jam sessions, a separation from popular culture, a development of crossover forms involving established musical styles (the prime example being Duke Ellington generally, and in Sweden Bengt Hallberg, Jan Johansson, Lars Gullin, Bengt Ernryd, to name a few), staking out a position in the established arts arenas, practising a written discourse, a special form of jazz critique focusing on differences and an intellectualization of the jazz interest, participation in public debates, stressing the uniqueness of jazz as an art form, arguing for the value of jazz in schools, and political and organizational work to establish jazz in Swedish society.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, Vasa

A Swedish Story of War and Love

Barbro Bursell, Willam Grey & Brita Tott. En berättelse om krig och kärlek i stormaktstidens

Sverige. Bokförlaget Atlantis, Stockholm 2012. 208 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7353-569-4.

■ William Grey was a Scottish soldier, presumably of noble descent, who came in the early seventeenth century to Sweden, where he and Brita Tott (who was of the mere gentry despite having a name like the aristocratic Thott) fell so deeply in love that he ended up abducting her from her home so that they could marry. He continued his military career under the Swedish soldier-kings, while she looked after the children and the home, the estate and the farming. He died early, and Brita Tott then waged a long struggle to maintain herself at an acceptable social and economic level; her sister contested Grey's nobility and hence his right to the assembled estate; however the sister's claim was not accepted in the Svea Court of Appeal, the supreme judicial instance for the Swedish nobility at the time.

Brita Tott and William Grey settled on the farm of Bodarna, where the author of the book lives today. The reason for writing the book – which is as good as any other – was curiosity about the place where she lives and the people who built it during the century that is still known in Swedish historiography as the Age of Greatness. For a Danish reviewer that name has always had a special ring that the author, formerly head of the Royal Armoury who in 2007 was responsible for the excellent exhibition *War Booty*, knows better than most people. Yet her mission is not to problematize or analyse as a cultural historian or ethnologist either the couple's life and deeds, the relation of Sweden as a great power to other countries, the lifestyle of the Swedish nobility, or anything like that. Her mission is quite different.

Perhaps the intention behind the book can be summed up in the word *narrative*. That is specifically stated in the subtitle, "A Narrative of Love and War in Sweden's Age of Greatness", although I do not think the reader is given a story of "war and love" – that would really call for a pen like Tolstoy's – but much more about a couple's life and dealings in the remarkable circumstances that Sweden as a provisional great power offered to a foreign soldier of fortune like William Grey and an independent woman like Brita Tott. For me the book gave a rich, well-written picture of a couple in a specific period of Sweden's history which, although based on studies of sources and literature, does not shy away from using imagination where the sources are silent, and a splendid ability to get into the mind of Brita Tott in particular, rendered here and there in the text with words like: "and so I did this and that" or "I think this and that".

The result is rather successful, although it differs a great deal from most books reviewed in *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. In my eyes that is not a disadvantage. The book is a kind of reflexive ethnography in the past combined with biography and what is fundamentally a classic ethnological local study, which requires particularly extensive empirical knowledge to write. And the author possesses that knowledge in plenty; indeed, she almost overflows with it in places – the way she constantly refers to the main characters merely by their first names is something of a strain. Because the book is divided into many short sections, the general delight in storytelling never becomes too much.

If I may be allowed a negative note, it is striking how Swedish in all its references the book is. I do not have the background knowledge to doubt the thoroughness here, but I do notice that a knowledge of – or use of – the now rich research on the history of nobles and estates in the other Nordic countries, not to mention European studies of these topics, studied as cultural history and focusing on the first half of the seventeenth century too, does not appear to have been within the author's scope. This means that the book is decidedly Swedish and inward-looking. But again: given what I presume to be the intention, although this is formulated somewhat differently in the introduction to the book, this is fully understandable. A couple of days in the company of William Grey and Brita Tott can thus be recommended.

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, Copenhagen

Swedish Fieldwork in the Hebrides

A Swedish Field Trip to the Outer Hebrides, 1934. In Memory of Sven T. Kjellberg and Olof Hasslöf. Alexander Fenton & Mark A. Mulhern (eds.). NMS, Edinburgh 2012. 107 pp. Ill. ISBN 1-905267-65-7.

■ Shortly before his death in 2012, the Scottish ethnologist Alexander Fenton compiled and edited the book *A Swedish Field Trip to the Outer Hebrides, 1934*. It is based on a diary and a manuscript, along with photographs and drawings, all produced by Sven T. Kjellberg and Olof Hasslöf during a

couple of weeks in the summer of 1934. The book consists of three parts. It begins with an introduction where Fenton puts Kjellberg and Hasslöf's fieldwork into a broader context of Scandinavian ethnologists' explorations of Celtic folk culture, and in particular the study of a specific type of Scottish house, the "blackhouse". The second part contains Hasslöf's diary and Kjellberg's draft manuscript. In the third part Fenton compares a description of the Hebrides from 1845 with Kjellberg and Hasslöf's material. Fenton's editorial contribution is thus extensive.

The two Swedish ethnologists (in 1934 they were both museum officers in Gothenburg) made their trip to the distant group of Scottish islands in order to fill a gap in the knowledge about the fishery livelihood and coastal culture around the North Sea. They came home with substantial knowledge about the life of the inhabitants of the barren islands. The documentation, in the form of photographs, drawings, and Olof Hasslöf's travel diary, is preserved in the archives of Gothenburg City Museum. The translated diary is supplemented with a draft manuscript by Kjellberg, which he translated and sent to Fenton in 1971.

Hasslöf's diary entries are characterized by subjective observations, along with an endeavour to achieve an objective account of what he and Kjellberg saw and experienced. There are accounts of house-construction techniques and materials, but they are interleaved with statements about how dirty it could be in a kitchen, coupled with a description of the housewife's winning smile. The occurrence of sheets in the beds in the very simple and archaic dwellings, the "blackhouses", is noted, which suggests that the two travellers were hospitably received and were able to see all the rooms. They also write about the generosity and kindness they encountered on their travels, which were mostly by bicycle. Both Kjellberg and Hasslöf were trained in the documentation of buildings through fieldwork in the Swedish countryside organized by Sigurd Erixon and continued to work according to his methods. Yet their photographs, drawings, and descriptions record not just building designs and boat types but just as much the work people did in the Hebrides in 1934. Sheep shearing, cattle markets, how to grow potatoes under peat, kitchens with an open hearth on a stamped earthen floor, the weaving of the famous Harris tweed – the book gives a multitude of fascinating glimpses of how people managed to earn a living in a barren and intractable environment.

In his preface Fenton praises the quality of the photographic material that Kjellberg and Hasslöf brought home from their trip and deposited in the archives of Gothenburg City Museum. He says that the pictures are a significant contribution to the visual history of the region. The book contains a large number of these pictures, in high-quality reproductions, and many of Kjellberg's fine drawings. One might question the sepia tone that all the photographs have been given, presumably to give them an archaic touch. The original photographs probably did not have this tone; they ought to have been reproduced closer to their original character. But this is a marginal note on a highly ambitious and lavish edition of an interesting and beautiful collection of source material.

Karin Gustavsson, Malmö

Return to Karelia

Takaisin Karjalaan. Outi Fingerroos & Maunu Häyrynen (eds.). Toimituksia 1250, Tiede. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran, Helsinki 2012. 223 pp. Ill. Maps. ISBN 978-952-222-310-4.

■ In Finland, several different branches of science have performed research about Karelia, the Karelian people, and Karelian evacuees. This is fine and there is a reason to be joyful to observe that new material is published about the subject. The writers of this book represent folkloric, geographic and landscape research, architecture and some other university subjects, too. However, there are no representatives of traditional ethnology, although several dissertations are being written in Helsinki. This is strange because in many other countries there is only one subject that covers both folklore and ethnology.

The main theme of the book in question is cross-border relationship, and within this framework, the observation of the present, over-the-border, Russian area, better known in Finland as "the ceded Karelia." The past and a wide variety of views of Karelia are described in a distinguished manner. The neighbouring area is interesting for Finnish researchers, who have managed to make contacts for research and have had the possibility of observing still visible Finnish traces both by interviewing the population and studying buildings

spared until today. Groups of Finnish students pay visits on the other side of the border and the impressions of these visits are also presented to us, but the middle generation, who travel by car to their former home villages, does not appear in this book. The present generation of middle-aged Karelian evacuee descendants and their impressions cannot be found here. As a novelty, a notion of Karelia reflected by a young researcher is brought to us, coming to full blossom during the orientating process. Gratifying, here is at last a little bit of a hermeneutic opinion I myself had tried to bring into research already in the 1990s when it moved nobody.

In Finland, the term "Return to Karelia" activates a notion of the long-wished return of Karelian evacuees to the area of the lost Karelia. In Finland, three organisations have been operating for the return of Karelia to Finland, all these are free organisations of citizens. The number of active members is relatively small because, for example, the largest organisation of Karelian evacuees, The Finnish Karelian League, appears only as a cultural organisation preserving the cultural heritage of the Karelian evacuees. This field of cultural work gets hardly any attention in this book, although the notion of Karelian descent is alive amongst Karelian evacuees in Finland, meaning also its spreading and cultural influence over some parts of western Finland. This phenomenon of cross-border relations of Karelian descent does also exist in the other direction, westwards, because there are Karelian associations in Sweden as well.

The idea of return has always stirred up emotions; still it is left unobserved what are the present opinions of the Karelian evacuees. Earlier, in my own interviews, supporters were only found amongst the eldest generation within a group of approximately one hundred Karelian evacuees. – "If a message came that we could go to Karelia, my man wouldn't even go to sleep but leave no matter day or night…". The younger generation, those in their forties, took it seriously but thinking in a practical way: "No, it wouldn't be clearing forests and building, we wouldn't have strength to do it any more, as we have already been clearing forests and building here in other parts of Finland… Present-day contentions for return are different: they are born based on discussion and general legal questions. An outsider is not able to get any picture about the matter, as no comparison to other countries is shown here.

The themes of "Yearning to Karelia", without the notion of returning territories, has been dealt with fairly much in general conversation and it has been described in depth thanks to many writers. Perhaps literary research or psychology could best conduct us towards scientific analysis. A nostalgic Karelia-interpretation is still on its way. It is good to learn that some newest forms of commemoration have also been mentioned here, such as evacuee hiking trips where participants cover a walk of 7 to 10 kilometres on foot in terrain, receiving a new, refreshing event about the experiences of former generations.

Although, the fear of having to get on a train with small children one under each arm, still do not, in its full despair, reach the present hiker, who can spare some of his time for the hike.

How to respond to the whole period of the Karelian living as evacuees and to their coping with it? Trauma and victim theories are fairly common models for explanation in other cultures, but their weakness often lies in the fact that they eventually lead to a rather futile search for the guilty and this kind of attitude has long before been abandoned in Finland. The concepts of collectivism have been ignored in the research of small populations, although they would be used in sociology in big countries. In my opinion, the situation of Finnish Karelian evacuees should not be adopted, without careful field research, to any theory because Finland's case is so specific. Fates filled with trauma have occurred all the time; this is not the find of the latest years. During the wars and after them, there were elderly people amongst the Karelian evacuees who had the strength for the period of clearing forests but died as soon as the new farm or house got ready. That was the first and silent trauma generation. Becoming a victim, or even more, a scapegoat, might have lived in the minds of the Karelian or in the rhetoric of speeches at festive events, but it was not reflected in the creation of a new identity. The war did make huge demands on the original population as well, who by supporting the acquisition of land and laws of compensation in the Parliament did share the burden of loss and their own land with the evacuees. The victims for the homeland as casualties or killed relatives were mutual.

The Karelian, in addition, had lost their homes what roused sympathy. Both groups were given a hard time and one group might cause the other for bad relationship; still, in field research, when asked

about disagreements, the general answer has been "only at the beginning."

Direct aggression was avoided but indirect aggression was experienced as e.g. Heli Kananen showed it in her recently published history dissertation "Controlled adaptation" (2010).

In my own field studies, I aimed at finding real, documentable contact surface and acquired cultural features, what I actually found surprisingly lot on the local level.

Thus, I would claim that the encounter of cultures that started in Finland right from the evacuation was the smoothing factor and the creating force of the new Karelian evacuee identity that prevented the Karelian evacuees from being caught up in themselves and their traumas too much.

Identity is a negotiable contract that had to be created under the pressure of forced adaptation in one's own surroundings both on the local level and towards the dominant culture. Human dignity was gained by the help of the state, or as the Karelian themselves say: as soon as our feet were under our own table where one could reach towards the future, i.e. for example one could send his children to school. From that time on, they had to live adapting, accommodating their own cultural heritage under the rules of the dominant culture still with it in parallel operations such as in associations. Creativity is unlimited and because of this, there are still lots of Karelian phenomena such as foods and pastries, music, dresses and applications, for instance in the field of fashion. In the atmosphere of freedom, and when it was not dangerous to one's own position, they could express the injustice they had suffered what can be liberating for the individual. However, it was not a totalitarian state to live in, there was no force to silence people at all, only the main attention was somewhere else: on basic survival. Also in this book, silence is repeated as if it had been controlled. Research was scarce but the few who left to do some research did receive a warm welcome. In addition, for any individual in exceptional conditions, there is every possibility from survival to drifting to the fringe, and Karelian evacuees are in no special position in this.

This book would want for the voices of today's older and younger generations of Karelian evacuees. Numerous trips are made by the present generation of Karelian evacuees to the Karelia over the border, friends have been made with the present residents and these experiences, and these actual and emotional openings would have been enlightening as a subject of any researcher. The present generation has progressed also in this matter further then the general tone of this book. The coming generations will have to create their relationship to Karelia themselves and we would also need empirical research on how Karelia unfolds as a significant place in the eyes of the younger generation, leading to genuine interest. Karelian descent still kindles; there is its cultural force.

Pirkko Sallinen-Gimpl, Helsinki

An Introduction to Fashion

Cecilia Fredriksson, Mode. Liber, Malmö 2012. 123 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-47-09672-5.

■ This book on "Fashion" (*Mode*) is small but significant. The focus is on text while the rich pictorial universe of fashion is for once in the background and only occasionally slips through the eye of the editor's needle, toned down to black-and-white pictures. The reason for this is that the book is part of a series on concepts in the human and social sciences. Already published titles in the series are, for example, about *Power*, *Culture,* and *Ethnicity*. It is the exposition and understanding of the concept that is central.

With this book Cecilia Fredriksson, professor of ethnology at Campus Helsingborg, Lund University, supplies an introduction to an understanding of the concept of fashion. It is refreshing that this is not yet another presentation of the dominant theoretical exegeses of the phenomenon. The introduction is far more independent and personal in the sense that Fredriksson places special emphasis on explaining fashion in its context. The foundation for explaining fashion also concerns its place and relationship to concepts such as "the modern" and "modernity". Fredriksson points out here that "the modern" is a concept and a figure of thought that is used in perfectly ordinary everyday situations to organize the world around us. A thing can be modern or out of date. The concept of "modernity", on the other hand, describes a state of society where the individual is believed to be far more liberated and hence able to question both belief and tradition. The phenomenon of fashion thrives in modernity. It is a place for change, which is a driving force behind fashion, and fashion is needed to mark difference when a firmly

anchored societal hierarchy no longer prevails. Fredriksson also points out that fashion, as a way to aesteticize everyday life, is a modern competence that should be assessed in terms of how important it is for the individual to be able to stand out and create a personal identity.

Fredriksson covers many aspects of fashion in this little book and considers several central discussions carried on in this young, interdisciplinary field called fashion studies, which in recent years has become an independent subject of study at the universities of Lund and Stockholm. She takes the term "fashionology", as used by the Japanese-American sociologist Yuniya Kawamura, which has become highly influential in the growing field of Nordic fashion studies through being translated into Swedish as *modeideologi*. Fredriksson emphasizes the potential of the theory for understanding the organization of the fashion industry, but she also points out its obvious weakness in the form of a rigid definition of fashion as merely an abstract, symbolic phenomenon. In Fredriksson's view fashion can also be materialized and thus be concrete items of clothing.

Fredriksson's observations of the phenomenon of fashion also highlight several Nordic research contributions, particularly from Sweden and Denmark. This makes the book exceptional, as well as being a good survey of a research field that is otherwise dominated by its recent Anglo-American theories.

To sum up, the book gives nuanced insight into how the phenomenon of fashion is complex, with many different meanings and uses in modernity. Fashion is a figure of thought, a way of organizing the world socially. Fashion is an aesthetic phenomenon. Fashion is clothes. The many facets of fashion are held up, discussed, and viewed from an ethnological perspective in Fredriksson's book. For any ethnologist with an interest in fashion it should be obligatory reading.

Marie Riegels Melchior, Copenhagen

The Affective Turn in Cultural Analysis

Jonas Frykman, Berörd. Plats, kropp och ting i fenomenologisk kulturanalys. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2012. 176 pp. ISBN 978-91-7331-524-1.

■ We often speak of "turns" in research; the literary turn and the affective turn are examples. Professor Jonas Frykman has written a book on the affective turn and how this is expressed within ethnology. Questions are asked as to how the hierarchy of emotions influences academic texts, and how a new view of practice, body, action, experience and prereflexivity involves ethnological research. Major references are Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Bruno Latour.

Frykman refers to a change in the notion of culture; from being thought of as culture transferred from one generation to the next, to being thought of as orientations and processes. He calls this post-phenomenology, which this reviewer reads as elements within post-structuralism. Frykman discusses the practical use of these perspectives in analyses of place, body and objects: the object of one's attention and the dominance of a physical presence or object in a specific place, for example a monument, influences one's orientation in life.

In this reviewer's perspective, the primary issue in the book is how places and objects shape the people around them. Empirical examples used include both fiction and Frykman's own fieldwork, first and foremost his fieldwork in the post-war Balkans.

The term "turn" may point towards something new. Jonas Frykman sees himself as part of a new wave (p. 19), inspired by the nexus between empirical studies and philosophy, availing himself of phenomenology rather than mere interpretation of texts. The book is very inspiring and takes the reader through an important change in the history of our academic field. There are, however, a few comments to be made on two important questions in the book; firstly, how material objects and places form people, and secondly, the matter of methodological access.

The nature of the literary turn made it hardly imaginable that objects and places existed beyond language (p. 31). Obviously, this is a restrictive element, and this becomes clear, for example in Frykman's empirical descriptions from the café table in Visegrad, during the memorial ceremony commemorating the massacre of thousands of Muslims (p. 45). Muslims have come to the town bridge to remember their relatives who died in the massacre, and Frykman gives the bridge the role of actor: It has qualities that are not projected on to it, but which exist "beyond our ideas" (p. 43). The bridge shapes the people standing on it, walking over it, seeing it, and living with it in everyday life. What

people project on to an object or a place has a meaning. However, the object or the place, independent of all projections, is permeated with emotions arising from daily life, mass media, architecture etc. (p. 52) – emotions that, in the end, influence people by virtue of the object or the place. It is not a question of thinking *about* the object or the place, but rather thinking *with* the object or the place. Thus, interpretation of material culture may not be reduced to subjective projections, Frykman definitely tries to go beyond a subjectivistic perspective. But does this understanding of phenomenology imply a new understanding of realism?

In this particular setting, it is possible to introduce the researcher's own emotions, arising out of participation. However, as researchers we might pose a problematic question: how are we to perceive the experiences and emotions of informants – *without their being made explicit, through words, either spoken or written*? Tacit knowledge may be acquired by the researcher observing and taking part in an activity such as building a musical instrument or a boat. The experience level, however, must be put into words. Frykman points out that emotions cannot be reduced to characteristics, and the focus should be on what emotions *do* to a person, not what they *are* (pp. 38–39). But the question remains: How are cultural researchers to reach this level, without the use of spoken or written words?

