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## The Arctic Desert (*Helluland*) in *Bárðar saga*

William Sayers  
*Silver Spring, Maryland*

RÉSUMÉ: *Helluland*, nom géographique désignant l'Île Baffin au nord du Canada, figure non seulement dans les sagas islandaises qui traitent de Vinland, mais aussi dans d'autres oeuvres de date postérieure, telle la saga de *Bárðr*, où le toponyme, divorcé d'un endroit exact, porte la charge sémantique de "désert arctique." Les aventures de Gestr, fils de *Bárðr*, qui fait un voyage à *Helluland* afin de s'approprier le trésor d'un roi qui avait lancé un défi au roi norvégien Óláfr Tryggvason, se terminent par l'intervention surnaturelle de ce roi missionnaire qui sauve Gestr des forces malignes. De retour en Norvège, Gestr se fait chrétien. Ayant trahi ses origines à la fois islandaises, païennes et semi-monstrueuses, Gestr est aveuglé par son père. Sur le plan symbolique l'histoire reflète la situation de l'Islande aux 13e et 14e siècles, virant de son passé libre, héroïque et coloniste à un avenir chrétien et européen, un avenir carrément sous l'égide de la monarchie norvégienne.

ABSTRACT: *Helluland*, a geographical name for Baffin Island in Northern Canada, occurs in those Icelandic sagas which deal with Vinland, but the name also occurs in works with an earlier date, such as *Bárðar saga*, where the toponym, unconnected to any exact location, carries the meaning of "arctic desert." The adventures of Gestr, *Bárðr*'s son, who makes a voyage to *Helluland* to gain the treasure of a king who had challenged the Norwegian king Óláfr Tryggvason, end with the supernatural intervention of the missionary king to save Gestr from evil forces. Back in Norway Gestr becomes a Christian. Having betrayed his origins which were Icelandic, heathen and half-giant, Gestr is blinded by his father. On the symbolic level, the story reflects the situation in Iceland in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which was in the process of turning from its free, heroic, colonial past towards a Christian and European future, a future squarely under theegis of the Norwegian monarchy.

The designation of the Norse settlement or staging post at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland, as a World Heritage Site in the 'Columbus year' of 1992 was scarcely fortuitous in its timing. Against the rhetorical weight that international recognition has given the site at the northern tip of Newfoundland as the Vinland of the Norse explorers, Larsson (1991) has amplified the earlier thesis that would see the most permanent of the Norse settlements in the more favourable climactic circumstances of the southern shore of Nova Scotia or Cape Breton Island. The tension that results between the northern site, raised to iconic status with its Norse identity buttressed by archaeological evidence, and the putative southern site is matched in the ongoing critical review of the Vinland sagas, *Grænlandinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða*. Here there are two trends, which might be broadly categorized as colonial history and ideological history. The former, the traditional approach, catches some of the assumed explorer spirit to pursue the questions of dates, sailing routes, landmarks and landfalls, the settlement site, the accuracy of Norse ethnographical observations. This is the New World perspective.<sup>1</sup> The second, more recent trend is part of the larger reconsideration of the Icelandic family sagas as more potentially informative about the era of their composition than about the post-settlement and generally pre-conversion era portrayed in the works. To judge the Vinland adventure according to the criteria of social and ideological history, the settlement was never seen as permanent since security could not be assured; the prestige won by its most successful leaders, Karlsefni and his wife Guðríför, was translated into social standing back in Iceland and bequeathed to a succession of prominent leaders and churchmen; Vinland gradually moved back over the horizon into legend along with the legendary islands of the Atlantic. The Vinland accounts mark a conclusive break with the heroic, centrifugal, pagan past, as Iceland, for good and ill, turned and was turned centripetally towards the new social, economic and political organization of the Age of the Sturlungs, towards the Norwegian throne and Norwegian church, and towards Christian Europe. This might be characterized as the European perspective in 'Norse Atlantic saga' scholarship.<sup>2</sup>

A number of the names that the Norse explorers gave to landmarks and other noteworthy topographical features have been preserved in *Grænlandinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða*: *Kjalarnes*, *Krossanes*, *Furðustrandir*, *Straumfjörðr*, *Hóp*. Three geographical zones gain relief through the formal similarity of their names: *Helluland*, *Markland* and *Vinland*. If *Vinland*, the most temperate and bountiful of the three, is somewhere between Newfoundland and New England, *Markland*

“Forest-land” is thought to correspond to the Labrador coast, and *Helluland* “Slab-land” or “Land of Flat Stones” to Baffin Island. The first region encountered by the Norse crews was *Helluland*. In *Grænlendinga saga* it is described as follows:

Þar sigla þeir at landi ok kǫstuðu akkerum ok skutu báti ok fóru á land ok sá þar eigi gras. Jǫklar miklir váru allt it efra, en sem ein hella væri allt til jǫklanna frá sjónum, ok sýndisk þeim þat land vera gæðalaust. (1935: 249)

[They sailed right up to the shore and cast anchor, then lowered a boat and landed. There was no grass to be seen, and the hinterland was covered with great glaciers, and between glaciers and shore the land was like one great slab of rock. It seemed to them a worthless country. (1965: 55)]

The medieval Norsemen were no strangers to the Arctic environment. They had reached Jan Mayen, Spitzbergen, regularly traded with and drew tribute from the Permians (probably Karelian traders) of the White Sea area and, in the west, had progressed far to the north along the western coast of Greenland. A runestone has been found at latitude 73° N.<sup>3</sup> In giving names, the Norse voyagers situate the three regions on an evolutionary scale that moves from a bare and sterile landscape to one with basic natural resources (timber), finally reaching a more diversified zone with fish, game, edible plants. Of the three names from the Vinland sagas, *Helluland* thus carried the fewest associations, both because of the lack of sustained interaction on the part of the Norsemen and because of the barren image projected by the name itself. *Helluland* was available as a geographical cipher to be assigned a fuller value by later storytellers.

\*

One such example occurs in *Bárðar saga*, freshly edited just before the Columbian anniversary year in 1991 along with *Harðar saga* and a number of lesser sagas and *þættir*.<sup>4</sup> With its subject matter largely human interaction with the supernatural in Iceland and beyond as opposed to the inexorable mechanics of domestic feud, *Bárðar saga* has many of the characteristics of the mytho-heroic sagas and romance and has stimulated scholars to the creation of a sub-genre, *landvættasaga* “land spirits’ saga” (on genre definition see Rowe 1989 and Mitchell 1991). The present study is concerned with the latter half of *Bárðar saga*, also known as *Gests þáttir Bárðarsonar*. In this self-contained episode in the romance mode Gestr comes before the Norwegian king, is sent by him in pursuit of a mysterious warrior who had appeared before the court, and penetrates the warrior’s barrow in the Arctic reaches of *Helluland*. Here he is rescued by miraculous intervention of the Christian king, and

returns to Norway to Christian baptism, only to be blinded by his father Bárðr for his betrayal of pagan ways.

The narrative and thematic strategy of the family sagas often employs introductory chapters in a distant past to establish key themes and motifs, and lays out genealogical links that determine social standing, temperament and personality. Both Gestr's ancestry and sites analogous to that of the quest are introduced in the first lines of the saga. Greenland was thought to be linked by land to northern Scandinavia and the frozen sea of these shores was called *Dumbshaf* "Dumbr's Sea," *dumbr* "mute" also reflecting the lifeless northern wastes. *Bárðar saga* opens as follows:

Dumbr hefir konungr heitit; hann réð fyrir hafsbotnum þeim er ganga norðr um Helluland ok nú er kallat Dumbshaf ok kennt var við Dumb konung. Hann var kominn af risakyni í föðurætt sína, ok er þat vænna fólk ok stærra en aðrir menn. En móðir hans var komin af tröllaættum, ok brá því Dumbr í hvárutveggju ætt sína, því hann var bæði sterkr ok vænn ok góðr viðskiptis, ok kunnir því at eiga allt sambland við mennska menn. En um þat brá honum í sitt móðurkyn, at hann var bæði sterkr ok stórvirkr ok umskiptasamr ok illskiptinn ef honum eigi líkaði nokkut. Vildi hann einn ráða við þá er norðr þar voru, enda gáfu þeir honum konungsnafn, því at þeim þótti mikil forstöð í honum vera fyrir risum ok tröllum ok óvættum. Var ok hann inn mesti bjargvætr öllum þeim er til hans kölluðu.<sup>5</sup>