On a number of occasions, Jonas Frykman discusses method, mainly in the chapter "Fieldworking on your feet" (a pun on the anthropologist Michael Jackson's expression "thinking with one's feet"). For a researcher trained in ethnology and with a methodological attention to archives and interviews, "fieldworking on your feet" may seem like a new turn. "Fieldworking on your feet", in the opinion of this reviewer, is a technique almost identical to observational participation (or participant observation, as it formerly was known in qualitative research) – a routine method in anthropology since Bronislaw Malinowski. In recent decades a number of ethnologists and folklorists have used this method, without calling it "fieldworking on your feet". There might be a difference between observational participation and "fieldworking on your feet", but this reviewer is unable to catch a difference between the two – if the difference is at all explained in the book.

Jonas Frykman has written a highly interesting book that ought to be read by scholars and students alike. The main issues, however, are the extent to which the method constitutes a "turn" in our academic field, and whether "post-phenomenology" constitutes a new form of realism.

Tove Ingebjørg Fjell, Bergen

The Metamorphosis of Fashion

Modets metamorfoser. Den klädda kroppens identiteter och förvandlingar. Lizette Gradén & Magdalena Peterson McIntyre (eds.). Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2009. 310 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-225-7.

■ This edited volume contains articles by eleven scholars of dress and fashion, with backgrounds in ethnology, gender studies, and culture studies from Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland. And that alone is good news! For while the museum stores are packed with collections of costumes and textiles, research on dress and fashion has had difficulties for years. Thankfully, this is no longer the case. The last eight to ten years have seen the growth of fruitful interdisciplinary cooperation in the Nordic countries, involving researchers from museums of cultural history, museums of design, universities, and other research institutes. *Modets Metamorfoser* ("Metamorphoses of Fashion") can be viewed as a result of the new networks. The book demonstrates the thematic, academic, and theoretical breadth that characterizes recent Nordic research on dress and fashion.

The articles here address three overall topics: Clothes, fashion, and body; Clothes, fashion, and place; Clothes, fashion, and power. The texts are connected in that they all deal with dress practices and people's relations to clothes and fashion. The ambition of the group of authors is to demonstrate how to build a bridge between the social and the material and between older ethnological research with its focus on clothes as objects and more recent studies with the focus on the dressed body.

In the introduction the two editors, Lizette Gradén and Magdalena Petersson McIntyre, take up a fundamental discussion in the field, the relationship between the concepts of dress and fashion. Some researchers claim that western fashion is a distinctive phenomenon with a status of its own, which should be analysed and described in itself, and which does not necessarily have anything to do with the clothes that people wear in practice. Others claim that it makes no sense to analyse clothes and fashion as

separate spheres; they should be analysed as two sides of the same thing. The authors in *Modets Metamorfoser* agree with the latter standpoint. The articles in the book therefore seek to show how clothes and fashion can be analysed as cultural processes, for example, identity constructions, and that the analyses can be based on something material, such as objects of clothing. Several articles use performance as an analytical concept and try to interpret the dressed body in a performative perspective in order to combine the view of fashion as embodied practice with the view of fashion as idea and discourse. Other articles deal with the ability of clothes and fashion to transform the person who wears the garments, and discussions of gender and sexuality in relation to clothes and fashion recur in several of articles.

In empirical terms, the articles cover a wide range. Marianne Larsson's essay is about what clothes do to people, or more specifically what the postal uniform does to the postman. Ingun Grimstad Klepp analyses what it means to feel well dressed. Marie Riegels Melchior writes about the Danish fashion industry and the way it stages itself as something particularly Danish on a globalized market. Magdalena Petersson McIntyre's article considers the influence of sport on fashion, gender, and body, based on ethnographic fieldwork done at a fitness centre. Viveke Berggren Torrell's contribution analyses the way the Swedish welfare state (the People's Home) advised housewives about the right clothes for actively playing children. Karolina Ojanen's essay investigates norms of dress among Finnish horse girls, as regards what the right clothes mean for the girls and what this can tell us about Finnish gender culture. Lizette Gradén has examined folk-dress fashions among Swedish emigrants in the USA and analyses what happens to folk dress when it is moved from one geographical place to another. She considers how a body in folk-dress becomes a tool when social and geographical boundaries are renegotiated. Marie Nordberg's article is about hair and power; she analyses the short hairstyle that has become the characteristic of men in power. Angela Rundquist's essay deals with women's festive dress and the opportunities this special category of clothes gives to transform the wearer. Bo Lönnquist's article is about fashion and men's underpants, and the transformation this masculine garment has undergone since the end of the 1960s, from being invisible, private, and unmentionable to become colourful, decorated, and filled with symbolism and humour. Magnus Mörck rounds off the volume with an article about men's suits. He regards the suit as an expression of masculinity, fashion and power. It is worn daily by men in power and in various professions, but it is a form of dress that all men have a relationship to and have to wear at some time in their life.

All in all, *Modets Metamorfoser* is a book full of inquisitive and well-written articles, which demonstrate the current breadth of the field and show that Nordic research on dress and fashion has started in earnest. It will be exciting to see what cooperative projects will emerge in future.

Helle Leilund, Copenhagen

Death and Dying and Cultures of Commemoration

Anders Gustavsson, Cultural studies on death and dying in Scandinavia. Novus Press, Oslo 2011. 215 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-7099-639-1.

■ At the start of his book, Anders Gustavsson states that he collected English translations of articles in Swedish that had previously been published separately for this book, which is intended for an international audience, on the advice of his foreign colleagues. The articles appear to be presented as separate chapters in the book. Gustavsson has spent a long time studying external symbols associated with death such as gravestones and the expressions of the emotions of those who have encountered the death of a near one or a pet. He has carried out field work in Sweden and Norway, and also briefly in Portugal and France. In the course of this field work he has gathered a wide-ranging archive of material – photographs, observations, interviews – and has studied letters, diaries and archives. The most recent collection of material consists of Internet memorial sites for family members, friends and pets, the number of which skyrocketed in the 2000s.

Gustavsson emphasises the fact that his research is based on material which is limited in geographical scope. The research is qualitative and does not aspire to make quantitative generalisations. The theme that pervades the whole book is a comparison between the ways Swedes and Norwegians face death and commemorate the dead. The comparison is

based on materials gathered in relatively similar local communities, which lends credibility to the comparison.

The first chapter of the book discusses death in a nineteenth-century Swedish rural community. The most important material consists of the diaries of a man who lived from 1795 to 1879. The man writes about the events on his farm, local deaths and funerals, events in neighbouring villages and reports of deaths he has read in the newspapers. In addition to the diaries, Gustavsson has studied the parish registers of deaths and burials. The writer of the diaries lived close to the village church and closely observed events at the nearby church and graveyard. He conscientiously recorded the name, age and home farm or croft of each deceased person. The diaries give an interesting and detailed insight into both now obsolete burial customs and new conventions – such as the replacement of biers with hearses, which happened in the diary writer's village in 1872. Moreover, the writer describes the special burial customs that existed for people who committed suicide or for children who were stillborn as well as those pertaining to mass deaths caused by epidemics, royal deaths and burials and how the deaths of domestic animals were dealt with.

In the following chapters Gustavsson discusses the symbolism of gravestones in the 1990s in Swedish and Norwegian graveyards, how Christian revivalist movements affected the iconic symbols and texts on gravestones as well as the commemoration of the deceased, cats' graves in Sweden, Norway, Portugal and France, sudden deaths (accidents, suicides), the Internet as a domain of death and commemoration and research ethics. Most of the book concentrates on the handling of death and the culture of commemoration in recent decades and even in the last few years. After the slightly disconnected historical starting point at the beginning, the book progresses in a natural way: the means of commemoration have partly stayed similar (e.g. gravestones, epitaphs); modern culture and new technologies have brought in changes in the forms and symbolism of commemoration.

When comparing Swedish and Norwegian gravestones of the 1990s and 2000s, Gustavsson reveals as the main difference between the countries the fact that old traditions are more actively maintained in Norway. According to him, religious symbols (e.g. the cross, angels) and religious terminology (e.g. God, Jesus, the Lord) on epitaphs are more common there than in Sweden. However, Gustavsson states that the appearance of crosses on Norwegian gravestones does not necessarily indicate a Christian reference. He considers that the use of the cross merely reflects the fact that the Norwegians follow traditions and use the same symbols and epitaph as they have seen their predecessors use. Nowadays, the cross is more a general symbol of death and mourning in both Norway and Sweden than a specifically Christian one.

Secular and sacred symbols are combined differently in Norway than in Sweden, where secular images and epitaphs do not usually appear together with sacred symbols. In Sweden, a boat or a ship on a gravestone refers to recreational hobbies, whereas in Norway these are associated with a religiously-coloured idea of life as a journey. In Sweden, gravestones are more often engraved with images that evoke positive feelings (birds, flowers, animals) and often also with symbols referring to features of the deceased's life, such as images related to leisure and hobbies (pets, fishing, hunting) or work (a horse or a tractor, musical instruments, a paint brush). According to Gustavsson, this emphasis on the deceased's personality on gravestones is related to laws on burials and gravestones that came into effect in Sweden in 1990 and in Norway in 1996 allowing more liberal individual choices. In Norway, a sort of individualisation on gravestones can be seen in references to the deceased's job title, which according to Gustavsson are still engraved according to the old tradition. Commemoration of the deceased is also evident in the Swedish traditions of visiting graves to remember her/him and the next of kin taking care of the graves and their flower arrangements. In Norway, it is common to hire a graveyard employee to maintain graves, which are also visited less often than in Sweden, since remembrance of a deceased person is not seen as being connected to her/his burial site.

Gustavsson has found innovations in Norwegian gravestones that were not present in Swedish ones – even though Norwegians follow tradition more closely. One popular custom not found in Sweden is having a bronze figure of the deceased attached to the gravestone. According to Gustavsson, the way deceased persons' names are place on the gravestone is a sign of equality (or the lack thereof). In Sweden, when married couples are buried, the

man's name is still engraved on the left, and the woman's on the right, as if to show a difference in rank. This is done even if the husband dies after the wife. Sometimes the wife's name is engraved under the husband's name. However, this custom started to become less frequent in the 1990s. In Norway, the name of the person who dies first is engraved on the left side, regardless of the deceased's gender. The names may also be placed so that the name of the person who dies first is on top, and subsequent deaths are listed below it. Gustavsson considers that the Norwegian custom reflects the discourse on equality of recent decades. Re-using gravestones is also more common in Norway than in Sweden, and is, according to Gustavsson, a sign of modern environmental consciousness.

In Norway, stillborn babies and miscarried foetuses (with a gestational age of at least 28 weeks) have had the right to a grave since 1990 (in Sweden since 1999), and since 1996 the right to a free gravesite in the mother's home municipality. In practice, both countries had allowed for the burial of such prematurely deceased infants in their own graves with full-size gravestones even before the law came into effect. Moreover, the gravestones of almost full-time foetuses have clearly shown the child's name, and the gravestones have not been hidden from view as they were before. The graves are well maintained throughout the summer, which according to Gustavsson is a comfort to the parents, who never got to meet their children alive.

In the last few decades, sudden deaths have often given rise to more visible exhibitions for public mourning. In both Norway and Sweden (and Finland, too), the victims of traffic accidents, especially young people, are publicly commemorated with candles, flowers and pictures at the accident scene and with epitaphs on the Internet. According to Gustavsson, this tradition of commemoration has come into being in particular among young people who feel that they belong to the same generation as the deceased. In such cases, the emphasis is specifically on the mourning and sense of loss of the deceased's next of kin, friends and peers. One essential feature of this custom is the fact that the accident scene is marked as the location where the final parting with the deceased has happened, even if s/he actually died in hospital or on the way there.

It has also become more common to mark the places where famous people die to show collective grief. In Sweden, the murder of Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986 was the first, prototypal event of collective, indeed national, grief and shock, where the murder scene was inundated with flowers and candles. Similar forms of collective mourning and grief were seen when Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh was murdered in 2003.

Gustavsson does not discuss recent sudden deaths or celebrity murders and the cultures of commemoration in other countries at all in his book. However, these expressions of collective grief often extend beyond national borders. The most far-reaching expression of collective grief was probably in connection with the death of Princess Diana in a car crash in 1997. In Finland, the death of Diana and the murder of Olof Palme were clearly used as models for collective expressions of grief when two policemen were murdered in 1997 (Korkiakangas 1997 in *Ethnologia Fennica* 1997, vol. 25, pp. 6-8). Gustavsson's statement: "Solidarity and collectivism have become important key words in the approach to traumatic situations at the expense of individuality and privacy. This is a major innovation in the study of rituals around sudden death in recent times" (p. 140) is highly apposite to the mass killings in Norway in July 2011, which are still being mourned and processed both collectively and privately. Another expression of collective commemoration is the remembrance of historical mass killings or deaths. The most recent example is the commemorative journey to honour the memory of the victims of the sinking of the Titanic on 14 April 1912.

New technology has made it more common to commemorate deceased close relatives on special Internet sites. According to Gustavsson, this is more widespread in Sweden than in Norway. It also seems that it is done more often by women (mothers, widows, sisters) than men. Gustavsson sees this as a sign of men's inability to express deep emotions verbally in crisis situations, although he thinks the situation will change gradually. Gustavsson has studied websites that do not require separate registration, and are thus, in his view, public in the same way as graveyards and headstones. However, he does point out that the researcher cannot just stalk the site like a spy, observing and saving texts without taking part in the discussion itself. Because the writers are not aware that their sometimes very personal expressions of grief and loss will possibly be used in research studies, the only option for the re-

searcher is to make the writers anonymous. Naturally, the researcher must always act in an ethically valid way, and this is also true when studying gravestones.

In addition to Internet epitaphs and gravestones for humans, Gustavsson discusses commemorations of pets, especially pet cats. According to him, pet cemeteries and epitaphs are signs of the emotional closeness between people and their pets. Gravestone symbols and epitaphs for pets, in Gustavsson's study cats, have become more and more like those of deceased humans, especially in Sweden. Unlike in Portugal and France, pets' graves in Sweden have also started to display religious symbols: crosses and angels. The anthropomorphising of pets is also apparent in epitaphs on the Internet. They claim that not only human beings but also deceased pets go to Heaven, the humans to a Heaven of their own and the pets to a separate one. The people and the pets who are supposedly in Heaven are written about as if they were still taking part in events on earth. Dead relatives and cats are in their Heavens, waiting for those still living, and will greet them after death. One epitaph for a cat states, for example, '…hope we will meet you again on the other side. We hope you will greet us at the door when it is our turn to go through the pearly gates' (p. 189). Heaven with angels has become a sort of a conceptual and emotional base for coping with grief. According to Gustavsson, this is not a traditional Christian custom, but rather a neo-religious trend.

Gustavsson dedicates a separate chapter to discussing questions of research ethics. Field work that involves confronting death means that many ethical aspects must be taken into account. Gustavsson does not find photographing at a graveyard ethically questionable, since graveyards are public spaces. Possible conversations with relatives at the graves require an empathetic approach while at the same time maintaining a certain distance out of respect for the relatives' grief. One must also avoid undue haste and show an interest in the interviewee so that s/he does not feel taken advantage of. Gustavsson poses further questions, such as whether it is unethical for a researcher to open wounds caused by loss, can somebody performing field work provide support for a mourning person, can the researcher offer an opportunity for a mourner to express her/his feelings of grief to an outsider and thereby obtain some relief.

To conclude the book, Gustavsson has written reviews of some Swedish and Norwegian and one German doctoral dissertation on death published in the 2000s. The topics include terminal cancer patients, the funerals of homosexual men who died of AIDS, Muslim graveyards and a school trip to a Polish concentration camp. Gustavsson's book reviews raise interesting questions about how death is confronted, and they constitute a good supplement to the book.

The book is a wide-ranging and well-thought-out study of Swedish and Norwegian ways of facing death and of the symbols associated with it in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Gustavsson focuses his observations on the emotions caused by the death of a close relative or pet and the expressions of these feelings in the symbolism of gravestones and in letters, diaries and epitaphs on the Internet. The book can be regarded as ethnographic: it is not burdened with long theoretical introductions. Its strength lies in the field work material and the abundant illustrations thereof: quotations and photos of gravestones with their symbols of death bring the subject matter close to the reader.

Pirjo Korkiakangas, Jyväskylä

The Gastronomic Revolution

Håkan Jönsson, Den gastronomiska revolutionen. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2012. 224 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-484-8.

■ How does one describe a revolution? That is the question that Håkan Jönsson justifiably uses as the heading to the first chapter in his book about "The Gastronomic Revolution". He then tackles the interest in food and meals that has grown so vigorously in the last thirty years, especially meals and cooking enacted in a commercial public sphere. He also considers how this interest can be understood in the light of a new outlook on knowledge. The aim of the studies in the book is to expose cultural processes by analysing and synthesizing different attitudes to the ingredients, dishes, and meals encountered in Sweden today. This is a vibrant cultural field of study with an unusual dynamic, but it is a field where most things have not yet been studied, especially not from the perspective of cultural value.

But is it a revolution as the author claims? Is it perhaps not just a revolt or a more moderate Swedish reform, an ordered development with a careful-

ly chosen direction? The answer is probably that something out of the ordinary has happened, but let me return to that.

The text also examines the profession of chef and thus becomes a portrait in a somewhat neglected ethnological genre, occupational descriptions and knowledge perspectives in a profession. It is an exciting and interesting method for getting at the meaning of processes. The text is also an attempt to analyse and understand a contemporary phenomenon whereby food and meals are used for postmodern identity construction. Readers witness the rapid upheaval that took place, with portraits of different revolutionaries with seemingly disparate goals and approaches. Some are the thinkers of the revolution, others implement it, and a third group are the cheering spectators.

The author describes a pre-revolutionary stage in the craft of chef, which has been characterized through history by the knowledge of a master passed on to the apprentice through the repetition of manual actions, into a profession that has been academized today and dramatized in cookery programmes every evening on all the world's television channels. And as Jönsson shows, food and meals are a suitable and highly diversified cultural expression to study, especially when this is interpreted and evaluated in the home, at lunch with workmates, but also as the experience of a meal in a restaurant or as the explicit purpose of a holiday trip. Verbs like grow, preserve, store, buy, cook, season, eat, enjoy, loathe, and wash up are all examples of considered acts and intentions that constantly create and recreate the cultural meaning of food and meals.

The author works with multiple methods of cultural research, gathering material from different kinds of fieldwork in order to track down his topic, such as going native with participant and working observation, using himself as an object of close-up study in a restaurant kitchen. He also has observations of the Chef of the Year competition and many interviews with people whose job involves commercially interpreting and creating contemporary food culture. The book also has almost fifty pages of pictures which greatly help to clarify the discussion. In terms of method the book is well structured, since the field of food culture is best examined with several interacting methods, particularly because observations and conclusions from different methods yield more wisdom about this blank spot in research. Some of the ideas in the book have previously been published by the author in the form of reports on various research projects. The book is written in a clear, elegant, and correct style.

Jönsson describes a historical process which in a sense is still in progress. It is sometimes said that *the revolution eats its children*, and perhaps this is a possible interpretation of today's plethora of cookery programmes on television, where one can try out the profession of chef for an evening or a few episodes, and also the publication of cookery books, on average just over one a day. It is therefore an open question whether gastronomy is slipping into a new age or if it is perhaps even introducing a new paradigm in our understanding of people's interest in food and meals. For this reason it is regrettable that the book has a defect that is not uncommon in ethnological literature – there is no index. This makes it tricky to make use of the book afterwards if one has to flick through it from cover to cover in search of something in particular. The book could have had several indices, of people, topics, terms, and perhaps more. Not least because it describes a revolution and a set of rebels, it will be a necessary point of departure when future studies are undertaken.

The seven chapters in the book vary in length, from about 15 to 40 pages. The last short chapter in particular, with its interesting conclusions and reflections, seems to be over in a moment, especially because Jönsson in the introductory chapter observes that values and forms in food culture change in a movement that corresponds to other changes in society. This is an important observation that makes one curious to read more about the subject.