[There was a king named Dumbr. He ruled over the gulfs that stretch to the north across Helluland, now called Dumbshaf after King Dumbr. He was descended from giants on his father's side. They are more handsome people and bigger than other men. But his mother was descended from trolls, and Dumbr took after both sides of his family, for he was both strong and handsome, and of gentle disposition so that he was quite able to consort with humans. But he took after his mother's kin in that he was both strong and vigorous, but moody and ruthless when displeased with anything. He strove to become the sole ruler over the people of the north, and they called him their king, for they felt he would be a great bulwark against giants and trolls and monsters. He became the guardian spirit of all those who called on him. (1984: 3)]

In this initial chapter there is an association of sterile environment and the supernatural, as if the only life forms that could subsist there did so through more than human power. In following the fortunes of King Dumbr's son Bárðr and those of his son, Gestr, my topics for inquiry, in addition to the name *Helluland* and other points of contact with *Grænlendinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða*, will be: 1) the 'outlandish' warrior who challenges the royal court and initiates Gestr's quest; 2) the incursion into a barrow or burial chamber and interaction with the howe-dwellers; 3) relations between the pagan and Christian spheres of influence, their representatives, and the hero, and 4) the often structurally

parallel relations between Icelander and Norwegian king, and Iceland and Norway.

\*

In early chapters describing Bárðr's fosterage in Dofri's cave on Dovrefjell, the saga makes a careful statement on pre-Christian and Christian Icelandic culture. Dofri instructs Bárðr in various crafts, arms-bearing and genealogy but also in magic and witchcraft (*galdr ok forneskja*), so that his pupil is both prescient and wise (*forspár ok margvíss*).

[V]áru þetta allt saman kallaðr listir í þann tíma af þeim mönnum, sem miklir váru ok burðugir, því at menn vissu þá engi dæmi at segja af sönnum guði norðr hingat í hálfuna. (1991: 103)

[These were all called arts in those days by men of power and prestige; for nothing was then known of the true God here in the northern hemisphere. (1984: 5)]

This is less than an outright condemnation of pagan practices and they are even credited with some efficacy. It is the continuation in error after the true faith had become available that draws censure (Stefán Einarsson 1966; Schach 1975).

Bárðr has a dream of a beautiful flowering tree that is interpreted to predict that a future king of Norway will be similarly fostered in Dofri's cave and will have a descendant (Óláfr Tryggvason), who will rule a unified nation and will introduce Christianity (Turville-Petre 1988). Anticipating later tendencies in his mixed ancestry that will lead him to avoid the company of humans, Bárðr leaves Norway for Iceland.

Years later, his son Gestr is curious to see this king of Norway and takes passage with his half-siblings Þórðr, Þorvaldr and Sólrunn. Gestr's companions accept baptism at the request of King Óláfr, albeit with some reluctance (Schach 1982). This prepares a family saga type scene between free-born Icelander and Norwegian monarch. These stock encounters, which can take the form of an athletic or verbal contest, with one or the other lightly disguised, or, more simply, the king's recognition of the qualities of his visitor, present the two men as equals, save for the circumstances of rank and function that their countries have lent them. Only a Norwegian ruler is the true judge of an Icelander's worth. From the Icelandic perspective an ideal relationship with Norway was symbolized in the honoured status of such warriors, traders and poets at the royal court.

Óláfr seeks out the reserved Gestr and a debate on conversion to the Christian religion ensues. Gestr allows that the king's faith is likely better

than his own but claims: “‘Alls ekki er mér um at láta þá trú, sem inir fyrri frændr mínir hafa haft. Er þat hugboð mitt, ef ek læt þann sið, at ek muna ekki lengi lifa’” (1991: 159) [‘I am not eager to renounce the belief that my ancestors have had before me. I have a premonition that I shall not live long if I forsake that faith.’ (1984: 95)]. Attuned to the story-telling conventions of dreams, portents and premonitions as proleptic devices, the saga audience would expect this fear to be later realized. This is not a true theological debate, not even the assessment of relative practical merits of the two religions that is occasionally sketched in other works. Gestr is essentially a traditionalist, putting his faith where his kinsmen—that mixed breed of humans, giants and trolls—put theirs. The king recognizes Gestr as a man of good fortune and (quite unhistorically) declines to impose his Christian religion. As a more historical detail, however, Gestr is prime-signed so that he may frequent the company of Christians. The first phase of the relationship of Icelander and King, of Iceland and Norway, ends in a standoff, a recognition of inherent and comparable worth on both sides. In historical Iceland the religious issue was resolved in or around the year 1000 with the conversion via legal process of the entire Icelandic community.

The other principal strand in the confrontation between Gestr and Óláfr is the question of personal freedom versus subservience. Along with debates over proprietary churches and tithing, it must have continued to be a topical issue in Iceland in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century when the saga is thought to have been composed, that is, at no great remove from the extension of Norwegian hegemony, political and ecclesiastical, to Iceland in the years 1262–64. The religious confrontation and matching of men and cultures continues in rather different form toward the close of the saga.<sup>6</sup>

With Gestr nominally incorporated in the royal court, more as guest than king’s man, the stage is set for the adventure proper, which occurs at Christmas, when the court is crowded and the mood is high.<sup>7</sup> An uninvited warrior enters the hall. “[H]ann var mikill ok illiligr, skrámleitr ok skoteygr, svartskeggjaðr ok síðnefjaðr” (1991: 160) [He was big and evil of aspect, dusky [ÍF: yellowish] of complexion and restless of eye, black-bearded and long-nosed. (1984: 95)]. He is armed and wears gold jewellery. The visitor complains of the ungenerous reception but offers his own treasures to the man who dares to come and get them. He exits but leaves a foul, toxic stench behind and great fear. From tales he had heard among his northern kinsmen, Gestr identifies the challenger as a king Raknarr who had ruled oppressively in Helluland (var. *Hollsetuland*

Holstein), then in a bizarre self-exile had himself buried alive with eight hundred of his men on the ship *Raknarsslóði*.<sup>8</sup> “[Þ]ykki mér ván, at haugr hans muni vera norðarlíga í Hellulands óbyggðum” (1991: 161) [‘I would expect to find his grave in the northern wastes of Helluland.’ (1984: 99)]. The king charges Gestr with the recovery of these treasures and offers his aid in the form of various magical objects. Paralleling the saga’s distinctive mix of historical-factual (personal names, genealogies, and placenames) and legendary-supernatural, the king’s gifts to Gestr are both realistic (iron shoes for trekking in Helluland) and magical (auto-incendiary candle for speleology). The overall configuration, however, is that of the romance hero with preternatural helpers, friendly animals and magic objects. The twist in this saga is in their relative adequacy.

Despite the conventional, centripetal romance movement from the royal court, Gestr adopts a guarded attitude towards the Helluland expedition as he did toward the king. Setting out from Trondheim, Gestr and his men sail north along the coast of northern Norway to Hafsbótanr, the landmass thought to lie inland from the pack-ice of Dumbshaf. Giantland (*Jötunheimar*, *Risaland*) also lay in these latitudes. Among the helpers Gestr had requested are a male and female sorcerer, Krók and Krekja, who recall the Irish slaves Haki and Hekja sent ashore by Leifr in Vinland. Despite their Christian faith the Irish and Hebrideans were often associated by the Norse with sorcery. Unlike Haki and Hekja this couple does not bring back the bounty of a new world but is swallowed by it, when the ground yawns beneath them as they attempt to recover a treasure. This is a first statement of the insufficiency of traditional pagan magic under the new dispensation of Óláfr Tryggvason’s Christianity and a pointed comment on the earlier Vinland accounts. Another comes when a hooded, one-eyed stranger joins the party in the far north, giving his name as *Rauðgrani* “Red-Beard”. The name and cowl suggest the master-disguiser Óðinn, and both the name and ensuing scene recall the episode of the Þórr-worshipper Þórhallr in *Eiríks saga rauða*.<sup>9</sup> Rauðgrani, dressed in clothing that recalls the Irish *kafal* of Haki and Hekja, proselytizes for the heathen religion, but is clubbed over the head with a cross by Gestr’s companion, a Christian priest Jósteynn, who had accompanied the expedition at King Óláfr’s behest. The ‘ex-god’ plunges overboard and disappears. It is significant, however, that he appears to the party only when they have reached the limit of the known world, strengthening the association of heathen religion with the north which, in the cosmological conception of that religion, was the point of origin of such evil powers as trolls and chaotic forces as giants. The author has

dismissively collapsed pagan cosmology, moving the inhabitants of Ásgarðr to Útgarðr and even giving Óðinn the red beard of Þórr.