In chapter 2 the reader meets a pre-revolutionary situation in Sweden where the citizens constantly live in the shadow of the twentieth-century alcohol rationing and restrictions on the serving of alcohol, via the restaurateur Tore Wretman's efforts at enlightenment in the post-war years, up to the ideals of the *nouvelle cuisine* in the 1970s and 1980s. A major focus for the revolution was the crucial year 1984 when some Swedish restaurants were rated for the first time by the respected Guide Michelin according to its international standards. Suddenly Swedish restaurants could become the equal of French cuisine, but they could also progress in their own direction. The chapter is a good start because it shows that laws, ideals, and interest in the Other build up cultural systems and can only be under-

stood by being analysed as parts of an interacting thought system.

In chapter 3 the author himself goes out into the restaurant kitchen, now as a researcher but with his own past experience of working as a chef to serve as a foundation for his understanding. It is an astute chapter with very good ethnology, where classical fieldwork shows its power. Jönsson gives particularly elegant descriptions of the colleagues he meets, and how they alternate between seeing him as a useful equal and looking down on him as an incompetent academic pretending to be a chef. Here we clearly see the old master–apprentice relationship of the profession and the values on which today's academized gastronomy rests. It is also solid evidence that a revolution is in progress. For a historian of food culture the evidence is useful, since the author demonstrates that food culture concretizes ideas about cooking but also everyday values concerning right and wrong.

In chapter 4 we are taken to the finest stage on which gastronomy is enacted, the competition to find the Chef of the Year, where Sweden's leading professional chef is chosen. This exposes the kitchen, the manual movements, the utensils, and the cook's attitude for assessment by the general public. This is a double stage: a physical demonstration with an applauding and cheering audience in a large venue, and a televised show that viewers watch in their own home. This too should be regarded as revolutionary.

Chapter 5 discusses how one can learn gastronomy, from a master's certificate and today's academic education to in-service training through various professional institutions. The unofficial view of knowledge in the business itself is usually that the best foundation is obtained by working with a master and learning the right kind of knacks and attitudes, which cannot be obtained through book learning. After two or three years a chef in search of knowledge will move on, like a flying Dutchman, with the final destination being a restaurant of his own where he can escape the critical gaze of the master and become his own boss. And the dream must come true fairly quickly, especially when the chefs reach the age of 35–40 and no longer have the energy for working days of 12–14 hours or more, or when their knees and hands no longer obey them. For there are no gold watches in the restaurant business.

Chapter 6 deals with the postmodern interest in food with a narrative and an origin, and meals as an experience in themselves. This shift in the way people want to perceive and express contemporary values through food and meals requires new occupational categories, such as sommelier, barista, chocolatier, and chefs who work according to kitchen manifestoes and other revolutionary tracts. The chef is now clearly linked to primary production, which is why an experience day on the Bjäre peninsula, where people pay to dig potatoes, can be viewed as an extension of a meal experience. A visit to the Farmer's Own Market is another example of the system of ideas associated with today's meals. A revolution is in progress where the norm is no longer a single culinary ideal (read: French cuisine) but those who work in gastronomy today must reflect on their profession and to some extent transform it into a vocation, something deep-rooted in their own personality. Just as ordinary people today often live according to dietary regimes expressed in abbreviations like GI and LCHF, the chef must also nail his theses on blackboards in the restaurant or express them as a manifesto when he appears on television and declares: "This is what I am passionate about."

Everything is tied together in chapter 7, where Jönsson looks at the consequences the ideals and values he has surveyed can have for the business that turns out matching products and services every day. He finds five especially significant changes in the wake of the revolution: enhanced professional status, visibility in the dining room and the media, more and new occupational categories, new types of companies with a wide range of products and a multitude of new ingredients to cook with, and the fact that people in the business have begun to intellectualize the value of a new outlook on knowledge. These factors in combination with the technical development of kitchen appliances and computers for orders, calculations of nutritional value, and the fact that it is possible today to control cooking at very precise temperatures, down to one decimal point, means that gastronomy can rightly be said to have gone through a phase of revolution. Even if it is still going on, the chef has also come out on the other side, expressing both yesterday's and today's cultural values in a new form. There is no going back.

Let me end by agreeing with Jönsson's statement that the appearance of commercial food culture in

our times is an unusually revolutionary cultural expression. One would be justified in talking of *the gastronomic turn* as a counterpart to *the linguistic turn*, where Jönsson raises his gaze above the edge of the plate and shows that there is a world here to discover, but this is of course only for those who want to see. His work reveals the value of foodstuffs, food, and meals as ideas in society at different times in history. The answer to the question why we humans devote so much time to cooking, creating dishes, and enjoying meals is far too complex a cultural process to be explained in terms of eating to survive, or because food tastes good, or because the body needs fuel. Jönsson is on the trail of ideas in the history of food culture and shows that this can become an independent research field. For just as little as literature is about paper and ink, food and meals are not just about nutrition and satiety. This book about "The Gastronomic Revolution" already shows that the answer in the future will be better than that.

Richard Tellström, Örebro University, Grythyttan

Why History?

Jorma Kalela, Making History. The Historian and Uses of the Past. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2012. 196 pp. ISBN 9780230276819.

■ Jorma Kalela, Emeritus Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Turku, has written a stimulating book for students and practising historians. According to a review by the British historian Hilda Kean, the book has been written for 'thinking historians', and it certainly does make one think and reflect upon one's own methodological and ethical practices. In my own reading of the book, I found myself often agreeing with Kalela's reasoning, but even when I did not, I could not help admiring his discussion, which is made "*aus Liebe zur Kunst*". The message of the book can be condensed as follows: All historians should be aware of their societal role and reflect upon it – ethically and methodologically – at every stage of the research process. Further, the book reminds the scholarly community of its rather limited role in the production of historical knowledge, compared to everyday and popular or public histories. Consequently, the book entails a warning against the adaption of a patronizing stance by academic historians and a related call for them to enter into the "participatory historical culture", as he calls the field that is made up of various uses and genres of history.

Before writing *Making History*, Kalela published a textbook *Historiantutkimus ja historia* [Historical research and history] in 2000, which deals with theoretical and methodological questions in scholarly history writing. This book already contains a discussion, albeit a brief one, on the place of academic history in relation to other forms of history production. A book entitled *Jokapäiväinen historia* [Everyday history] published in 2001, which was co-edited by Kalela, was a welcome introduction in the Finnish language to the field of everyday uses of history. The present book continues Kalela's scholarly involvement in history-in-society. He now holds a recognized status as a pioneer in this field. Initially, this involvement goes back to his work as a commissioned historian in the Finnish Paperworkers' Union in the 1980s. In connection with this project, he set up history study groups and in this way acquainted himself with the idea, introduced by Raphael Samuel among others, of history as a form of social activity and everyday practice rather than being primarily a distinct academic discipline and privileged area of knowledge.

Making History is a textbook on methodology that can be used in undergraduate and postgraduate courses on historiography and research methods. At the same time, it can be read as an intellectual autobiography, written by a scholar who can look back on a career spanning 40 years. In his narrative, Kalela reflects on the different stages of his work and links them to various currents and paradigm changes in Finnish and transnational scholarship since the 1960s. In particular, the emergence of the so called "new histories", including oral history and memory studies, has challenged the privileged status of academic scholarship. This retrospective look at his own career lends added weight to Kalela's argumentation in support of his view of history-in-society and to his discussion of the methodological implications of the connection between history and society for the work of historians. As an expert on the uses of history in society, Kalela must be aware how skilfully he himself exploits historical argumentation: his views do not remain abstract but instead are embedded in his own experience, which is in history.

Making History is very usable as a textbook for learning and teaching purposes in the context of academe. On the other hand, I am sceptical about the

book's broader usability for lay historians, even if they were native speakers of English, despite the publisher's claim that it also serves such a purpose. In my own view, the reason for this lies in the fact that academic historians are accustomed to reflecting on the theories and methods they use in their work, albeit sometimes vaguely, whereas lay historians have a different approach. Although Kalela writes about history-in-society and the relevance of public histories, he is here speaking to his academic colleagues. The structure of the book with its six chapters is fairly clear. Each of the chapters has its own focus although they inevitably overlap and the central message permeates them all and is repeated throughout the book. This repetition is understandable but can on occasion be slightly excessive.

In their writings and teaching, academic historians have conventionally addressed the question: "What is history?". At the beginning of his book, Jorma Kalela suggests that it should be replaced with a more fruitful one, namely: "Why history?" This formulation – or "What is history for?" – implies for academic historians a self-critical question regarding the justification for our work. If history is a form of social activity and everyday practice, how should the academic community position itself and define the value of its work? Kalela's response is as follows: Historians are obliged to produce sound knowledge, based on a solid analysis of their sources, and to give a fair description of the past. This process is not, however, independent of its surroundings, as historians have conventionally been taught to see their work. Everything historians produce is inevitably directed at a specific audience. Historians select their topics and formulate their research questions in the existing circumstances. Correspondingly, their findings have an influence, if only indirect, on current debates. Further, Kalela argues, in relation to everyday and public histories historians have the responsibility, based on their training, of acting as referees. They have an obligation to point out the deficiencies in lay interpretations. On the other hand, historians do not have the privilege to decide what is seen as historically significant.

Throughout his book, Kalela constantly reminds us that historians have the role of "guardians of sound knowledge of the past". This responsibility to give "a fair description" implies that historians have to make sure that people and their actions in the past are understood "on their own terms". This is an aim that we can all concur with from an ethical point of view, because we would all like to be treated in that way, both in the present and in the future when we have passed away. It does not diminish the value of this aim that epistemologically we know that it cannot be achieved completely. However, I wish to raise a question about where the limits of this understanding should be drawn. We should not impose our moral standards on the past, which is Kalela's message, but neither should we be too gentle because it can lead to understanding the actors "too much". They also had moral and other responsibilities, imposed by their respective societies, and as researchers we are justified to evaluate whether they fulfilled them or not. I am sure it is not Kalela's intention to promote relativism, but I would suggest that he could have been little more explicit in this regard.

Kalela's message of historians' interrelatedness with their surroundings is not radical as such, and consequently this message might appear rather conventional in the eyes of students and young professionals, for whom this interrelatedness is more or less self-evident, if it is not read against the writer's scholarly biography. However, when this message is combined with the author's emphasis on the relevance of the target audience of one's study and the importance of consciously and constantly taking the audience into account, Kalela's discussion becomes much more thought-provoking. At least in the Finnish scholarly community, historians have conventionally overlooked the question of the recipients' role in the production of historical knowledge. Or then they have treated the audience, if it is a lay one, as passive receivers of their professional teaching. Kalela, however, reminds us that the readers also actively use and re-use what they have read in creating their own histories. I share this interpretation, but I am somewhat hesitant regarding Kalela's reasoning that historians should be responsible for controlling the use of their interpretations. While he also admits that our studies may have unintended consequences, he is definite about the possibility of scholars to control the reception of their work. However, for me, the question remains: How, for example, can we prevent people from reading selectively despite our efforts to formulate our points of departure and our findings as clearly and unambiguously as possible?

When *Making History* is read in the present situation of the academic community, I suggest that Kalela's message of history-in-society and the role of the audience in the social process of knowledge production are radical and offer arguments for opposing current policies. When we are told that only academic publishing in its limited forms counts as valid, the logical conclusion drawn by most scholars is to restrict their own work to the university. Kalela's message, on the one hand, is that history is too important to be left to professionals, while, on the other, he makes a claim for the active involvement of academic historians in public debates in which history is used as an argument. What is needed at the present time is a strategy for the double involvement of historians – in both the academic and the public sphere – and Kalela's book, based on his profound scholarship and his own empirical work is a valuable contribution towards this goal. Moreover, his message is not limited to history but can also be applied to other disciplines in the humanities.

Tiina Kinnunen, Jyväskylä

Encounters between Sámi and Finns

Veli-Pekka Lehtola, Saamelaiset suomalaiset – kohtaamisia 1896–1953. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2012. 528 pp. ISBN 978-952-222-331-9.

■ Veli-Pekka Lehtola, a professor of Sámi culture and a specialist in the history of Lapland, has published several books that deal with the past of the Sámi. The present book, *Saamelaiset suomalaiset – kohtaamisia 1896–1953*, is his magnum opus so far. Using a wide variety of sources, from committee reports to memoirs and travelogues, the author examines relationships between the Finnish Sámi and the Finns during the first half of the twentieth century – a period that has not attracted as much scholarly attention as the earlier history. The examination extends from the actions of the state to different encounters between Sámi and Finnish individuals on the local level.

The book begins from 1896, when the demarcation between Finland and Norway was conducted and the Finnish administration began to strengthen in the Sámi area, and ends in 1953, when the post-war reconstruction period was over. This space of time is divided into three periods and studied from different perspectives; the author discusses, for example, the situation of Sámi languages and education and the changes in reindeer herding. One recurrent theme is the construction of roads. The state wanted to build roads in order to exploit natural resources and to connect Lapland to the rest of Finland, but many local residents opposed the plans, suspecting that the road would bring unwanted people to the north. Along with the construction of roads, the number and influence of the Finns grew in the Sámi area, and Lapland gradually became dependent on the south that had previously been relatively unimportant to the Sámi.

In the final part of the book, Lehtola highlights the consequences of the Second World War. The population of northern Finland was evacuated during the last phase of the war, when the German troops mined Lapland and destroyed most of the buildings along the main roads. The evacuation winter 1944–1945 was an exceptional period for many Sámi. The influences that the Sámi received from the Finns during the evacuation time, together with the destruction of Lapland and the reconstruction after the war, contributed to cultural changes, and the Sámi became more Finnish.

Different Sámi groups are often discussed separately in the book. The Sámi population in Finland during the first half of the twentieth century can be divided into three language groups – the speakers of North Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi languages – and into groups that practised different livelihoods. The regional and cultural variation was remarkable, and different groups had different relationships to the Finns and to the changes that took place in the course of time. The population of Utsjoki, for example, did not have much contact with the Finns at the beginning of the twentieth century, while Sámi people in Inari already lived side by side with the Finns. The development among the Inari Sámi people that has often been seen as a loss of culture and becoming Finnish is presented here as a form of living multiculturalism.

While the book explores the great lines of history, the author also brings out the individuals. The Sámi population was not a uniform group, a passive object of the actions of the state, but consisted of individuals using different strategies to succeed in times of societal change. Not only Sámi persons but also Finnish officials are discussed as individuals with their own personalities, opinions and worldviews. As Lehtola notes, different officials working

in the Sámi area had different attitudes to the local population. Some of them opposed the efforts to improve the situation of the Sámi while others defended their rights, and some learned the Sámi language themselves.

The perspective of the individual is also highlighted in the captions to the numerous black and white photographs in the book. Some of the pictures portray Finnish officials who served in northern Finland, while most of them show local Sámi people. In the ethnographic tradition, similar images have often been used as representations of "a people": anonymous men and women in their exotic dresses have embodied the Other in the eyes of Western mainstream populations. In Lehtola's book, however, these black and white figures of the past are presented to the reader as individuals. In almost every case, all the persons in the image are mentioned by name – often with both their Sámi and Finnish names. Sometimes the captions also provide other information about them.

The book is nuanced and dispassionate, but the author does take a stand on the contemporary controversy about colonialism in Finland. According to him, the Finnish colonialism was not necessarily about oppression or subordination; the actions of Finnish authorities were based on the ideal of the equal rights of individuals, and the Finnish policy cannot be compared to the assimilation policies pursued in Norway. The results, however, were quite similar, with the Finnish school system playing an essential role in assimilating the Sámi into a different culture and different language. According to Lehtola, the concept of colonialism is still legitimate, even though the history is more complicated than the image of the overpowering oppressors and the powerless indigenous population suggests.

Lehtola's present book is well written and easy to read but no less scholarly for that. The numerous sources of the study are referred to with more than 1,700 endnotes. Even though the book is an exceptionally thorough one, it has its limitations, as the author notes. Due to the limitations of the sources used, the study concentrates more on some groups than others. The thoughts and actions of women remain largely invisible, as they are hidden in the sources as well.

Saamelaiset suomalaiset is a significant contribution to the discussion about the relationships between the Finnish state and the Sámi population. It brings out the complexity of the history of northern Finland, with lots of differences between Sámi groups as well as between individuals, and thus contributes to a more nuanced picture of the past.

Nika Potinkara, Jyväskylä

The Mature Woman, Who Is She?

Tanten, vem är hon? En (t)antologi. Marianne Liliequist & Karin Lövgren (eds.). Boréa bokförlag, Umeå 2012. 284 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-89140-80-6.

■ This is yet another book about women and about how womanhood is made. However, instead of pondering on the question in general, the book limits itself to the study of the so-called *tant*, in Swedish. A *tant* could be translated as "aunt", but in Swedish the word *tant* covers both family members and non-family members, and, moreover, it often carries a nuance of being old or at least middle-aged. Age – or perhaps maturity would be a suitable euphemism – is not the only characteristic trait of a *tant*, as the book underlines very well. A *tant* is often regarded as old-fashioned, conservative, resolute and angry, rather fat, and having a big bosom, broad hips, permed hair, and sensible shoes. Not to forget to mention her big handbag! The book seeks to consider the concept of *tant* as one related to age. The articles are interdisciplinary, combining texts by ethnologists, sociologists, researchers interested in ageing, cultural analysts, and literature students at the University of Umeå, Sweden.

The book consists of ten articles. Most of them are written in the general style of feminist texts questioning the concept of *tant* and asking for what she is like and who would identify with her. The answer is that the concept is not clear-cut. On the contrary, there are several kinds of mature women with varying dreams, fears, needs, and ways out of boredom, and they adjust according to their resources and possibilities. However, a *tant* is always somebody else! A woman never admits that she is one herself. In this way the reader can see that *tant* is not always a nice thing to be.

The book gives an overview of the concept of *tant*. It would have been interesting to have the information about the age of the researchers writing the articles. I cannot decide whether they are surprised to find the great variation in mature women's wishes, or whether they are just trying to describe their findings. Anyway, the book is also a kind of a discourse analy-

sis. It tries to demonstrate how people and popular press speak about mature women. It turns out that in quite many ways the *tant* is described as an admirable person who knows what she wants and achieves it in the most efficient ways.

The question "Who is a *tant*" has different answers. On the one hand she is invisible and, consequently, powerless. This means that she should modernize her appearance with the aid of sit-ups, new clothes, make-up, and other commercial remedies. In this way she is said to be remarkable and to have her chance with new partners and friends. This implies that she is not good enough the way she is, but should do something about it. On the other hand, she is enviable for she is said to have found her style, she need not change herself in order to please anybody. This discourse says that she has a good portion of self-esteem, she is secure in her own person, and, if needed, she is even allowed to tell "truths", i.e. say how things are without any soft soap. Karin Lövgren points out the similarities between the way a young girl in her puberty and this mature woman are handled in the texts, and she draws the conclusion that both are regarded as being in the middle of a phase of transition from one age to another. The parallels are striking. Does this mean that even a mature woman is not regarded as a grown-up person?

Eva Söderberg describes the Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren's ways of creating mature women. She finds several types and relates them to the way in which the concept of *tant* is used for Astrid Lindgren herself. This article is clear, systematic and enlightening. Katarzyna Wolanik Boström scrutinizes her family history and the aunts (in this case they are family members, therefore the adequate translation for *tant* must be aunt) in her and her mother's lives. She gives a nice description of what they meant to her and her mother, what they were like, what ideals they had for a good life, and how they helped to raise young girls. The article is quite interesting, not least because we get insight into the rural society and the relationship between women there. I wonder how aunts and girls get together in a society where the distance between people from the same family can be thousands of miles. Marianne Liliequist presents her reader with a similar article about her aunts, and the way she looked at them when she was a child. This article is written from an autoethnographical perspective.