Gestr and his expedition winter in Greenland. While Gestr is standing watch he is attacked by a belligerent bull, against which an axe proves useless. The powerful Gestr tries to wrestle the beast to the ground but is in danger of being gored. The priest strikes the animal with his cross, and it too plunges into the earth. These events echo scenes from *Eiríks saga rauða* in which a bull terrifies the natives, they ineffectually break an axe, and disappear into the earth.<sup>10</sup>

The next test is of a different kind: a natural, not supernatural, obstacle. It is of particular interest since it offers 1) a softening on Gestr's part towards his priestly companion, 2) a subtle statement of the latter's limitations before environmental conditions, as distinct from supernatural pagan power, and 3) a more graphic depiction of the Arctic environment. From Greenland the adventurers proceed south-west, then turn on a westerly course. After crossing glaciers they meet lava fields (*brunahraun*). This feature is borrowed from volcanic Iceland to characterize the glaciated areas of sub-Arctic America. Gestr and his men take out the down-filled iron shoes and advance, but the priest has none and soon his feet are bloodied. Gestr asks who will take up the "scroll-monger" (*skráfínnr*). When no-one volunteers, Gestr has him ride on his pack, saying that it is best to help him since the king set such store by him. Clearly, Gestr has been impressed by the priest's two acts of exorcism. The incident exhibits similarity with continental hagiographical accounts of a well born man who helps a needy traveller who may be Christ in disguise. At the same time, it illustrates the relative imperviousness of the Arctic environment to Christian virtue and power.

After the lava-fields the party reaches the seashore and sights an island which can be reached at low tide by way of a reef. On the island is a barrow. "Segja sumir menn, at þessi hólmr hafi legit fyrir Hellulandi; en hvar sem þat hefir verit, þá hafa þar öngvar byggðir í nánd verit" (1991: 165) [Some say that the barrow stood in the north off Helluland, but wherever it was there was no habitation nearby. (1984: 103)]. We should not look for geographical accuracy in the saga, although this itinerary could be imagined as a crossing of the glacier-covered Cumberland Peninsula in southern Baffin Island to Cumberland Sound.

Gestr orders the barrow to be broken open, a task in which Jósteynn participates. The barrow proves resistant to intrusion, its breach closing in the course of the night. The hibernating dead protect their peace and the

treasure buried with them.<sup>11</sup> Hoping to keep it open, the priest spends the night at the breached barrow, armed with cross and holy water. The dead king appears and attempts to lure him away with promises and fine gifts, illusions of various kinds. These deceptions are called *fádæmi*, and may be compared to the optical distortions “*sjónhverfingar*” practised by the Æsir on King Gylfi in Snorri’s *Gylfaginning*, by Útgarða-Loki on Þórr and his companions, and by sorcerers in the family sagas, including the Amerindians of *Eiríks saga rauða*, often with a view to creating panic in an opposing force.<sup>12</sup> Jósteyinn has the impression that friends, kinsmen, even King Óláfr are asking him to leave, or that Gestr and the party are abandoning him. Negative visions of demons are called up to frighten him off, and recall earlier grotesque scenes of the saga in the halls of trolls and giants (Motz 1984). Holy water keeps the fiends (*fjándr*, a clearly Christian term) at bay and the priest maintains his vigil until daybreak, thus making possible Gestr’s descent into the barrow.

The temptation of saints is a story-telling commonplace; the archetypal scene is the Devil’s temptation of Christ in a high place from which he can survey the world (Matt. 4). Medieval Christian demonology explained some of the evil in the world as the devils’ efforts to entrap sorcerers and other practitioners of non-Christian religions more deeply by appearing to further their purposes. Thus, magic could work for those who believed in it, although its efficacy was doubly deceitful, since even the magician was forfeiting his soul. This conception provides saga-writers a blanket justification not only for portraying heathen magic in the pre-Christian period, since it was known to have been practised then, but also for showing it as having concrete (but ultimately limited) nefarious effects including fatal enchantments and weather-working that caused death at sea.

With regard to Raknarr’s barrow, both positively and negatively characterized beings in *Bárðar saga* are shown to live in caves at important moments. The similarity of *hellir* “cave, cavern” and *hella* “flat stone, slab” may have drawn the Helluland motif into the orbit of the stories associated with the cave-dwellers Dofri, Bárðr, Helga, Gestr and their enemies, Hít and Kolbjörn.<sup>13</sup> There may be a similar semantic overlap in the term *bjargvætr* “protective spirit” since *bjarg-* is both a compounding element meaning “help, save, be serviceable” and a noun “rock, boulder.”<sup>14</sup> Gestr’s descent into Raknarr’s cavern is a replication of earlier heroic deeds in his and his family’s history. The relevance of this telluric activity and residence to Icelandic identity will be explored below.

The barrow is fifty fathoms deep and Gestr is let down on a rope, equipped with protective cloth, sword and candle. The ship *Slóðinn* and its crew of hundreds is at the bottom of the barrow. *Slóðinn*, while likely larger than any dragon-ship ever built in viking times, seems an appropriate final resting place in the Arctic, since adventurous crews must always have seen the possibly encasing movement of pack-ice as a hazard. Gestr's candle ignites when he reaches the bottom, and its light stimulates the dead warriors to partial life; they cannot speak or move, save to snort and roll their eyes. Gestr decapitates them with *Óláfr's* sword and begins to pillage the chamber. He then seeks out *Raknarr* in a deeper vault. The king's evil appearance, the cold and stench of the chamber are emphasized. Nonetheless, Gestr greets him courteously, to which the king nods in acknowledgement. A bad king is still a king, as evidenced by the ambiguous stance of later Icelanders to the Norwegian kingship that combined attraction with veiled threat.

'Bæði er, at þú ert frægr, enda þykki mér þú allítrigr vera at sjá; hefi ek langan veg sótt þik heim; muntu mik ok góð erendislaun láta hafa, ok gef mér gripuna þá ina góðu, er þú átt; skal ek þá víða þína risnu bera.' (1991: 167)

['You are both famous and, I think, most glorious to look upon. I have come a long way to see you. Now you will reward me well for my journey and give me these good treasures of yours, and I shall proclaim your generosity everywhere.' (1984: 107)]

The king nods again and Gestr removes his helmet, coat of mail and other treasures, but *Raknarr* resists the appropriation of his sword, the most clearly identifiable symbol of martial kingship. The dead king lunges angrily at the same time as Gestr's candle burns down, and Gestr is at a loss. With this shift in the balance of power and lighting effects, the decapitated warriors in the ship now arise. Gestr calls on his father *Bárðr*. On retiring from the human world he had become a protective spirit not unlike a Christian saint, winning the local epithet *Snæfellsáss*—in the period of the saga's composition perhaps best understood as "supernatural protector of *Snæfell*" (Kuhn 1968). Although the earlier part of the saga had given repeated examples of *Bárðr's* efficacious intervention under similar circumstances, he is powerless before this greater enemy, who, in his home environment, also draws on supernatural power, but of a malign sort. *Bárðr* is unceremoniously manhandled by *Raknarr's* warriors and cannot reach his son. Gestr then vows to God to accept King *Óláfr's* faith if he escapes alive and prays the king to come to his aid. The king appears in a flash of light, *Raknarr* is disconcerted and loses his strength.<sup>15</sup> Gestr cuts off *Raknarr's* head, places it at his buttocks, the warriors resume their seats, and the vision of *Óláfr* disappears.<sup>16</sup>

Decapitation as a means of checking further haunting by revenants is a common feature in the family sagas, although the explicit mention of placing the severed heads at the buttocks is rarer. It is comparable to the poles of defamation, scurrilous verses, and insults in which Icelanders accused their opponents of being the victims of male rape or practitioners of bestiality and coprophagy. It is this last charge that is symbolized here by the positioning of the head.<sup>17</sup> This is a gesture of social shaming, the reasoning apparently that the *draugr* or *haugbúi* would be reluctant to frequent human society after having been so dishonoured (Sayers forthcoming). Thus, Gestr's rescue is effected by the triumph of the Christian supernatural over the heathen supernatural, but his terminal act is drawn from the older palette, part belief in the preternatural, part symbolic social gesture.