What could the aim of this book be, apart from describing different ways of looking at and talking about mature women? Why are today's young girls interested in womanliness in the forms of housekeeping, especially baking and embroidering? Is this interest a reaction against the general exhortation to be competent, efficient and quick at the same time, as one should be impeccably beautiful, thin, and have a ready wit? This wish might be too great a demand, and as a way out the young girls might cast a glance on their mothers, grandmothers or other mature women to find models for how to manage life. Or is the book an attempt to console women of this age and tell them that they are quite normal even if they don't always care so much about their looks, their wits, or their temper, for they have realized that there are other, more important things in life? Is the book a means to liberate younger women from the yoke of being modern women, or is it just a collection of articles about how mature women can be regarded? Anyway, I think it is worth reading if the reader is afraid of getting old. It is not at all that terrible, provided one is healthy and sane, and does not mind too much about other people's opinions.

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo

Researching Everyday Food

Time for Food. Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits in a Global Perspective. Proceedings of the 18th Conference of the International Commission for Ethnological Food Research. Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, 18–21 August 2010. Patricia Lysaght (ed.). Åbo Akademi University Press, Åbo 2012. 366 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-765-642-9.

■ What is everyday food? It refers to the meals that we have without thinking about them. It is the food we need every 4–5 hours throughout life, those meals that can be eaten nicely with a knife and fork, or consumed less nicely, eating out of your hand in your living room, but it is also the food that readers of this text probably had just a few hours ago. For if we live until we are 80 years old, we will have had 175,000 meals, mostly just everyday food, and most of these meals we will not even remember. You can have fun trying to remember your meals in the last 48 hours, and it is possible only with very great difficulty to draw up a reasonably reliable list. It's easier to remember the larger meals like lunch and dinner, but all the snack food and the small sandwiches

here and there are more difficult. Did I eat an apple yesterday or was it the day before yesterday?

The 18th conference of the International Commission for Ethnological Food Research (SIEF) was held in Turku in August 2010, and now the conference proceedings are published in the book *Time for Food: Everyday Food and Changing Meal Habits in a Global Perspective*. The conference volume is divided into four themes: (1) Food in Multicultural and Transnational Contexts, (2) Everyday Meal Habits – National, Regional and Local Varieties, (3) Home-produced Food, Farmers' Markets and Wholesale Provisioning, and (4) Organic Choices, Well-being and Future Food Consumption.

The conference itself was not a large one, even though it is open to food ethnologists from all over the world; only 15 of the papers presented in Turku are included in this volume. As usual, the contributions span over long periods of time, from the Middle Ages to the present, from an agricultural society to contemporary consumer society, from rural to urban. The conference represents an ethnological tradition characterized by descriptive observations without theoretical perspectives, and the findings are not always elevated to a culturally significant level. Modernity is mixed with traditionalism without discrimination, and cultural diffusion is a recurrent explanatory idea.

In a foreword to the book Professor Patricia Lysaght and Professor Anna-Maria Åström write that "multicultural and transnational trends also mean that we now can speak about dishes that have spread to many parts and cultures of the world" (p. 9). I have always found it strange to use the verb "spreading" when talking about food and meals, since culture in other scholarly research is usually about human active choices and intentions, and we want to achieve something with our cultural choices. It is not clear whether the food researchers here are studying the cultural intention and the willingness to use a certain dish, or if culture is the concrete expression (the dish itself), or perhaps both but differently. Are different kinds of culture encapsulated in food, dishes and meals?

In this review I will concentrate on the contributions of representatives from various Scandinavian institutions. The first of the four keynote speakers was Håkan Jönsson of Lund University in Sweden, who spoke under the title "Ethical Aspects of Applied Ethnological Food Research", emphasizing the ethical aspects based on personal experience. He asks whether ethnologists should sell their skills to commercial companies, who then use the knowledge for various marketing messages, with the result that the ethnologist contributes to people abandoning their culture. Jönsson says that the issue needs further discussion. In her keynote address Yrsa Lindqvist of the Archives of Folk Culture at the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland focused on the cultural processes of everyday life in older ethnological food research, which concentrated on production, while consumption is in focus today. With examples from kitchen gardens and new home kitchens as a showroom, Lindqvist discusses how traditional subjects can be transformed in the present. Tolger Gillebo from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences in Aas discussed organic food in his keynote lecture, based on three case studies, showing how organic food is used to build personal identity and how it creates opportunities for innovation for companies operating in markets.

Drinks and beverages are a somewhat neglected area in food ethnology research. Emeritus Professor Nils-Arvid Bringéus from Sweden makes a literature study and gives a descriptive contribution on the use of various beers and juniper drinks, as well as apple and pear cider as an everyday beverage, and he goes through locally produced beverages in southern Sweden during the last three centuries. The focus is on twentieth-century apple drinks – cider and apple juice – with a certain economic importance, as the production of fruit wine was illegal due to the state alcohol prohibition during much of the century. The article does not address the cultural ideas that people in Sweden had about these the drinks or contemporary ideas.

Symbols in everyday food were the focus of the presentation by Professor Elbjørg Fossgard, University of Bergen. She is interested in the ideas behind everyday food in Norway in 1800s and 1900s, especially in rural communities. Her text is based on a literature review of how meals were described and practised in the middle class, and she looks at the meal as a whole and how the concept of family was created during the ritual meal in which the children participated, or when child-free meals were staged. The meal is governed not only by how money is invested in commodities but also in the serving, as people's choices are governed by the cost of servants or the use of daughters to help in serving. Foss-

gard discusses how the concept of "family" comes into existence through a variety of meal-making efforts, such as good table manners, community, celebration of the nuclear family and the emphasis on health as the norm, eating the right nutritious food. The article is a good example of how food and meals are never just only food and meals.

Gun Roos from the National Institute for Consumer Research in Norway discusses a contemporary topic, how organic food is perceived among young cadets at some officers' training schools in Norway. In focus group interviews Roos examines how the values from the food production are transferred to the person who eats the food and how the meaning of food is also an expression of the discourse and ideas. For cadets, the issue of organic food is a matter of different ways to find balance between the cost of food and its effect on health, what to eat and how food turns into an ideological expression of "doing the right thing".

Senior lecturer Maria Frostling-Henningsson from Stockholm University works with multiple qualitative methods such as interviews, shop-a-long and analysing purchase receipts to find how contemporary consumers of different kinds of family households manage dilemmas that they face in their everyday food choices when they do their shopping. She describes a sharpened conflict about the intent and practice of ideals and everyday situations, and interviews families with or without children, getting them to talk about their strategies to comply with the Zeitgeist, which requires deliberate choice on the one hand, and personal comfort, health and making the meal into a social event on the other hand. Here the meal is an expression of the values the families stand for, and also expresses how we as human beings through life's various family constellations change our value perceptions and thus our meal expressions.

Organic food, environmental change and the role of food production for contemporary and future consumers was analysed by four Finnish researchers from different research institutes and universities in Finland; Anna Kirveennummi, Riikka Saarimaa, Leena Jokinen and Johanna Mäkelä. They use a method of scenario generating, presenting four different scenario models to discuss the different paths that food consumption in Finland might take until 2030. The use of scenarios is a way to connect historical knowledge with future development, and it can be a good method to understand how people think about food and why certain developments in food culture are more likely to happen than others.

Food and meal ethnology could be one of the biggest topics in the ethnological research field, since it studies the cultural production that each person and each community practises several times a day, year in, year out, and in a variety of social formations. But the theory is still limited and the intellectual discourse restricted. At the end of the book there is a very interesting chapter where previous years' conferences and conference themes are presented in a chronological list. The conference has been going on since 1970 and 18 conferences have been held, including this one in Turku. Many of the papers have never been published or have only reached the academic community in summaries or published in German, which is a difficult language for today's young food ethnologists to decipher. It would therefore be of great value to ethnological food research if the unpublished texts were published at least on some ethnological website; the subject is a rather inconspicuous one and needs more texts to develop further.

Richard Tellström, Örebro University, Grythyttan

Biographical Meanings

Biografiska betydelser. Norm och erfarenhet i levnadsberättelser. Lena Marander-Eklund & Ann-Catrin Östman (eds.). Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora 2011. 250 pp. ISBN 978-91-7844-827-2.

■ This volume entitled "Biographical Meanings: Norm and Experience in Life Stories" is important because it draws attention to a well-established field with the ambition to develop research on life stories. The editors of the book are the folklorist Lena Marander-Eklund and the historian Ann-Catrin Östman at Åbo Akademi University, who initiated the project by arranging seminars about the writing of biographies and then edited the present publication. Apart from the fact that the editors themselves have contributed one case study each, the volume contains a further five studies by Finnish academics and three by Swedes, from a range of disciplines. The book thus reflects the wide research interest in life stories that can be found in ethnology, folkloristics, history, philosophy, comparative literature, and sociology, although the first three are most prominent in this volume.

Through the researchers' problematizations and case studies, the reader gains insight into many different lives and thus into the varying conditions for producing biographies in time and space. Based on published and unpublished autobiographies, we learn of destinies such as Russian women's memories of prison, a farmer's son's upward mobility, and an acknowledged author's life story. Biographies collected by research institutes and archives give us a housewife's account of her everyday life and a Jewish woman's experiences in different phases of life in different countries. A collection of letters describe the way of life of a Swedish immigrant in America, and biographies of some mental patients are outlined through studies of accumulated letters and hospital records. Altogether the memoirs range from the late nineteenth century until today, shedding light on the life of people in different social strata, from the highest to the lowest. This also allows an opportunity to examine how the writing of biographies is related to norms and influence. All life stories reflect, in one way or another, expectations of how they should be formed, which also reflects the social climate and class contexts. The essays in this volume also highlight aspects of power concerning the individual's possibility to control his or her own life story. Some of the narratives retold in the book give an impression of the writer's awareness and control of the self-presentation, while others are more closely tied to the conventions of the genre and some are constructed around a few fragments of the persons' subjective perceptions.

What the researchers in this volume have in common is that they discuss biography in terms of narratives about and by individuals. The aim is not to claim that they are representative, but rather to show how major historical events and processes influence the autobiographers' understanding of themselves. Birgitta Svensson stresses in her article the importance of affirming people's desire to relate their own and other people's lives to grand narratives. When the little narrative in a specific place has an impact on great history, the social contexts also become comprehensible. She thus opposes the post-modern perspective that dismisses the significance of the grand narratives. In her opinion, they are relevant since they give people collective frames of references to which they can relate and through which they can interpret their lives. In short, they can find meaning. Bengt Kristensson Uggla argues against the idea that a person is a narrative. He claims that a person's life contains so much more than can be included in narratives "because of the narrative incompleteness of life". It is not merely a question of the length and content of the narratives, but also a lack of conventions or ability to express the complexity of experience in words and arrange it in narrative form. In the introduction to the volume the editors highlight the importance of adopting a neo-materialist outlook. When experience is considered in the analysis, this does not mean a return to a realistic outlook; narratives are still interpreted as constructions, but interpretations of life are not confined solely to linguistic expressions.

The articles in the volume are divided into three chapters. In the first, "Desire for Identity and the Politics of Memory", which includes the articles by Svensson and Uggla, we also find essays by Marianne Liljeström and Ville Kivimäkis. Liljeström applies a gender perspective to study Russian women's autobiographies for their relationship between self-presentations and social climate. She compares narratives intended for publication with those written solely as autotherapy, lacking legitimacy for publication at the time. Kivimäkis analyses Finnish war veterans' memoirs in relation to prevailing political conventions.

Chapter two, "Form and Rhetorical Devices", opens with Susanne Nylund Skog's study of a Jewish woman's oral and written narratives. The research interest concerns intertextuality, how life stories are constructed in relation to the grand narrative of the Holocaust, the woman's own memories, and her ambition to reconstruct events in the lives of older relatives. Nylund Skog studies how the narrator's expectations of children and grandchildren having access to other life stories also affect how she shapes her own narratives. Lena Marander-Eklund likewise considers the form in her close-up reading of a woman's account of her life and marriage. Here she discusses not only how the appeal for women's life stories influenced the content of the narrative but also that it was the Department of Women's Studies at Åbo Akademi University that took the initiative. Would the narrative have been different if the appeal had come from a different sender? Did the writer's notion of the aims of the staff in the department influence her way of expressing herself, to confirm their expectations about the vulnerability of women? Anna Möller-Sibelius, who

has analysed Bertel Gripenberg's memoirs, shows how he shaped his self-presentation in a highly conscious way with skilled use of rhetoric, and how his autobiography also reflects the phase in which he was when he was writing, related to the declining popularity of his writings and the spirit of the time.

In the third chapter, "(Re)constructing a Life and a Life Story", Peter Olausson describes how he went about collecting information about a well-known emigrant to America. A gravestone in Indiana, USA, and a fragmentary collection of letters from America in Sweden were the starting point for his reconstruction of this relative's life, which ended in the middle of the twentieth century. Ann-Catrin Östman's gender analysis concerns a man who looks back on his life of upward mobility and how his descriptions are perspectivized in terms of the values of modernity. The rejection of the norms of pre-industrial society is described through accounts of women's living conditions. By drawing attention to them he achieves his goal of also portraying himself as a modern man and husband. Jutta Ahlbeck-Rehn has searched archival material about mental patients, on the basis of which she discusses how life stories can be constructed. The material includes hospital records where the staff's preferential right of interpretation affects the questions put to the patients and what is recorded; it also includes confiscated letters written by the patients. Ahlbeck-Rehn discusses the extent to which the patients were aware that the staff would read the letters and how this may have affected what they chose to write.

In the disciplines represented in the book there are established research traditions concerning autobiographical narrative in different forms and the writing of biographies. This volume may represent an interdisciplinary research field, but it does not claim to be carried out using interdisciplinary methods. Each researcher starts from the current research front in his or her subject, but the reader is given no introduction to this. The book even lacks presentations of the authors, which means that a reader who is not already familiar with the researchers' academic backgrounds may find it difficult, at least initially, to see the relevance of the questions asked. The authors move within a multidisciplinary rather than an interdisciplinary field, and the book would have benefited if the differences between different authors' premises had been considered. Readers who expect a significant increase in their knowledge of neo-materialistic perspectives might end up slightly disappointed. The step between what has previously been written in this research field and the essays in this volume is not large. I would nevertheless recommend this book, since it has an explicit ambition to develop the field and it uses several examples to stress the importance of elucidating the place of experience, a material scene that has meaning for the writing of (auto)biography. I suspect that the seminars which were the incentive for this book also meant the start of a research journey, like the journeys described in the book and the journeys people take when writing their autobiographies. Through the writing they discover themselves; it becomes a reflexive process that leads to greater awareness. For these researchers, the academic exchange no doubt involved a journey which partly took a changed course. This book therefore encourages emulation. The studies here can be compared with what Bengt Kristensson Uggla writes about life stories: they do not reflect all experiences because life goes on. And I would add so does research.

Kerstin Gunnemark, Göteborg

Music on the Border

Marja Mustakallio, Musik på gränsen. Hundra år av tornedalskt musikliv. Arktinen Ajatus, Övertorneå 2012. 358 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-637-0380-5. (Swedish translation of Musiikkiarajalla: Satavuotta tornionlaaksolaista musiikkielämää, Suomen etnomusikologisen seuran julkaisuja18. Arktinen Ajatus, Övertorneå 2009.)

■ The musicologist Marja Mustakallio has done remarkable historical research in order to document the music history of her native region, the Tornio River Valley that makes up the border district between Sweden and Finland. This book titled "Music on the Border: A Hundred Years of Tornio Valley Musical Life" gives many interesting insights into regional patterns of music-making and their relations to larger social structures. The focus is on the nineteenth century although the description starts with eighteenth-century travelogues and some chapters go into the twentieth century.

When Finland in 1809 went from being a part of Sweden to a part of Russia, the Tornio River suddenly became a national border that cut through villages and family ties. Although the border has been open and personal contacts have continued, the dif-

ferent administrative structures – not least the schools and what was taught in them – shaped a situation where experiences and frames of references did not match across the border. For the people on the Swedish side, the most devastating effect has perhaps been the denial of their language. From the late 1800s, the Swedish policy was to make Swedish the only language in this area where Finnish was the mother tongue; hence, speaking Finnish was forbidden at school (and of course school books were only in Swedish). The central question Mustakallio poses is: was music affected by this division? Was the homogeneous regional culture stronger than state policies?

One effect of the border was that the Finnish language on the Swedish side first became an archaic Finnish, and then with the fast modernization after World War II a great influx of Swedish loanwords has made Western Tornio Valley Finnish into a language of its own – quite recently it was officially recognized as one of Sweden's languages, called Meänkieli ("our language"). And when Mustakallio originally published her book in 2009 in standard Finnish, she realized that Meänkieli speakers couldn't read it. So in order for the people on the western side to read the history of their region, the book had to be translated into Swedish (and she notes that such a translation, for the minority but into the majority language, did not fit into the rules for translation support).

How do you write a regional music history? Of course it depends on the aim of the project, the definition of the region and the motives for choosing it. Here, the broad question of comparing music on the two sides of the river makes it relevant to draw up a broad inventory – which means searching for traces of music-making on many levels and from different kinds of sources. This book draws upon printed travelogues, newspapers, estate inventories and other fiscal archive material, private letter collections, sheet music inventories, folk-life descriptions, tradition archive questionnaires and interviews, and Mustakallio's own interviews. An impressive amount of work went into this book!

The chapters are to a large extent built up from the different sources and the milieus that produced them. So, the first chapter that draws on travel accounts speaks of the Tornio Valley as an exotic place in the north, and of the music that drew attention to foreign visitors. One place of special visual impact was the "mountain of the midnight sun" in Aavasaksa on the Finnish side and the Övertorneå parish church in Matarengi just across the river. At Aavasaksa there were Midsummer celebrations with dancing, and nationalistic songs – Swedish as well as Finnish – up to the 1890s when Russian soldiers started to supervise and nationalist outbursts were prohibited. Matarengi Church had an imposing organ bought from the German Church in Stockholm in 1780, and a skilful organist, Johan Portin (he moved from Stockholm to Matarengi because of the organ), who worked there for nearly sixty years. Travel descriptions also mention bourgeois homes where the daughters were good amateur pianists and singers; likewise, yoik and runo singing also attracted attention.

The next chapter deals with the church organization as a site of music. The tasks of the sexton and organists are presented on a general level; then a lineage of organists is reconstructed, parish by parish. The organs in each church and the hymnals that were used are presented. One chapter discusses traces in the estate inventories and lists the fiddles, pianos, harmoniums, psalmodikons, accordions and harmonicas, and automatic music machines. The largest chapter, over a hundred pages, focuses on music in the twin cities of Torneå and Haparanda during the nineteenth century, and gives a broad portrayal of urban bourgeois life where home music, choirs, and all the touring musicians of all kinds are presented, as well as the ceremonies and celebrations where music had an important place. One difference is that the public music in Torneå was incorporated in the popular movements and societies (temperance, volunteer fire brigade etc.) while Haparanda had more of an autonomous music life where concerts were held just for the sake of music.

One chapter is devoted to the Matarengi folk high school that started in 1899 and the roles of the headmaster and his wife in the first decade, Ludvig and Elisabet de Vylder. Ludvig de Vylder published his ideas on the role of singing and dancing at the school, so here the ideology behind the choice of singing in unison instead of four-part choir, and refined folk songs and dance games is spelled out quite clearly – an interesting example of how ideas circulating on a national level were presented and adapted at the local level. Worth noting is that he was in favour of the use of Finnish at school, although it taught pupils for inclusion in Swedish so-

ciety. Elisabet de Vylder was a strong proponent and transmitter of the folk high school song tradition, introduced Alice Tegnér's songs for children and planned and directed many celebrations during the year as well as weekly soirées. The high school stands out as a rural culture centre and is apparently remembered in this way.