That Raknarr should refuse to surrender the insignium of kingship is understandable enough but gains added significance when considered in the larger context of Gestr's and other Icelanders' relations with the Norwegian kingship. In the immediate context of the challenge to seek him in his barrow, we see combined in Raknarr 1) supernatural power, 2) a concern for kingly prerogative, 3) an ambivalent generosity which seems intended to draw men to their doom, 4) the wealth that is associated with the underground and the world of the dead, and 5) negatively charged physical characteristics which in part derive from his deceased state, e.g., dark complexion.

At this juncture we may introduce the idea of a multi-tiered evolutionary scale—nature to culture, supernatural power to human power, paganism to Christianity, among other axes. On it we can situate Raknarr and later, in conclusion, we can chart Iceland's spiritual development. Dumbr, it will be recalled, had a light and dark side and could mingle in human company. His son Bárðr eventually leaves continuous participation in the human community in favour of emergency interventions as *bjargvættir*. Raknarr has gone wilfully 'backwards' on this scale, with anti-social acts including his self-interment and burial of his men in the most lifeless part of the north where he had ruled, also the home of giants, trolls, and pagan magic.

Gestr, with help, has then successfully met Raknarr's challenge and has defeated him. Concurrently, King Óláfr, with his heavenly ties, has proved a more reliable succour than Bárðr, who draws his strength from the earth. Yet further difficulties await Gestr above the barrow at the surface. All his men, save Jósteyn, have lost their wits and are fighting

among themselves, apparently the victims of the disorienting heathen magic deployed in the temptation of the priest. Jósteinn pulls Gestr from the barrow, restores the sanity of his men, and it is he who, in a Moses-like act, leads the party back to the mainland, after subterranean tremors emanating from the barrow caused the sea to cover the reef serving as causeway and Gestr's faithful dog, the gift of a troll-wife, has died in the attempt to find the way. In the end, only the priest and the objects assigned by Óláfr prove adequate to the demands of the journey.

Gestr turns Raknarr's treasure over to King Óláfr and accepts baptism as he had vowed in the howe, without further discussion and without further narrative elaboration in the saga. Immediately thereafter Gestr is visited in a dream by his father Bárðr, who says:

'Illa hefir þú gert, er þú hefir látit trú þína, þá er langfeðgar þínir hafa haft, ok látit kúga þik til siðaskiptis sakir lítlmennsku, ok fyrir þat skaltu missa bæði augu þín.' (1991: 170)

['Ill have you done now that you have renounced your faith and that of your forefathers and allowed yourself to be forced to change your custom because of your cowardice. For that you shall lose both your eyes.' (1984: 113)]

Gestr awakens with pain in his eyes, which that same day burst from his head. He dies in his white christening gown and the king mourns his loss.<sup>18</sup> Earlier in the saga Bárðr had shown himself a vengeful father. He is an exponent of the old order; his acts of assistance are without ideological motivation and are limited to rescue under threatening natural conditions, at times magically inspired. Gestr dies sinless, which is every Christian's hope. His failure in his father's eyes is his inability to overcome Raknarr alone, his 'insufficient masculinity' (to give a gendered and somewhat more literal rendering of *lítlmennska* than the translators' "cowardice"). Yet Bárðr himself had been unable to penetrate to the lower chamber and assist his son. The punishment of blinding is consonant with traditional imagery that saw conversion as preceded by an experience of illumination ('seeing the light'), so that the penalty, in Bárðr's view, is matched to the putative offence, although the perspective is a more Christian than pagan one. Light imagery had also figured in Gestr's penetration into the howe. Óláfr's magic candle was sufficient only for the foreordained period of its normal burning; the king had warned Gestr to leave when it burned down, which occurs just as Gestr is attacked by Raknarr. The resurgent powers of darkness and cold are then overcome by a greater light, that of the king himself. Worth noting, too, is that Bárðr's vocabulary in reproaching his son is that of the post-conversion period; *siðaskipti* "change of faith" was the conventional term

used in historical writing and is a surprisingly neutral one, given the medieval circumstances, connoting neither “renouncing the false ways of heathendom” nor “embracing the one true faith.”<sup>19</sup>