"Folk music", that is music sung and played in the villages by the peasants, is presented according to different themes of uses, situations, and genres: New Year's singing, singing as the coffin was carried from the house of the dead, topical and narrative songs and their singers, dancing, dance events, the dance musicians, Laestadianism and music, dances at weddings. In some measure this draws on Hans-Erik Alatalo's fieldwork as presented in *Nurmen Linttu* (2004) and earlier village life descriptions, in some measure unpublished material is presented. I am personally happy to see that material from the fieldwork done by the late archive director in Umeå, Åke Hansson, in the 1970s and 1980s together with Mimmi Keskitalo has been transcribed and come to use here (quite a few song texts). The last chapter presents two musicians whom Mustakallio documented through her own fieldwork. Lauri Haajanen and his family came as refugees from Karelia to the Swedish side in 1945. He played the accordion at dances and local celebrations. In the 1970s he started to write songs, on demand and for local events, and even arranged two concerts late in life with his own songs that have also been released on cassettes and in print (he wrote at least 150 songs). Rolf Wikström came from a family where singing and music were important, moved away to become teacher, returned to the Tornio valley for a period but settled further south in the same county. He played the piano, accordion and was member of choirs. These presentations seem to follow the interviews quite closely which gives them a sense of intimacy; they are but samples from a larger number of interviews that is planned to be the subject of a forthcoming book.

The concluding chapter brings out some themes that have been recurrent through the book. One is the presence of family relations, reflected in how brothers and sons succeed to organist positions, and the importance of the home as a site of music-making. To begin with, there were no distinct differences across the border (but some regional differences up- and downstream); they started to develop when Sweden began its hard language policy in schools, and the independence of Finland furthered the division. There are some interesting observations here on singing and language switching: people speak Meänkieli in everyday interaction but sing songs in Swedish at ceremonies and celebrations, and in standard Finnish when they were introduced from broadsides; there are even song texts using both languages. And Swedish was the language in the urban and middle-class milieus on both sides of the border throughout the nineteenth century.

An almost overwhelming mass of empirical data is presented here. Some parts read more like "lists in speech", with no narrative drive besides chronology; sometimes data are presented in tables and quotations. Thus there is a structure consisting of the addition of short parts: the largest chapter has some 60+ subheadings, which gives an encyclopaedic impression. The chapter endings and conclusions are short summaries rather than analytic discussions. This publication will probably fill a need for people in the Tornio valley to get access to sources about their history. I think it is best characterized as an inventory with comments; I sense a kind of pedagogic mission of explaining the local by showing its connection to a general national level (often with references to and quotations from national standard works) and to the general political structure of the time. Obviously Mustakallio has gathered a huge and unique corpus of material, and to give each theme a distinct scholarly analysis would delay the availability considerably; I deeply sympathize with her motive of bringing it to the people it concerns. But besides the regional and minority identity aspects, the volume has much to offer from other perspectives: there are many interesting passages and details for those interested in the social history of music, the student of nineteenth-city urban life, or for the study of the folk high school movement, to name a few. And now I am waiting for her next volume!

Alf Arvidsson, Umeå

Source Pluralism in the Historical Study of Animal Husbandry

Janken Myrdal, Boskapsskötseln under medeltiden. En källpluralistisk studie. Nordiska museets handlingar 139. Nordiska museets förlag, Stockholm 2012. 310 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7108-555-9.

■ Medieval material life, people's everyday reality, is a neglected research field among historians, cultural historians, and even more so among ethnologists. One reason for this, apart from lack of interest, is the inaccessibility of the scattered sources that shed light on simple phenomena. There are however exceptions, as this book clearly demonstrates. Janken Myrdal, professor of agrarian history at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, formerly curator at Nordiska Museet, took his doctorate in 1985 with a dissertation on medieval tillage, *Medeltidens åkerbruk: Agrarteknik i Sverige ca 1000 till 1520.* The dissertation was initially intended to cover animal husbandry as well, but the sheer amount of material ruled that out. In subsequent years Myrdal has published many contributions about animal husbandry from different perspectives, and these are assembled in this work. As the title indicates, two different topics are considered here. The first part discusses questions of method, sources, and source criticism – for which the author coins a new term, *source pluralism*, while the second examines animal husbandry in the Middle Ages.

After reading through his works, the methodological questions stand out as primary, whereas animal husbandry is an exemplification of this source pluralism. As he writes in the introduction: "This has become a book about methods for studies in cultural history, and animal husbandry is the study in which the method is demonstrated." What he presents here is a challenge to the rigid Weibullian paradigm prevailing among historians, the method according to which one should identify the *best source* as a guide without bothering to search for the multitude of forgotten, often inaccessible sources. The leitmotif is instead to look untiringly for material that is hard to find because it is trivial or concealed for various reasons, including ideological reasons. The study of everyday life (which includes animal husbandry) and the living conditions of the broad masses in the Middle Ages requires diverse material from different disciplines. Interdisciplinarity is the basis for Myrdal's source-pluralistic method in which the amount of different materials in *one* context is the basic condition. He describes his method as "the individual researcher's interdisciplinarity". Its principle is that the credibility of a statement is strengthened by the agreement between several different sources. The aim is consistently to find the tiny, ignored detail, regardless of the difficulties. The researcher should, however, retain as a base the knowledge created by a specific subject, but break free from it and conduct extensive special studies of different materials. One of the fundamental conditions for Myrdal's method is the requirement of spatial and chronological closeness: the evidence must be contemporary but the interpretation can derive support from later sources. He admits that what he calls "the ethnological time-layer" (the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century) is crucial for all studies in cultural history, as is evident, for instance, from the studies of implements in the later part of his book. The author concedes that his source pluralism is a rather toilsome approach because the method is not yet fully developed.

It may be added that his introduction of a new research principle, source pluralism, is scarcely intended for the beginner in cultural history, because of the diverse and strict demands made of the researcher. Thinking independently is an obvious need, but one should also have solid scholarly experience and a well-development network of contacts, with different researchers and specialists with whom one is in continuous dialogue. Further requirements of users of the method are familiarity with the source material that is relevant to the phenomenon under study. He also reminds us of the importance of work economy: the effort expended in relation to the goal, to the expected result. The time consumed in going through disparate sources cannot always guarantee a reward for the toil. Nowadays, when competition for grants between scholars is tough and the grant givers often expect quick results, many researchers may choose a more tested method than the one offered by Myrdal. He is nevertheless optimistic about the usefulness of source pluralism in the future given that the publication of source material will increase – chiefly as sources become digitally available in the future.

Almost half the book is devoted to a monumental presentation of the medieval source material of various kinds, which he penetrates and comments in detail. In this case it concerns what useful knowledge these sources may be able to contribute about medieval animal husbandry, primarily in Scandinavia, but also what comparisons they allow with continental countries. There is no room here to do justice to the intensive work – the hunt for useful source

material – that Myrdal has done in the last few decades. These include written sources such as letters and accounts, as well as narrative sources such as laws and miracle tales (with great emphasis on the revelations of Saint Birgitta), household books, proverbs, and dictionaries. Archaeological material is also included in source groups which, in the case of animal husbandry, are synonymous with "wood archaeology" since most implements were made of wood. A great deal of space is devoted to proverbs, which give us a good idea of the distribution of different kinds of animals. Myrdal finds that the Swedish proverbs are regionally based and a large share of them derive from folk experience. Pictures are the author's favourite source because they are plentiful in Scandinavia in the Middle Ages. The Swedish images – mostly wall paintings and sculptures – allow a wealth of studies about herders and farm animals, of which several dozen beautiful photographs, all newly taken, are published here (from Lennart Karlsson's database at the Swedish History Museum, Stockholm). The value of pictures as sources is discussed in detail on a European basis, with support from the famous German *Sachsenspiegel*, among other works. The author claims that regional difference can be found by analysing the images, and that the objects occurring in the pictures can be used in studies of changes. Throughout his scholarly life Myrdal has been a skilled artefact researcher, and his experience now proves very useful in the analyses. One conclusion is that the pictorial material is steered by the narratives.

The pictorial evidence offers ample opportunities for artefact studies. Here I select just a few illustrative examples of how source pluralism works as a method. For reasons of space I omit phenomena to do with milking and the making of butter and cheese. A separate section is devoted to the occupational costume of herders, the cape and cloak, which gave protection against rain and cold. Myrdal devotes considerable attention to the herder's staff. This seemingly simple object is divided into eight groups, from the simple straight staff or club to the well-developed "shovel staff", one end of which is shaped like a small spade or shovel of iron, which could be used for throwing earth, sand, or gravel against stubborn animals, in this case sheep/goats. Among the staffs we find the crook, with the end shaped like a hook with which animals could be caught by the leg. Myrdal places the different staffs in their chronological context. The collar worn by cattle is examined in the same detail, with the development of its form from the simple withy collar to the more sophisticated locking collar. To let the reader understand the development or improvement of the collars, the author ought to have added some drawings to the text. This also applies to the *lekande* (a swivel ring with a bolt). Other objects that the herders could have with them are small bags, hand axes, and some form of musical or signalling instrument such as a horn or flute. There is evidence that herders sometimes carried fire, but no tinderbox is included in the survey.

The second half of Myrdal's book deals in more concrete terms with animal husbandry in the time from the eleventh to the sixteenth century. It should be pointed out that Myrdal only considers cattle and sheep/goats, while other animals such as horses and pigs are excluded. The omission of horses may surprise scholars from other countries. Myrdal says that horses entail special problems since they differ so much from other farm animals, and one can to some extent agree with him even though – in my opinion – the horse is in many ways an integral part of animal husbandry. What is studied is the management of the animals and the artefacts associated with them. The second part of the book begins with different questions about pastures, their use and regulation. This includes summer farms, which are well documented in the laws of Dalarna from the early fourteenth century. In connection with summer grazing the author looks at the dangers to which the animals were exposed, especially wolves, less often bears. The professional herder had great responsibility; he had to be able to prove that any animals which had died were outside his zone of responsibility. Predators were hunted as intensively in the Middle Ages as in later centuries (up to the middle of the nineteenth century) according to records of tradition.

A separate section is devoted to the objects and equipment needed by the grazing animals at the summer farm. The Swedish laws have detailed accounts of tethering devices and ways to prevent animals from getting through or over fences, so that we can see continuity in their use over the centuries. In this context Myrdal once again brings up the issue of who did the herding. He wants to find out whether the Nordic system is archaic and ecologically conditioned or is later and historically condi-

tioned. To sum up, it may be said that in the early Middle Ages the herding was done by slaves. Later on there were professional male herders both on the continent and in southern and central Scandinavia. From the fourteenth century the herding was managed in turns by the villages. Towards the end of the Middle Ages the responsibility for herding passed to women and children as well. This applies mainly to the northern half of Sweden.

In his general summary and interpretation of the agrarian revolution in the period from the eleventh to the fourteenth century the author claims that it not only included tillage but also animal husbandry and women's work. The latter mainly involved looking after the milk and dairy products for sale. Later on women took over the majority of the work with cattle, including herding. At the same time the role of animal husbandry increased in relation to tillage. One contributory factor in this development was the consequences of the Black Death. The growing participation of women in this may have been due to the conscription of the males for military service in times of unrest. After this meticulous survey of medieval sources on animal husbandry we now have a firm basis on which to stand. For much later times, ethnologists have documented all aspects of this occupation. One may wonder what is the crucial difference between the Middle Ages and the well-researched "ethnological time-layer". According to the previously asserted ethnological axiom, the simpler a cultural phenomenon turns out to be, the more lasting it is, and it also displays great agreement between different countries. Animal husbandry is one of these phenomena. There is, however, a blank spot in the history of this economic activity which awaits research: from the start of the sixteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century. As observed above, the emphasis in this book is on the introduction of a new research method that Myrdal tests on the topic of animal husbandry. At the same time, his source pluralism is a powerful critique of the Weibullian source criticism prevailing among historians and used by them as a matter of routine. He calls his method (perhaps for want of a better term) source pluralism. Since this method is the result of many years of research and since its usefulness concerns different disciplines, it would have been justified to have a comprehensive summary in English.

Mátyás Szabó, Simrishamn

Sex for Sale in Denmark

Niels Jul Nielsen & Lise Astrup Frandsen, Sex til salg i storbyen. Prostitution sidst i 1800-tallet og i nyere tid. Københavns Museum, København 2010. 182 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-87137-23-2.

■ Prostitution, the phenomenon of men (as it usually is) gaining access to women's bodies in return for some form of payment, is often understood as inevitable. Not necessarily desirable, but inescapable. It has been assumed to be "needed" regardless of the geographical, historical, or cultural context, and it is not infrequently described as "the world's oldest profession". Whether or not prostitution can or should be regarded as a profession, however, is the question that dominates the highly polarized contemporary debate. Some people think that the activity should be liable to tax and that prostitutes, like any other occupational groups in society, should be granted access to security systems such as unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, and pensions. To deny prostitutes these rights, by stigmatizing or criminalizing prostitution, according to them, is an expression of an antiquated morality and a way to declare adults legally incapable because of their choice of occupation. Sweden, however, has led the way by allowing another explanatory model influence the legislation, namely, the view of prostitution as an assault on the women who prostitute themselves, as an expression of men's violence against women. Since 1999 the *purchase* of sexual services, not their *sale*, has therefore been criminalized in Sweden. Regular evaluations since the law came into force have shown that it has broad popular support. Norway and Finland have followed Sweden's example, but Denmark in the same year chose instead to decriminalize prostitution. As long as no one but the prostitutes themselves earn money from the activity and pay income tax and VAT, it is permitted to sell sexual services there. Against the background of these national differences, it is particularly interesting for a Swede to read a book about prostitution in Denmark, with a title meaning "Sex for Sale in the City", written by the Copenhagen ethnologists Niels Jul Nielsen and Lise Astrup Frandsen.

The book applies both a historical and a present-day perspective to the issue, as two different periods are studied: the end of the nineteenth century and today's Vesterbro, two periods when prostitution has

been on the political agenda both internationally and nationally. The authors have chosen to look at prostitution from three different aspects: how it is debated, how it has been regulated in practice by different authorities, and how it has manifested itself physically and co-existed with other life in the city.

The difference between how prostitution is debated and handed by the authorities during the two periods depends above all on the way it is considered to be a problem, and for whom. It was not really until the end of the twentieth century that we began to take an interest in the effects of prostitution on the prostitutes themselves. At the end of the nineteenth century the concern, besides its general "damage to society", was the significance of prostitution for the spread of venereal diseases to the rest of the population.

In the nineteenth century prostitution, in the sense of *selling* sexual services, was forbidden in Denmark, but as the fear of infection increased, it came – paradoxically – to be gradually accepted in practice. At the same time, it was subjected to increasingly detailed regulations, enforced by the police. Prostitutes who voluntarily underwent examination were promised anonymity and medical treatment free of charge. Viewed from the other side, the medical examination was regarded as a form of coercion imposed on women who worked as prostitutes: those who refused it risked prosecution and punishment. From the 1840s onwards a woman who wanted a "permit" to engage in prostitution was obliged to register as a "public woman" and carry on the business in a "public house" under the supervision of a landlady. In this way the police could check that the women had the requisite medical examinations. Paradoxically, as many debaters pointed out at the time, the indirect acceptance of the forbidden prostitution led to a rise in the number of prostitutes: those who had prostitution only as a sideline or sold sexual services as a one-off phenomenon could avoid conviction for this if they registered as prostitutes and started pursuing their trade "full-time" in a brothel.

The authors thus describe how the regulation of prostitution not only had the function of controlling the forms in which prostitution was expressed in public and preventing the spread of disease, but also sought to urge and compel the women to behave like "good prostitutes". Apart from having to live where they were told to, and turning up for regular health check-ups, this meant that they had to keep themselves and their homes clean and tidy, be punctual and disciplined, and not show themselves openly in bourgeois public spaces; in other words, despite their choice of profession, the women had to stick to prevailing gender norms and at least behave in a "feminine" way. The rules also prescribed how they should live and comport themselves, and what contact they could have with other women's children and their own; they could not be visited by underage men or other women. If the women stayed within these restrictions, prostitution, as the necessary evil it was, could be accepted. What the authors show, interestingly, is that this desire on the part of society to create good, well-behaved prostitutes ran counter to the activity itself. To attract customers, the women had to behave badly, talk loudly, and show themselves in the streets and in public buildings in a state of less than complete dress. Being a prostitute was by definition not being a good woman, which is part of the semantic difference that we still tend to sum up in the dichotomy of the whore and the Madonna

The demands that were made and the rules set up for prostitutes in the nineteenth century were introduced as a consequence of informal acceptance, not through a formal change in the law. Prostitution was still prohibited. The debate towards the end of the nineteenth century concerned how to decide the priorities between the personal freedom of the prostitutes and the need to stop the spread of venereal disease. Some people thought that prostitution had to be combated without restricting and regulating the living space of the women, and that equality between men and women should apply in all fields (i.e., that the focus should not only be on the prostitutes but also on the men who bought sex). Others thought that the regulation of the prostitutes' lives and behaviour was necessary, even though they were aware of the dilemma it meant to forbid prostitution on one hand and to regulate it on the other hand (thus implicitly accepting it). In the same way as in many other countries at the turn of the century, however, the resistance to regulation increased, and in 1895 it was decided that public women could no longer be referred to special houses. The year 1906 saw the definitive end of the regulation of prostitution in Denmark. After this prostitution would be regulated by the law on vagrancy, which could still be used to coerce the public women in different

ways, such as punishing them with fines and imprisonment, a situation that prevailed until 1998–99, when the law was changed and it was formally permitted to earn money as a prostitute.

In this book the authors say that they want to help to write the cultural history of prostitution, not to discuss prostitution as a matter of social policy or psychology. They explicitly abstain from taking any stance and thus do not answer the question in today's debate about whether prostitution should exist or not. Instead the aim is merely to describe how it is enacted among us. This refusal to adopt a position but merely to describe a phenomenon is in fact what the authors mean by a "cultural-historical" perspective. In my opinion, however, they have already taken a stance there.

In the description of the registered "public women" in the nineteenth century the reader is not given any opportunity to consider the various forms of prostitution. Both the outlook that affected the actual regulation, that prostitution was above all a problem for the rest of society, and the authors' description of it, presuppose that it is possible to draw a sharp boundary between a prostitute and a non-prostitute. There is no sliding scale including the possibility that a man might have salved his guilty conscience after a rape by giving the woman money, thus transforming the crime into a "sex purchase". There is no consideration of the possibility that an "identity" as a prostitute was not so much a self-chosen "profession" as a temporary solution to an acute need for money to buy food; perhaps it was even a one-off event. With today's simplified view of the past we get a picture of prostitution in the nineteenth century being synonymous with sexually liberated women with loose morals, cheekily enticing seamen and other travelling men to their basements in certain parts of the city. Prostitution may perhaps be a multifaceted and problematic phenomenon today, but it is not portrayed as such in the nineteenth century.

When we as researchers treat a multifaceted issue like prostitution, so potentially problematic for the individual, from a supposedly objective "cultural-historical" perspective, there is an obvious risk that we ignore the power aspect that colours the whole problem, and that we ourselves are a part of, both as citizens and as researchers. Instead of achieving the aim of giving an objective description of a cultural phenomenon, we risk contributing to the reproduction of a romanticized, exotic image of a real social problem. Prostitution becomes something deviant, exciting, titillating that we are curious to learn about. This perspective becomes even more problematic when the study moves on to the present.

The very first sentence in the book hints that the authors may have got caught in this trap: "A distant world. A life that takes place in secret and with destinies we know nothing of" (p. 6). As a critical reader I cannot avoid wondering immediately who "we" are here. For whom is prostitution an unknown world? A new survey shows that between 30,000 and 53,000 Swedes have received payment for sexual services, and that between 260,000 and 330,000 Swedish men have at some time paid for sex, according to Carl Göran Svedin and Gisela Priebes (*Sälja och köpa sex i Sverige 2011*, 2012). Consequently, there are quite a lot of people for whom prostitution is not a foreign world. Rather than being something exotic, the phenomenon actually seems to be an experience shared by many.

The authors continue the introduction by pointing out that "we" know where prostitution can be found in a city, but avoid it; that "we" quickly turn the page in the newspaper when "we" come to the pages containing sex advertisements, but that "we" simultaneously feel very curious. Once again I must ask who "we" are here. The aim behind this form of address is naturally to invite the reader into the book and into the world that the researchers have studied empirically, but the consequence is that the "everyday" character of the phenomenon is under-communicated and that both sex buyers and prostitutes are placed in the category of deviants, as "the Other". It is not "we" who buy and sell sex, although statistics show that this is exactly who it is. "What kind of people sell sex? And who are the buyers?" the authors ask, suggesting that it might be possible to define the clientele with the aid of various characteristics when the statistics show the opposite.

This is not a consequence that I think we as researchers ought to allow a cultural-historical perspective to have. I think that "cultural history" which does not let the research function as a tool with which society can be changed must remain nothing but a curiosity. A cultural-historical perspective should not be used as an excuse for failing to reflect on power relations and taking a stance on difficult political issues.

The problem with this decision "not to take a stance" is even more obvious in the concrete descriptions of contemporary prostitution. In a brief reservation the authors admit that prostitution as a phenomenon is widespread and diverse, and that the dark figure concealing the more problematic aspects of prostitution is very high (p. 108). Despite this, the authors feel able to list the different "types" of prostitution: clinic prostitution, escort prostitution, prostitution in one's own home, bar prostitution, and street prostitution. On clinic prostitution, for example, they can say without problems that "in this type of clinic there are as a rule several rooms for receiving customers and a room specifically arranged for dominance with shackles, whips, benches and other apparatus. There is also a waiting room where the customers can have a cup of coffee when there is a queue to the prostitutes" (p. 111). The authors evidently feel no need to comment on the fact that a group of men sit together in a room drinking coffee while waiting to buy sexual services from one and the same woman. As for escort prostitution, they say that it is common for the prostitutes to have a private chauffeur who also functions as a security guard. The chauffeur waits in the car while the sexual transaction takes place, and if the woman does not come back within the agreed time he is instructed to call for help (p. 113). This statement too is left without comment. Why a prostitute should need a security guard to call for help while she is exercising her "profession" is implicitly understood and not problematized. A few pages further on in the book we are told briefly that foreign women in visible prostitution in Denmark make up almost half of the total number of women: "It is typically women from South-East Asia, Eastern Europe, the Baltic countries, South America, and West Africa. The largest national group of foreign prostitutes are the Thais, who often work in clinics in a well-organized system" (p. 114). Why have these particular women "chosen" to work as prostitutes in Denmark? Once again the follow-up questions are left unanswered, and prostitution is described without any conflict perspective, as if it were a cultural phenomenon like any other. In the authors' defence it may be said that the book is not only a study of life as a prostitute but also about the consequences of the location of prostitution in the city. I nevertheless think that the reader is left without important information about the more negative aspects.

The authors are not unaware of the problem: attempting to point out prostitution in the cityscape means that they define prostitution in a particular way, as something observable in the form of street prostitution or brothels, whereas much of the total activity goes on in hiding (p. 108). In recent years we in Sweden have had several court cases about young girls being driven around in cars to different addresses and groups of men. How do we point out that type of prostitution on a city map? Or the situations where young girls arrange a date over the Internet and then go back to the man's home, as the fourteen-year-old Caroline Engvall has described in the autobiographical book *14 år till: En sann svensk historia* (2008). Yet the authors still choose to study prostitution as a phenomenon with a specific place in the city. And, in my opinion, it is above all their empirical close-up study of the prostitution streets in Copenhagen both in the nineteenth century and today that adds to our knowledge of the topic. What I miss, however, is a much deeper discussion of what this "does" to the issue, how prostitution and especially the prostitutes are "constructed" through this choice – that the prostitution and the prostitutes described here are independent adult women who can acquire flats, advertise, and so on. I see this as an implicit stance in the contemporary debate about prostitution as a profession or as abuse.

Something that further reinforces this is the choice of pictures. *Sex til salg i storbyen* is a lavish book with many large illustrations in both black-and-white and colour, showing women as prostitutes, men buying sex, and the settings in which prostitution takes place. Of the 180 pages in the book, I reckon that half consist of pictures, often beautiful and artistic. The part about prostitution at the end of the nineteenth century is generously illustrated with photographs of named prostitutes who seem very exotic in their period clothes and hairstyles. In the contemporary part we are not shown the names and faces of the prostitutes to the same extent; instead the pictures show the places where prostitutes work, while the women themselves are blurred, seen in their underwear behind a pane of glass. This is a pleasing, attractive book on cultural history, which could well be left on display for people to browse in. But is it reasonable to have an attractive book about prostitution on your coffee table? From a Swedish point of view in general and

my own feminist position in particular, it is problematic. Evidently, from a Danish point of view, it is not.

Gabriella Nilsson, Lund

Tracing Material and Immaterial Culture

Aineen takaa. Näkyvän ja näkymättömän kulttuurin jäljillä. Aila Nieminen, Pia Olsson, Helena Ruotsala, Katriina Siivonen (eds.). Seurasaarisäätiön toimitteita 8. Ethnos-toimite 15. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 1336, Tieto. SKS, Helsinki 2011. 365 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-281-7.

■ What is the essence of material culture studies today? This question is addressed in the book *Aineen takaa* (From behind the object), which is dedicated to Docent Teppo Korhonen, lecturer of ethnology, who retired from the University of Helsinki at the beginning of 2012. As the list of his publications at the end of the book shows, he has a wide-ranging expertise in the field of ethnology, but he is known for his studies on material culture. This time the aforementioned question is raised by his colleagues.

Books that are compiled of several articles dedicated to the milestones in the life and career of well-known researchers of their field are sometimes difficult to review because of the variable quality and content of the articles. Fortunately, this does not apply to this book. *Aineen takaa* is a well-edited and fascinating collection of articles discussing material culture and a good contribution to the field. The writers represent ethnology, folklore studies, art history, archaeology, cultural heritage, social and cultural anthropology, and futurological research, which indicates that material culture is investigated in many areas of cultural studies. Unfortunately, the book does not provide English summaries for non-Finnish readers.

The book consists of three sub-themes: The Ennobling Material, The Cosmos in Everyday Life, and The Travelling Roots. The first part, *The Ennobling Material*, studies the cultural aspects of the dress. As a researcher specialized in dress studies, it appeals to me that sartorial matters occupy such a central role in this book. There are no school uniforms in Finnish schools, but as Docent Pia Olsson shows in her article, both formal and informal dress codes exist and children have to know them in order to adapt to the school culture. Docent Anna-Maria Viljanen tells in her article about the history and cultural meanings of the Romany women's dress in Finland. She makes a very interesting point by arguing that it was the urbanization that made the Romany a distinct group, whose outward identity is based on the dress. Before that the Romany dress was similar to the dress of Finnish women. Meanings of uniforms are dealt with by Emeritus Professor Juhani U. E. Lehtonen in the article that addresses the question of women in uniforms. Uniforms have traditionally been the kind of clothing that expresses masculinity. What happens to this dress code if women wear uniforms? In her article, Emerita Professor Satu Apo traces the history of Cinderella and the many meanings of her shoe in the story.

In the second part of the book that is titled *The Cosmos in Everyday Life*, the articles deal with magical and holy objects as well as immaterial aspects of material culture. The executive director of Kalevala Society, PhD Ulla Piela, discusses in her article how magical objects that from an outsider's point of view were useless, such as hair or nails, acquired their magical meanings in the agrarian society. Professor Jussi-Pekka Taavitsainen and Docent Markus Hiekkanen describe how religious relics are studied with new technical methods and what kind of new information this has brought into light. Ildikó Lehtinen, keeper of the Finno-Ugrian collections at the Museum of Cultures, shows in her article how such everyday items as towels have become central objects in the culture of the Volga-Finnic Mari people. Docent Katriina Siivonen discusses the immaterial aspect of material culture by giving an example of weaving a replica of a rag rug. What does it mean to make a replica if the only specimen you can copy is an existing rag rug? Both Emeritus Professor Bo Lönnqvist and Docent Leena Sammallahti dwell in their respective articles upon the history of the doll house. Lönnqvist traces it as a phenomenon; Sammallahti describes how she searched in the archives for leads of the carpenter who made a doll house for Lilly von Heideman, the daughter of the manor in Asikkala. The section ends with an article by Professor Outi Tuomi-Nikula, in which she shows how such an immaterial feeling as fear is materialized in the life of the people of the Altes Land by the River Elbe.

The last section, *The Travelling Roots*, starts with an article by Professor Hanna Snellman, in which she traces the transnational identity of Finnish im-

migrants in Sweden by re-reading the ethnographical material that was collected by the Nordiska Museet in the 1970s. Professor Helena Ruotsala describes the material culture of reindeer breeders and discusses the processes through which their everyday objects have become cultural heritage and symbols of local identity. The cultural history of Finnish manor houses in Savo, eastern Finland, is addressed by Professor Anna-Maria Åström in her analysis of the material and symbolic aspects of these buildings.

The essay by Professor Ulla Vuorela is subtitled as an 'insert' to the PhD thesis on porches by Teppo Korhonen. The essay is an interesting story of an old house that Vuorela bought in 2001, tore down and rebuilt by the advice of Korhonen, who had studied the porch of the house for his PhD thesis. In the next essay, the Executive manager Tuula Leimu and Emeritus Professor Pekka Leimu tell the multiphase history of the dining-room suite of Kultaranta, which is the summer residence of the president of Finland.

The book ends with an article by Professor Seppo Knuuttila, in which he discusses the ethnographical method as common ground for both ethnology and folklore studies. The context of his article is the current situation in Finnish universities; small departments such as departments of ethnology and folklore studies are conjoined into bigger units and the disciplines are expected to be integrated. Professor Knuuttila reminds us that ethnology and folklore studies have common roots and since the 1970s, they both have represented cultural analysis, have adopted ethnography as their main method and focused on the study of tradition. He also refers to Korhonen, who has written that the best result in the study of material culture is achieved when both material and immaterial aspects are studied from different points of view.

The cultural turn, to which Knuuttila refers in his article, means that the study of material culture in ethnology has little by little been replaced by the analysis of cultural meanings and identities. The articles in this book, however, prove that research into material culture is still topical in ethnological studies as well as in the related fields. Thanks to the new methodological and theoretical perspectives researchers have obtained new tools to approach material culture and incorporate these studies into wider issues of, e.g., identities, mentalities and gender like in this book. The value of this book lies in the multidisciplinary background of the authors. It shows that the best result is achieved when material culture is studied from different viewpoints, as Korhonen has suggested, not by guarding the borders of the disciplines.

Arja Turunen, Jyväskylä

Finnish Rural Women's Self-understanding and Societal Change

Pia Olsson, Women in Distress. Self-understanding among 20th-century Finnish rural women. European Studies in Culture and Policy. Volume 11. LIT-Verlag, Zürich & Berlin 2011. 287 pp. ISBN 978-3-643-90133-0.

■ *Women in Distress* presents Finnish rural women through their reminiscences. The stories provide an idea of the many-layered historical and personal elements that have affected their lives during the 20th century. At the societal level this century can be seen as a time of enormous change for women. The author focuses on both the way women have experienced their lives and the way they have wanted to depict these experiences and how different gender values have affected their experiences. The core of these narrations expresses instances of missed opportunities; gender conflict and mental submission persist, thus challenging the image of the strong Finnish woman.

The study is based on a questionnaire compiled by the National Board of Antiquities, entitled *The Status of Woman,* issued in 1985, answered by hundreds of women. The women were all born at the beginning of the 20th century and personally experienced most of the changes in society. They write about their lives in retrospect.

The methodological questions and problems connected to the use of questionnaires and autobiographical texts are dealt with in a well-informed way, in a separate chapter and throughout the study. Questionnaires have been called a genre of confessions and considered to be uncensored. However, in the narratives studied, negative and dubious themes are seldom expressed. A challenge for the author has been to bring out both the ordinary and the muted at the same time. An important question raised is: Would the stories have been told differently without the questionnaire? Would the lives of the women have seemed easier, happier or

more rewarding without the detailed probing? That we cannot know, but the reminiscences show that in the 1980s women were ready to share their miserable experiences and they were not ashamed to bring them to light. They were given a chance of not being the strong Finnish women and they took it. The life stories carry a feminist message, making the inequality between men and women visible. The criticism of the gender system is, however, not open or manifest.

The contents of the life stories are organized under six themes, each granted a chapter: war and gender roles, the predetermined roles of a woman, women in the social margin, the domesticated woman as an ideal, 'only the grove whores whistle', and family hierarchies. These themes are analysed with various methodological concepts and presented with rich empiric material. The author is inspired by feminist theoreticians, such as Judith Butler (gender production), Sara Ahmed (emotions as social and cultural practice) and Sandra Handing (feminist epistemology). Unfortunately, the analysis is not quite clear-cut and sometimes difficult to follow and the theoretical perspectives are dropped.

The idea that war could have had a positive impact on women's position has been questioned in international research. On the contrary, war increases the prestige of manliness, which is also supported by the narratives of the Finnish women. They show that women, in particular in postwar time, were expected to withdraw from paid work, as a sacrifice to the men returning from the front. The desire among the returning men was to continue from where they had left off – even in the case of gender relations. The post-war situation is commonly portrayed as a process of returning to the normal way of life.

The war generation is commonly perceived as having shared experiences and values. However, when the women pictured their lives as a whole the transitional period does not seem to have been very significant. Symbolic events, happenings that on the national level were considered important aspects of the psychological rebuilding process seem to have had no significance in the lives of the narrators. The author sheds light on how exceptional times are described on a personal level: how the national and social context of remembering becomes more personal but also more critical. The reminiscences also mention repression and the gendered exercise of power, which contradict the picture of togetherness.

The chapter *Women in the Social Margin* deals with single women, single mothers, widowhood and childless women. Single women were traditionally seen as anomalies and unfulfilled in their womanhood, but also considered a potential sexual threat. In the transitional period after the war this image persisted and changed only rather slowly. The theme is analysed using the concepts of centre and marginality. Marginality is determined according to a woman's personal relationship to a man and her marital status. Even though the main dividing line is between the married and unmarried, there are differences between various groups of women without husbands, and in the way in which both the surrounding community and the women in these groups see their positions. Marginality should not be seen in a mechanical relationship to the centre but is structurally and culturally produced: it is both a social position and a subjective experience. The author recognizes the ambiguity in the word 'marginality'. Who determines who is marginal and what is marginality? Not all people consider themselves as marginal even though they are labelled as such by others.

According to the traditional notion of the gender-based division of space, home has been considered the principal area for women's activities and women have also been expected to create the home environment. However, it is possible to analyse the ways women influence space from perspectives other than its creation, such as the way they use, see and experience their physical environment. The author shows in an interesting analysis of the domesticated women as an ideal how places acquire their meanings through their use and the experiences people have or do not have in them.

Women write quite openly about some sexual issues, which may be interpreted as a significant effect on the formation of their self-understanding and on their societal positioning. The descriptions usually include references to undesirable sexuality. Marital life is mostly pictured as a disagreeable responsibility, with women only the object and never the subject of the action. Like in other matters concerning decision-making, the authority in sexual matters also seems to belong to men. Sexual relationships are described as those of ownership: the traditional view was that a woman's sexuality was her hus-

band's private property. Even though the question of sexuality is addressed in the recollections, it was clearly difficult for the women to write about it as a positive or eagerly anticipated personal experience.

The hierarchical relationship between the husband and wife is commented on actively and emotionally in many of the narratives. The variations in patriarchal order are visible in the narratives, as are the changes the women experienced both in their own lives and even more in the lives of their children. The main impression is that rural family life was still mainly under male control even after the Second World War. The women's own authority is pictured as minimal, and as related more to time and age.

In the final chapter, *Against the Tradition*, the author concludes that the Finnish rural women were not merely preservers of tradition; they were active in their comments on a cultural phenomenon that was in a transitional phase. The women composed and decomposed their life narratives in the conflicting discourses of femininity, which makes them even more multi-layered. They did not accept male power and did not express self-denial and self-sacrifice. Rural Finnish women, even after the Second World War, did not have much connection with home-centred ideology as they did not have the freedom to decide whether to stay at home and take care of the children or go out to work. They had to do both but they did not reap the benefits of either.

The author demonstrates that ways of life are not only about individual choices and experiences, but also involve collectively shared and accepted ways of living. The women related their personal experiences of the conceptions of the woman's role they considered dominant for the period. The author shows how the negotiation process works, not only on the level of societal discourse but also on the level of individuals.

The women themselves compare their lives with those of the younger generation, with the modern woman. Thus they connect their thinking to the general idea with which the modernisation process has usually been connected: the advancement of gender equality and women's social position. The picture produced by the descriptions is one of a traditional woman who can enjoy some of the advantages of a modern woman in her old age – even though she would not describe herself as modern.

Inger Lövkrona, Lund

Stockholm's Building Boom

Anders Perlinge, Bubblan som sprack. Byggboomen i Stockholm 1896–1908. Stockholms stads monografiserie 225. Stockholmia förlag, Stockholm 2012. 144 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7031-246-5.

■ To a large extent the charm of the buildings in Stockholm's inner city lies in the diversity of apartment houses, usually of five storeys, constructed at the end of the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century. No two houses look the same. Many have admittedly lost their original rich decorative design, which was not to the taste of the practical functionalism, and as a result many property owners simplified the façades in the 1930s and 1940s. Yet many well-preserved buildings undeniably survive. Many of these houses in the original districts, not least in Södermalm and Vasastaden, were constructed by provincial builders who had come to Stockholm as construction workers with some technical schooling and decided to build houses on speculation. After the Second World War these houses tended to be classified as substandard by the city's leading engineers and architects, who would have liked to see the demolition in the Klara district continue in other parts of the city. I myself remember finding, in a building in Östermalm where I lived for many years, a letter from the authorities, sent at the end of the 1950s, informing about the planned demolition of the whole block. It was claimed that the buildings from the 1890s were no longer serviceable. The whole of the block would be filled with a huge multi-storey car park. The property owners and residents' associations naturally protested, saying that their houses would stand for a long time to come. They were right. The demolitions ceased and the houses are still there, more than fifty years later. If they are well looked after they can surely stand for another hundred years. In fact, it is interesting that many of the houses built on speculation by anonymous entrepreneurs around 1900, generally for working-class families without much spending power, are today in good shape and in great demand. Nowadays they are generally owned by housing cooperatives, which is a crucial factor explaining why the demolition of residential buildings is very rare in the inner city of Stockholm.

Anders Perlinge, an ethnologist and archivist, has written an interesting book about these builders at the turn of the century. The emphasis is on the fi-

nancing of the construction. At the end of the nineteenth century the state and the municipalities had not yet begun to take any great interest in building dwellings. The field was free for private opportunists. The period studied by Perlinge, 1896–1908, can be regarded as the close of this era. The financial crises that occurred towards the end of the period, with a particularly harsh effect on housing construction, meant that the time was ripe for more fully developed public involvement in the housing question in Stockholm.

The type of builders that appeared in Stockholm at the end of the nineteenth century was made possible by the reform introducing freedom of trade in 1864. Before this the houses in the city had been built to the order of landowning merchants, craftsmen, and officials who had their business on the site. Now craftsmen came from the provinces, calling themselves master builders, with no assets of their own. They were dependent on loans to be able to buy plots and build houses. They tended to build for the needs of the working class, and around 1900 this was mainly in Vasastaden and Södermalm, and the houses were sold immediately when they were completed, so that the builder could pay his expenses and repay his loans. The builders often designed the houses themselves without engaging architects. Construction naturally entailed risks. It proceeded slowly and was dependent on the season and the weather. It could take a long time before all the flats were rented. The loans were not cheap, but they also represented high risks for banks and other lenders.

A striking feature of the period is the high frequency of bankruptcy among the builders. Three quarters of all builders went bankrupt at least once during this time, an astounding figure. It was so common that, according to Perlinge, there was no serious stigma attached to it. Many of those who went bankrupt could try again, and several among them later became established as really successful master builders, operating well into the twentieth century. The crisis in the bank system as a consequence of the great earthquake in San Francisco in 1906 (the huge payments by insurance companies in the USA led to an international shortage of money), soon affected housing construction in Stockholm as well. Bankruptcies increased rapidly. Perlinge views this as an example of what Joseph Schumpeter has called *creative destruction*, that is, a crisis resulting in changed and improved conditions for the entrepreneurs who survive the crisis. The less serious players disappeared from the market. The crisis led to central agreements between the parties on the construction labour market, and the credit market was tightened and restructured.

Anders Perlinge gained his doctorate in 2005 with a dissertation, *Sockenbankirerna* (The Parish Bankers), that attracted some attention. There he studied the significance of private credit in rural Sweden before the breakthrough of the banks. For a long time there was a system of private loans with a very long duration. The rural builders seem to have brought the habit of borrowing through private and personal channels to Stockholm when they wanted to build houses. They avoided the banks. They became particularly dependent on credit from the suppliers of building materials. They, however, do not seem to have been as patient as the rural creditors, and when the crisis came in 1907–1908 they demanded payment, which of course led to a wave of bankruptcies.

Anders Perlinge has written a fascinating and readable book about an important phase in Stockholm's building history. It is a study on the borderline between ethnology and economic history. It is based on a large corpus of skilfully handled archival material, for example from the Centre for Business History (co-publisher of the book), the archives of the Stockholm Association of Master Builders, the archives of Stockholm Housing Inspectorate, and a number of private family archives. It is furnished with illustrative photographs, maps, and statistical diagrams, and it is written in a pithy, precise style, although the reader might perhaps need some basic competence in economic terminology to appreciate the text to the full.

Mats Hellspong, Stockholm

A Concise History of an Institution

Suomen museohistoria. Susanna Pettersson & Pauliina Kinanen (eds.). Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2010. 426 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-172-8.

■ It is always a milestone in an institution's history when written documentation about its historical development gets published. It is through carving the history in stone that the chosen path becomes the norm and all possible alternative paths and voices

will eventually fall into oblivion. It is an intriguing question why a history of Finnish museums has not been published earlier than in 2010. The process of planning for a history book has taken 30 years. Is the institution not that established after all, or is it too polyphonic to fit inside one neat cover? The editors blame the scarce resources, which can refer to both: either not enough stability or not enough writers in such capacity as to take on the job. Nonetheless, we finally have the privilege of holding in our hands a versatile book on Finnish museum history.

The book is a fruit of long labour, a five-year project. At first, a database was created of all historically oriented publications, bachelor's and master's theses and interviews and other manuscripts already in possession of museums and university institutions. (The database is hosted by the Finnish Museums Association website. Hopefully, its maintenance will be continued indefinitely.) A board of directors for the project was chosen from the most notable names in the museum field. Specified committees for the subdivisions of the project were chosen as well. And, last but not least, for the actual writing of the history, a committee was named as well. The writers themselves were chosen from the ranks of "the best experts in the museum field and long-term professionals". So, let the reader make no mistake: not only is this a fruit of meticulous labour, but also the truth about the Finnish museum history the way the establishment sees it. As historiography in general has developed into the direction of several parallel stories instead of one monolithic truth, this book will inevitably serve as a challenge and an invitation to alternative history writers.

Since the History of Finnish Museums mirrors the way the institution wants to present itself, it is of special interest to see how it has been compiled. What are the things that get to be said first and what are the things that are left in the end? How do the writers tackle the question of fitting everything from art exhibitions on the one hand to the information centres of natural history on the other under one umbrella? In my opinion, they have done a surprisingly good job. This may be either thanks to good editing or the above-mentioned committee, or maybe both.

The book has a very simple structure: it is divided into three main parts. The first part, *Museums and Society*, deals with the history of ideas, the organisational background, the protection of built heritage, the Finnish Museums Association, the audiences, and the museum as a place of reminiscence. The second part, *Museum Field*, has as its topics the National Board of Antiquities, local museums, art and design museums, museums of natural history and specialised collections. All these are represented in the context of their developmental history. In parentheses, one might raise a provincial eyebrow to such a title as: *The Basis of the Country's Museum Field: History of the National Board of Antiquities and the Finnish National Museum*, because the earlier part of the book was refreshingly non-Helsinki-centric, and the early provincial minds and their provincial museums got excitingly many paragraphs worth space.

The last, but by no means the least, part of the book is called *Premises, Collections and Museum Profession*. This is devoted to museum buildings and exhibition techniques, the history of Finnish museum collections, the development of restoration and conservation, the professionalisation of the museum and, finally, museology (museum studies). It is intriguing how both the museum professionals – the very backbone of the institution – and museum studies, the secondary institution which props up the original, get the final place in the sequence. Is this to say that they are less important, more important or possibly just the last step in the evolutionary ladder?

The editors have given free rein to the writers. Therefore, some of the chapters smack rather dry and academic and some are more reader-friendly. The reading gets quite exciting at places when the author assumes first person singular, such as the heritage conservationist Pekka Kärki in his account on the preservation of built heritage in the face of the frenzy of tearing down all old things. Another instance when a human voice gets heard in this book is folklorist Mari Hatakka's research on museum audiences or visitors. Using folkloristic methods, she reaches the personal in the museum quite well. There are also other parts of the book where the individuals whose ideas have been pivotal to the birth and development of the institution get a moment in the limelight. But there are moments when the individual role is blurred. For example, by just reading the institutional part of the museum history, one might mistakenly think that the Finnish minds were open only to ideas from Sweden – so much of the legislation and institutional structure has been adopted from our western neighbour. When we look at individuals and their personal experience, on the

other hand, the connection to elsewhere in Europe and the United States becomes quite evident.

There are altogether 17 contributors to the book. Out of these, at the time of publication, remarkably less than half held doctoral degrees, which is indicative of the academic level of Finnish museums, in contrast to many other countries in Europe. It would be a tedious task to summarise everyone's chapter in this limited space. I would, however, like to mention two interesting articles. One is Marjatta Levanto's brilliant account on how museums found their audiences. It casts light on how early museum curators saw their rapport with the crowds and how the change in the culture of museum-going has changed both the way the professionals see their customers and the customers see the museums. It is a surprising – and exhilarating in the possible opportunities this may open – fact that in 2002, seventy per cent of the museum visitors were occasional first time visitors, who had come to the museum not because of the collections or exhibitions but just to pass time. A parallel story is told by Ritva Palviainen in her article on the museum profession. Museums and their staff have indeed seen huge changes over the years. Not only has the profession become stabilised by a stark increase in posts, but it has also become female-dominated. In Palviainen's view the museum institution has now reached a basis from which it can move forward: it is based on science, it is international by its nature, the staff has many backgrounds and talents, and the institution rests on an ethically sustainable ground. Palviainen's view is optimistic: she thinks that society has shown its appreciation for the work done in museums by securing the museum's social role, academic level and budgeting by legislation.

The book comes with some helpful tools. It lists most Finnish museums by the year of their foundation, as well as the professional titles used in museums. It shows the timeline of the Finnish museum history and it has a thorough index of persons. As such it should deserve its place in particular as a textbook and a reference book in museum studies. Unfortunately, it has no summary in English, and this leaves all the useful information only to Finnish readers. Maybe an abridged translation would be in order.

In conclusion, the institution has proven itself through this book. However, a burning issue still remains unsolved. A book of this calibre may not find its way into the hands of politicians and those who draw up plans for public cuts. Something else has to be done, and it has to be done soon, as the ever-increasing pressure to cut down the public sector looms above us. Only during 2012, the National Board of Antiquities had to terminate fortytwo jobs and leave eight of its historical sites closed for the summer. The city council of Kankaanpää seriously considered dissolving its museum. And, finally, the University of Helsinki voiced its discontinued interest in funding the Central Museum of Natural History. As I have written in another context: the museum institution, its 'theory' as well as its profession, has to legitimate itself both to a new generation and to a new class in power.

Hanneleena Hieta, Turku

Marking and Masking the Body

Markeringar och maskeringar. Att visa eller dölja sin kropp. Roger Qvarsell & Birgitta Svensson (eds.). Nordiska museets förlag, Stockholm 2012. 198 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7108-552-8.

■ The Nordiska Museet in Stockholm has published a volume based on its rich costume collection. It illuminates and discusses the relationship between body and clothes, how people at different times in history and in different situations have either covered or uncovered their bodies as a way to manifest their identity. The book is built up around several example studies using either the museum's permanent collections or temporary exhibitions. Although the book does not provide any new knowledge, as the editors admit in the introduction, it is interesting and readable. The book sheds light on well selected and instructive examples that help us to understand the relation between body and clothes.

The introduction makes good reading because here Roger Qvarsell, historian of ideas, explains the central theme: the relationship between body and clothes. This, according to Qvarsell, can be understood through fashion. He writes: "The fixed Archimedean point is neither the body nor clothes. It is fashion. And fashion – the way of dressing – comprises not only clothes but also the way one walks and stands, puts a cup to one's lips, shakes hands, smiles, cries, loves, and hates" (p. 12).

The study of clothes and fashion is thus viewed as a point of entry to the study of the body, a way to understand the changing meanings ascribed to it,

and the shifting aesthetic appearances that are required if one is to keep up with the times.

Ulrika Torell's article with the captivating title, "Draped in dessert", is interesting to read. It is about the rather absurd practice of draping food on a body as if it were clothes. The article is based on an exhibition that was on display for a short time in the museum's entrance hall, where four chocolatiers had made wedding dresses of sugar and chocolate. Apart from demonstrating exceptional handicraft, Torell points out that these chocolate wedding dresses create an urge to taste and touch them. They function in the same way as the intention behind advertising. They foster desire in a dual sense, in that both the chocolate and the exquisite dresses made for idealized bodies trigger a desire to consume, which is a central practice for modern people.

Anders Nyblom's article also deserves to be singled out for its witty reflection on the collection of historical persons' clothes in the Nordiska Museet. This collection seems atypical in a museum of cultural history, and the article indeed confirms this. It is the absent body that is crucial for understanding these clothes. "The king is dead, long live his clothes," writes Nyblom! But as he points out, it is a kind of illusion that is created because the body is not there. The real person is missing. In such contexts the clothes show themselves as representations of bodies rather than something in themselves – and representations, note well, that are so specifically associated with a person's life that it is difficult to use them to convey the ordinariness of everyday life.

How bodily ideals are shaped by changes of fashion through time is exemplified by Marianne Larsson in her article about female skiing dress from the late nineteenth century to the end of the 1930s. Larsson tells how the interest in sport has created sporty fashions and bodily ideals, and at the start of the twentieth century was an important part of the women's emancipation movement in Sweden.

Birgitta Svensson ends the volume with an article about the exact opposite of the situation considered by Nyblom when it comes to the role of the body. It is about the visible and present body: the body as a canvas, the tattooed body. Regarding the relationship between body and clothes, Svensson explains tattoos as a form of interface between the body and the surrounding world, which simultaneously distances and intimizes the body. A tattoo is thus a central element in marking one's identity, and of a more lasting character than clothes. One might be tempted to say that a tattoo is a stamp that confirms that a human being is a hybrid between a cultural and a natural being. The article can be recommended, as can the rest of the book, as an instructive introduction to the relationship between body and clothes, and why it is such a central relationship if we wish to understand ourselves as humans and our cultural history.

Marie Riegels Melchior, Copenhagen

Finland's Favourite Stimulant

Tuija Saarinen, Pannu kuumana. Suomalaisia kahvihetkiä. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2011. 278 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-287.

■ Finland's favourite stimulant is coffee. Foreigners may be surprised discovering how passionately we take coffee and coffee drinking rituals. In her book, *Pannu kuumana. Suomalaisia kahvihetkiä*, PhD, folklorist Tuija Saarinen describes the cultural history of Finnish coffee drinking. The book includes coffee-related heritage, innovations, cultural practices, and social dimensions.

Saarinen's non-fiction is clearly aimed at the general public. The book is analytical and demonstrates a deep familiarity with the topic. The author's fluent text makes it a delightful reading for anyone. There is a compact theoretical summary at the end of the book, the extensive theoretical discussion being left out. Saarinen does not extensively open up discourses behind the texts, nor does she analyse the forms of remembering – and therefore the book is easy to reach for the common reader. Saarinen's study might be called a specimen of the direction that the Finnish Literature Society wishes their non-fiction to go.

The author's material consists of responses to different informal inquiries located in different heritage archives in Finland, as well as interviews, biographies, and fictional releases. Her own inquiries are *Ikimuistoiset kahvihetket* (Memorable coffee moments) in 2002 via the Folklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, and an inquiry targeted at the members of the Kuopion Isänmaallinen Seura in 2003. She has also availed herself of the responses to the coffee heritage inquiry of the Museovirasto in 1969, and an inquiry about the food heritage of the manses in 1969. Furthermore, her sources

include narratives from the competition that the Finland's leading coffee company Oy Gustav Paulig Ab arranged on the Internet in 2005.

A number of coffee-oriented books have been published in Finland, but the position of coffee drinking in Finnish social life has not been previously studied on a more extensive scale. It seems that no one has seen any reason in studying coffee, because it is such a self-evident part of the Finnish daily life and celebration. Coffee drinking has been researched as part of nutritional science, and the significance of coffee drinking has been briefly discussed in both Finnish and international researches when it comes to cuisine and stimulants.

Saarinen highlights an important aspect of Finnish culture: the whole social life is built around coffee drinking instead of meals. She is convinced by her sources that coffee's position in Finnish social life has been and still is essential.

The oldest coffee-related memories in the responses date from the 19th century and the timeline runs to the present day. It has been difficult for Saarinen to specify exactly when certain coffee drinking customs have been habitual in different parts of Finland because the narrators have been imprecise when sharing their coffee-related memories. They have timed their responses such as the end of the First World War or before the war. In her theoretical summary Saarinen brings up the risk included in the data collected over time. It has not always been easy for her to decide whether to write about the phenomenon in the present or the past tense, because she is not always sure if it still exists.

Saarinen describes what kinds of implements were needed for making coffee at home. She also describes a variety of roles that coffee had and still has – as a stimulant, part of a meal, and even remedy. Coffee drinking is a means of social interaction, and an attribute to one's communal status. To common people coffee has been, above all, a stimulant offering refreshment and comfort in the middle of a heavy workday. Coffee has also highlighted festivals and other special moments.

Merchants from Turku provided coffee for the first time in the 1720s. Neither regulations nor even a threat of fines could prevent the Finns from coffee drinking. It was well known that the smell of coffee could be hidden, for example, by boiling the cabbage. In time of war or emergency the boiled substitutes of coffee helped to maintain the coffee ritual, expressed generosity, and symbolized cohesion. A coffee substitute was prepared, for example, from rye, barley, and chicory.

At first coffee was drunk in towns by the gentry and wealthy people, and it was considered a rare luxury product. Soon the custom of coffee drinking spread to the countryside, and in the 19th century it was already a stimulant used by all. In advertising coffee still has an image of luxury.

Coffee seems to have been extremely important for place-bound housewives in farmhouses. They were having conversation while drinking coffee and resting. For women coffee drinking was an honourable way to refresh themselves, even though their husbands thought it was an expensive habit.

Coffee-making was learned through manses. The housekeepers went around with the priests to the parish catechetical meetings. Their task was to make coffee, and the housewives observed how they did it. As common people got an example to follow, mistakes were avoided. It occurred that raw coffee beans used to be cooked in a pot, because the housewives did not know that they should have roasted and ground them first.

Coffee mills and copper coffee pots became status symbols, and nowadays they are collectors' items. A new kind of coffee culture has reached homes. Coffee drinkers have enjoyed espresso and cafe latte since the 1990s. Furthermore, they have also begun to affect the type of coffee they drink. Fair-trade coffee has reached grocery shops at the consumers' requests.

Coffee cosies have traditionally been necessary objects for the home. The pan roast coffee was allowed to brew under a cosy for a few minutes before drinking and it was possible to leave it, if necessary, under the cosy for a longer time. In today's homes coffee cosies are already rare because coffee machines keep the coffee warm. Serving and dining habits have become prosaic. Today we drink coffee from mugs, and the beautiful coffee set remains in the cupboard.

Alcohol, which had previously been offered to the guests, was gradually replaced by coffee. Coffee drinking was associated with great moments, but also harsh memories. For example, coffee breaks in formal public situations are sometimes recalled as terrible because you required a strong cultural knowledge of serving order to behave correctly. One was also supposed to know the right moment for ac-

cepting the invitation to come to the table, and there were a variety of ways for inviting guests to come to the table. Saarinen describes how many cups of coffee it was polite to drink in different parts of Finland. There were also different ways to inform another person whether the coffee was good or not, and if the guest wanted to drink one more cup of coffee.

Saarinen has included in her text some descriptive quotations from her informants, and in addition she has created story boxes of some of the citations. The illustration at the study informs us about both the luxury image of coffee drinking (the Paulig Archive) and the importance of coffee breaks for, for instance, an exhausted aging housewife sitting in front of an oven (Folklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society).

Pirjo Nenola, Jyväskylä

Expressions of Folk Religiosity

Torunn Selberg, Folkelig religiøsitet. Et kulturvitenskapelig perspektiv. Scandinavian Academic Press & Spartacus Forlag, Oslo 2011. 174 pp. ISBN 978-304-0065-4.

■ Until the start of the 1980s religion was studied mainly within the disciplines of theology or comparative religion. Even then the researchers were mostly interested in institutionalized expressions of faith. Nowadays the general interest in individuals opens up opportunities to take personal faith seriously as well – in whatever guise it occurs. University project thinking brought together researchers from various disciplines for more or less fruitful cooperative ventures. This book about folk religiosity is a good example of a successful project conducted by students of religion and students of folklore at Bergen University in Norway. The underlying project was called "Myth, Magic, and Miracle Meeting the Modern".

Selberg starts her book with a good chapter about the prerequisites for research about religion among postmodern people. In Norway there are several recent and relevant occasions where modern folk religiosity was seen. Even the Norwegian Princess Märtha Louise founded an angel school, a fact that aroused some debate. Unfortunately, Selberg does not consider this theme in detail, but the mention of it takes her readers into the middle of her field of research, a field that was called folk belief, folk religion, new religion, alternative religion or even superstition. She defines her object of research as "divergence from hegemonic religion", and she wants to "discuss how continuity, discontinuity, and re-interpretations are expressed" (p. 10).

In Selberg's opinion, old and new phenomena make a mixture in folk religiosity. What is new, to her, is that these forms of belief are now clearly demonstrated by the believers. In olden days it was even difficult for the field-working folklorist to make people admit that they had met with the *huldra.* They might be afraid of being regarded as bad Christians, for all kinds of contact with other types of supernatural beings than the Christian God were regarded as reprehensible.

Old components of religion such as the *huldra* are found today, but they are used in new contexts. In the rural society of the nineteenth century, the *huldra* was connected to rural economic interests, whereas the *huldra* today is related to environmental, "natural" and feminist fields of association. This was also demonstrated by another Norwegian researcher, Ann Helene Bolstad Skjelbred. Selberg combines this modernization of folk belief with professionalism. The modern *huldra* is also connected to economy, when, for instance, a hairdresser advertises her shop with a picture of a *huldra*. Today you can learn how to manage angels in an angel school, or you can have a certificate to practise shamanism. She also calls her field New Age and says (p. 21) that it is no longer a kind of protest against institutionalized religion, but has changed into an individual faith, offering opportunities for a development of the self with the aid of (alternative) science, ecological thinking, alternative therapy, psychology, eastern religions, paganism, which means old religions, and Indian, Sami, and Celtic religion (p. 21).

Being a folklorist herself, Selberg takes the narrative as a foundation for her study. She scrutinizes articles in newspapers, magazines, advertisements, and different kinds of popular booklets, including novels. She also analyses a couple of interviews that she conducted among believers. Theories about narratives (for instance, Bakhtin) and methods for analysing them are her tools. Selberg has given her book the subtitle "A cultural-studies perspective" and, consequently, it is quite right that she also presents her reader with this perspective, which, to me, seems to consist of two important concepts: tradition and narrative, with all their problematic conno-

tations and methodological difficulties. In her last paragraph Selberg mentions that her empirical examples will demonstrate how multifaceted modern religiosity is: it is all around us, it combines with the characteristic aspects of postmodern Norway (and, probably, all western societies), such as marketing, tourism, experience industry, and the general interest in history. This ubiquity is an expression of the recent religious return.

After this introduction, the presentation of the six case studies begins. Before them I would have liked to see a small chapter about the institutionalized Norwegian form(s) of Christianity. What does postmodern religiosity in the country differ from? Angels were mentioned as a postmodern phenomenon, but they played and still play a role in the institutionalized form of Christianity for children in many Protestant churches. Pilgrimages and miracles are also examples of ingredients in Christianity, but obviously not in the kind of institutionalized Christianity that goes with this book. And what about Christian folk religiosity? How can we explain the experience of a poor lady who saved up her money to buy a new winter coat and regarded it as God's support when, in the next display window, she saw a hat with a suitable colour, even at a reduced price. Is this also folk religiosity?

Selberg's first empirical example concerns the *huldra* past and present. It gives a good overview of the research history in the field of folk belief. It questions continuity and change according to the demands of postmodern society and its ideals. The second chapter deals with how people tell about miracles and it demonstrates how interviewees today build their narratives about miracles upon biblical models.

Articles number three and five are about religious travel and sacred geography. The reader learns about modern pilgrimages to Norwegian holy sites and how they are advertised, and also how people worship at these places today. International pilgrimage is mentioned, as well, both that to Mecca and the revitalized and extremely popular journey to Santiago de Compostela. Selberg points out the importance of the journey and the physical stress it brings instead of underlining the worship at the shrine. Modern pilgrimage seems to be very much about physical fitness, experiences of nature and bygone times, and perhaps, a demonstration of a personal achievement. Geography and history are said to play a role in pilgrimage: people connect themselves with other places and other times where and when they think that the right, and often more authentic, kind of spirituality prevailed. Here, however, they make a selection. Pilgrimage brings only some – suitable – people and eras together. And only some places are regarded as more authentic, more like lost paradises than others.

The past, authenticity, and cultural heritage are issues that Selberg handles in her last chapter. It is about people's ways of referring to the past as a component in postmodern life. There is also an article about a guru in Norway and the debates about him in Norwegian newspapers.

I recommend this collection of texts to young students who are interested in religious studies. It serves as an introduction to folk belief investigations, and to methods for handling recent folklore material concerning religion in postmodern society.
Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo

Individuals in Motion

Individer i rörelse. Kulturhistoria i 1880-talets Sverige. Birgitta Svensson & Anna Wallette (eds.). Makadam förlag, Stockholm/Göteborg 2012. 232 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7061-102-5.

■ "Individuals in Motion" is the title of this collection of essays in cultural history, all of which concern the great upheavals in society during the last decades of the nineteenth century. It is the story of how new technological possibilities in the form of innovations such as the railway and the telegraph, the breakaway from the agrarian community and the migration to the cities, new winds of democracy and an emerging public debate, reflect the new conditions dictated for the people who were the actors in the transformation of the time. Definitions of gender changed, norms were subject to discussion, social movements grew up and set new agendas, leaving many people searching for an identity and new ways to view themselves in relation to society as a whole. Furthermore, this state of change aroused an interest in the past, in the society that was being left behind, and one expression of this was the foundation of museums.

The volume is the outcome of seminars held in 2009 and 2010 under the title "The Eighties: Cultural History in a New Society. Cultural History, Public Debate, and Critique of Civilization in Sweden in

the 1880s". It contains eight essays shedding light in different ways on the period (which in most cases, naturally enough, is much broader than the narrowly defined decade that appears in the title of the book). As is often the case with collections like this, the different contributions sometimes show little relation to each other, and do not tackle the same problems, apart from the fact that they all consider the period as a time of radical change.

This is probably a conscious choice in keeping with the reference in the introduction to Carlo Ginzburg's recommendation to look for hidden connections via the traces left in the sources, while it simultaneously avoids more synthesizing efforts with the emphasis on how things relate to an overall societal and state context. A parallel is pointed out to the conflict at the time between cultural historians (like the Danish scholar Troels-Lund) and political historians (who had a hegemonic position in this period). This distinction could well be problematized because it risks distancing one's gaze from the fact that, even though everyday life is diverse (and as a cultural historian one is of course committed to this complexity), bringing in a consideration of society as a whole (when it is difficult to avoid the significance of a political perspective) can give invaluable clues to an understanding of the conditions for and the limits to this complexity. The introduction – "Cultural-Historical Perspectives on the Individualization of the Time" – does in fact consider (p. 22) the need of the state to set limits and homogenize the population, as a development that ran parallel to – but surely not independently of? – the many processes of everyday life; this is a relevant point which could well have been related to the suggested opposition between cultural history and political history.

Three of the essays bring up a historical perspective framed by the period. Apart from the introductory article by the two editors, these are "Personal Historical Effects: On the Nordiska Museet and the Cultural History of Fame" by the cultural scholar Anders Nyblom and "Old Words, New Times: On Shifts in the Conceptual World of the 1880" by the historian Joachim Östlund. Nyblom corrects in an interesting way the picture we have of the Nordiska Museet, as primarily intending to preserve a peasant culture that was undergoing rapid change. Alongside the collection of local costumes and artefacts associated with what can broadly be called folk culture, high priority was simultaneously given to objects linked in various ways to the great contemporary personalities in art and science. The article has interesting observations about how this was linked to an overall state agenda where the personality cult that had formerly had a one-sided focus on kings and heads of state was expanded to include the great men of the bourgeoisie, the wielders of power in the new age and the symbol of the enterprise and success of bourgeois society. Östlund, who chiefly uses *böndagsplakater* (prayer-day proclamations) as his empirical objects, adds to the picture of how power and the people who enjoyed it changed their language in the light of the societal order that emerged at the same time that the continuity with the past was emphasized. He analyses the content of the royal proclamations, and we gain insight into the way rhetoric and metaphors change, and thus into the conceptual world of the sender, but there is no detailed account of who actually read the proclamations and in what contexts their messages could be envisaged as being significant.

As is well known, one of the fields that really came to dominate at the end of the nineteenth century was the issue of the two sexes, of the roles they were expected to fulfil and above all the sharp conflicts about the right to define. The historian Eva Helen Ulvros's "The New Woman", the ethnologist Fredrik Nilsson's "Martyrs and Respectable Women: Uncertain Identities in the Salvation Army at the End of the Nineteenth Century", and the historian Peter K. Andersson's "'Under Proper Supervision': The Landlady as an Authority and Official in Europe in the 1880s" all show, through different lenses, aspects of the negotiations about what gender is and what a changing situation many women were in.

Ulvros starts with the well-known debate about morality that was being waged, not least in literary circles, and which also involved the question of female authors and their works. A separate section is devoted to the relationship between Sophie Elkan and Selma Lagerlöf, who more or less directly negotiated their gender identity between themselves and in relation to the public sphere. Nilsson examines a category of women who have been left in obscurity and anonymity, namely, the missionaries of the Salvation Army working in rough environments among the vulnerable groups in society. Their self-understanding and identity work are explored chiefly through letters that they wrote to the leaders of the

Salvation Army when they were imprisoned for unlawful agitation or for other reasons were temporarily prevented from following their call. The strange mixture of being respectable women who not only associated with the most socially stigmatized people in society but also encountered opposition from both the emerging labour movement and the established church – and the exposed position this put them in – is nicely captured in the article. Andersson's landladies are another group of anonymous women who are typical of the time, when the growing urban population filled the rooms to let in the city flats. Being a landlady was a business opportunity for women – often widows – but seemingly not a very attractive one. The evidence about them is rather disparate, however – chiefly from literary sources – and we get a rather vague picture of who they were, if it is meaningful at all to treat them as a category with features in common.

Most of the essays are about the uncertainty and instability that the period brought. The ethnologist Lars-Eric Jönsson, in "Speech, the Body, and the City: The Psychiatry and Early Psychoanalysis of the 1880s", looks at this time of change in relation to the rising frequency – or at any rate the attention paid to – decidedly mental ailments and describes the distinction, still not clear at this time, between a psychiatric and a psychological approach to the topic. The historian Mats Fridlund, in his article "The New Boundary-Crossing Violence: The Terrorist and Early Globalization", deals with the potential instability of society from a completely different angle, namely, the occurrence of highly radical movements and individuals in connection with the establishment of the new society. This includes not just Russian nihilists, about whom one could read in the illustrated magazines of the time in connection with the bomb attacks they perpetrated, but also cultural personalities such as the author August Strindberg and the editor of *Social-Demokraten*, Hjalmar Branting, who both took a keen interest in nihilism. It is salutary for the whole volume that this approach allows the integration of an international perspective on the period that also considers violence, because it helps to bring in society as whole so that the picture reflects the limitations imposed on individualization at the time, despite all the talk about liberty.

This book can be recommended. It gives good insight into the changes taking place in the period in the different fields concerned, and the essays are all solidly backed up with sources and well illustrated. All in all, the volume is appetizing and inviting.

Niels Jul Nielsen, Copenhagen

The Heart of a City

Stadens hjärta. Täta ytor och symboliska element i nutida nordiska städer. Anna-Maria Åström & Jonas Lillqvist (eds.). Folklivsstudier XXII. Skrifter utgivna av Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland 761, Helsingfors 2012. 380 pp. ill. ISBN 978-951-583-234-4.

■ In a packed and ambitious volume, with good layout and beautiful print, we are presented here with several different projects in urban ethnology conducted during the first years of the 2000s. Most of the research concerns the changing centres of towns and cities in Finland, but there is also one essay each from Oslo, Gothenburg, and Mariehamn.

The title of the book, "The Heart of the City", refers to the fact that the centre is always the city's heart, and therefore the analyses focus on this. Of greatest interest, perhaps, is the introduction by Åström, who carefully familiarizes the reader with the way the analytical triad of the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre, along with his concept of symbolic centrality, can capture the development of the modern city. We are given descriptions of present-day trends concerning phenomena such as place, experience, history, and cultural heritage, sometimes with late modern features, but mainly considered as parts of modernity. We learn not just about how the spatiality of the city can be understood. There is also a brief survey of previous studies in urban ethnology. The analytical perspective focuses on processes, and as one would expect from an ethnological book about urban development, it captures micro-events in everyday life. The city is regarded as heterogeneous, stratified both socially and historically. On the other hand, there is no consideration of any gender stratification. Only one of the thirteen articles asks questions about the how places are gendered.

All the articles illustrate how city centres contain both tradition and change, and how it is increasingly obvious that late modern society is interested in attractiveness, tourism, consumption, and experiences that can be sold. It is possibly also the focus on spaces for consumption in the cities that explains why the articles have nothing to say about the grow-

ing segregation of recent years. Do the cities described here not have any instances of the beggars from poor EU countries that have become so common in Nordic cities, sparking heated debates about rights and opportunities in the city? Or were the studies conducted so long ago that phenomena like that were still not noticeable? And is it not obvious that a city centre looks very different when viewed from a gender angle?

The book is arranged in three major sections, the first of which is devoted to the hectic character of metropolitan life, mainly as enacted in Helsinki. The heading indicates that it is about modernity and change viewed through the pulse of the city and its dense areas. But interesting contrasts are provided by life in a small town like Jakobstad and in the main street of Oslo. This first part, which fills more than half of the book, is the most elaborate as regards theory, containing a great deal of innovative theoretical thinking about urban diversity, consumption, and the meaning of places. But culture is described in the singular definite form, possibly because the cities described here are not yet dominated by the diversity of cultures that has become common in other Nordic cities.

Åström has written two of the articles. One of them considers how ordinary people view the city centre. We are given many vivid quotations depicting city centres in the 1950s and today. Or perhaps they are all about today, since they are really about how people remember the city. The changes become particularly clear, however, after architects were allowed to dominate the cityscape in the sixties and seventies. But it is also remarkable how cultural institutions were allowed to spread, sometimes taking over abandoned factories which thus became, in Robert Willim's term, "industrial cool". An interesting feature is what Åström calls the city's memory system, which she regards as being particularly important in the struggle to clarify an urban identity in competition with all other cities. The built tradition, and the need to preserve it by communicating it, is just as important as the commerce and the symbolic memorial sites. The museums, too, play an extremely important role, according to Åström, in the urban memory system. Particularly interesting in this article is the space given to reflection on the symbolic and political meaning of places. This is where the ethnologist is able to speak clearly, emphasizing the significance of more obscure memories and the ritual potential of the city. The change that has occurred in street life is described as a switch from relaxing in restaurants and bars to having experiences in them. What is more, they have now moved out on to the street and are taking up more space as a whole. Many fine observations about "motorized flâneurs", lookout posts, and panoramas give perspective on both new and traditional city life. As someone who comes from the more southerly parts of the North, I agree with Åström's conclusion that Helsinki has retained a ruggedness that makes one feel as if one has come further to the east. There is also praise for the sensitive urban planning with a holistic architectural vision.

In another of the introductory chapters, Åström describes how the consumer landscape in the form of department stores and malls changed in the post-war era. New urban spaces have emerged in this form, mostly since the 1980s, yet simultaneously the big department stores in the city centre have remained stable. Buying routines and customer behaviour are revealed in fine recollections and long quotations. We also see clear social differences, and how special efforts are made to get the elite to affirm an exclusive way of life. The article ends with a theoretical reflection on how consumption has changed. The experience of being in consumer space is the most important thing today. People consume the space more than the commodity. There is a comparison between the consumer and the flâneur. Here I would have liked to see an analysis of how the different spaces are gendered, and I particularly miss the flâneuse that Doreen Massey has so nicely acquainted us with.

Pia Olsson's article about Helsinki also has a consumption perspective, but here it is the tourist consuming experiences in trendy shops and restaurants. The empirical material consists of guidebooks marketing Helsinki. The same focus on culture and architecture can be found here, but combined with saunas and tango. She concludes that the tourist uses the different city stages to try out a cosmopolitan lifestyle. In this way a spectacular cultural building like Kiasma can also serve as a backdrop for completely different activities. Otherwise the sights are described as mostly unchanged. What has changed is the way in which people make use of them.

Kari Telste's article is about the role played through history in Oslo by the highly significant main street, Karl Johan. It acquired its shape in the

mid-nineteenth century but did not attain its real significance until after independence in 1905. Telste concentrates on the refurbishment of the main street for the centennial in 2005, and contrasts this with the ideas and plans behind the construction of the street in the nineteenth century. The result is a highly interesting account of a special meeting place which has played a major part over the years in the exercise of power and the marginalization of people. As a public space, Karl Johan has carried the nation of Norway and has become, as she puts it, part of the self-image of the Norwegian people. This is where Norway's modern history is constantly retold through repeated stagings and narratives. Children parade here on the national day, and the king and queen are driven along here for the opening of parliament. The street becomes a place where political demonstrations in a democratic spirit confirm the union of the nation and the people.

But what about life in a small town? Katja Hellman conducts a fascinating analysis of development in Jakobstad, based on Lefebvre's triad, and arrives at the conclusion that urban development is a never-ending story to which new pages are added while old ones are removed. Summing up, however, she finds that the perceived heart of the centre has moved in the last twenty-five years from the square to the pedestrian street.

The section in the book that has the same title as the book itself, "The Heart of the City", deals with the city's cultural heritage and symbols. Here the articles offer no interesting new interpretations; instead they describe streets, urban spaces, networks, and settings past and present, based on current local and central development plans.

In Tiina-Riitta Lappi's article about Jyväskylä the main role is played by a park and a street, and here Lefebvre's concept of centrality is used to show the many aspects of the problem of space. Richard Sennett's perspective on urban planning is also mentioned initially; he points out how the diversity of the local environment is often not affirmed in planning contexts. In Lappi's Jakobstad, however, it seems as if everything ends up in a harmonious blend of memories and change, where the church park stands for continuity and the pedestrian street for change.

Kerstin Gunnemark's article about Gothenburg concentrates on the perspective of cultural heritage and discusses the dialogue between preservation and renewal and to what extent the citizens have any influence over the processes of urban development. Here the study does not concern the centre but the outskirts of a city.

Several towns with old, well-preserved wooden buildings in Finland have avoided the pressure of demolition and new building, while simultaneously the historic buildings have given rise to gentrification, parallel to the process of turning places into cultural heritage. Sanna Lillbroända-Annala describes how this has developed in towns like Karleby and Ekenäs. Historicization has taken place here, giving the towns a successful heritage status. She rounds off with the familiar phenomenon of cultural heritage becoming a sellable product in the tourist industry.

Pirjo Korkiakanga's description of Jyväskylä in pictures falls differs from the other contributions, in that it only describes how a city has been illustrated.

The last and shortest section in the book, entitled "The City as Stage Set and Backdrop: Late Modern Creations and Urban Behaviour", is the most disparate. It brings together different articles depicting such diverse phenomena as natural landscape, branded places, and medieval festivals. The first two articles, however, both have maritime elements, while the last two can perhaps be said to have one perspective in common: the use of history. Cultural heritage, tourism, and consumption are recurrent themes in these articles too. The Middle Ages seems to be the cultural heritage that sells best in the late modern experience landscape, but an Åland ship can also be useful for strengthening the brand of the town of Mariehamn. This last section of the book has one of the most interesting articles; even though it partly falls outside the frame through its focus on nature and landscape, it takes up central themes in the book such as experiences and perceptions of places and the role of history in specifying places. It is Katja Hellman who describes here the role played by the sea in Jakobstad, past and present. She shows how a widespread international trend since the 1980s, whereby attractive locations near the water have acquired increasing significance in urban planning, can be studied in close-up micro-perspective in a small town like Jakobstad. Here it is not a maritime cultural heritage that entices visitors to the waterside but a desire for recreation in a place close to nature, offering cycling and walks. This article asks questions about whether attitudes to and perceptions

of place are gendered. When the social construction of places is the focus of analysis as a way to give them meaning, gender becomes an obvious analytical angle. And even if the answers are not clear, it is important that the question is asked. At any rate she sees a difference between male and female patterns of movement by drawing attention to the gender perspective.

Despite certain objections, I must recommend this volume since it contains several interesting accounts of what actually happens in late modern Nordic city centres. Not least of all, it makes us aware of chronological strata in urban spatiality and of what changes in consumerism have meant for urban development.

Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm

Instructions for submission of manuscripts to *Ethnologia Scandinavica*

Articles should if possible be sent by e-mail or on diskette. Manuscripts should preferably be in English, although German may be accepted; if necessary the language will be edited by a native speaker. Articles may be submitted in the Scandinavian languages for translation, but articles in Finnish should be translated in Finland before submission. Articles will undergo peer review. We reserve the right to revise and cut the texts, and to ask authors to make revisions.

Articles should not be longer than 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.

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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.

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The world has become global, and Nordic ethnologists do research not just at home but just as often in other parts of the world. Some ethnologists study the meaning of migration. Their findings show that "here" and "there" are fluid categories. Others search for an understanding of identity and citizenship formations at different historical and political moments through the implication of otherness.

Gender analysis has become a dominant part of cultural analysis which is shown in most of this year's articles in *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. Even material culture and the importance of place continually do play an important role within ethnology as can be seen in various ways in this volume, not least in all the book reviews.

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