As in Gestr’s earlier quasi-theological discussion with King Óláfr, the prophetic content of which has now been realized, the issue is not the respective merits of the two belief systems, but loyalty to ancestral and community traditions or to the royal Norwegian proponent of a new faith. In *Bárðar saga* the opposed religions serve as metonyms to explore the more complex and still evolving relationship between an earlier, self-contained and self-sufficient Iceland and the new Christian European order, represented by Norway.

*Bárðar saga* concludes with a mention of the return of Gestr’s half-brothers and -sister to Iceland, and their reintegration into the community through property ownership, marriage and political alliance. Here it continues the saga’s sporadic but heavy reliance on *Landnámabók* and other family sagas to provide a dense ‘factual’ counterweight to the romance motifs and scenes. A final incident concerns a lawsuit to be prosecuted at a local assembly. The two brothers in fine outfits make a great impression on the assembly. “En er þeir kvámu á þingit, váru þeir svá vel búnir, at menn hugðu þar væri komnir æsir” (1991: 171) [When they came to the assembly their trappings were so magnificent that it seemed that the Æsir themselves had arrived (1984: 115)]. A stanza of verse preserved in the saga underscores the impression. It is difficult to say with what conscious thematic effect the author has deployed this simile to close his work (the passage is taken from *Landnámabók: Sturlubók* 207; *Hauksbók* 174), but the stunning visual impact of the adventurous brothers does recall the motif of cognitive distortion and disorientation, employed earlier in the incident of Gestr’s party by the entrance to the barrow, and more generally presented in the sagas as a consequence of baleful magical practices. But, significantly, the old pagan gods are brought in here only as a conventional reference point. Thus, in the closing lines of the saga, the heathen divinities and the witchcraft associated with belief in them are stripped of all effective power and are cited only in the shell-like form of their dazzling external appearance. The reality is that of two wealthy Icelanders, who had earned their eminence abroad at the Norwegian court and in far-off Helluland and who are now pursuing the court cases typical of the Icelandic family sagas from a position of economic security and strong political backing. After this adjustment in genre, the saga’s last words express uncertainty as to whether Gestr left descendants in Iceland. In contrast to *Eiríks saga*

*rauða*, which lists the churchmen and other prominent leaders descended from Guðríför and Karlsefni, this is tantamount to saying that what Gestr represented was without true issue in later Christian Iceland, save in memory and perhaps in ethnic self-awareness.

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*Bárðar saga* has been characterized as a *landvættasaga*, and its cast of supernatural characters is large, even if only a few, such as Dumbr and Bárðr himself, qualify for the title of *bjargvættir*, the most benevolent of these land spirits. The saga has two rollicking and raucous scenes of human interaction with giants and trolls, who are also to be counted in the non-human cast: the Yule feast given by the giantess Hít, where those in attendance include Bárðr, and the mock-wedding feast to which the troll Kolbjörn lures Þórðr and Þorvaldr, who are fortunate to have Gestr in their company. Gestr assumes the rescuer's role as Bárðr had at Hít's feast. Thus Óláfr's Christian intervention has two pagan or, at best, neutral precedents. But in the world of adventure these grotesque antics are not truly threatening. The episodes are in counterpoint to the human contention in the saga, which, however, does not achieve the intensity of the feuds typical of the family sagas. One feature that distinguishes *Bárðar saga* from the latter could be put under the sign of miscegenation, a motif established in the opening chapter with the ancestry of Dumbr, part giant, part troll, and capable of mixing with humans. This combination results in lighter and darker sides in the next generation, Bárðr both vengeful in family matters and helpful when the Snæfjell community is in difficulty. Gestr's ancestry is then a hybrid one—troll, giant and human. This theme of mixed human and non-human, culture and nature, empirical and magical is also reflected in other irregular unions in the saga: Skeggi and Bárðr's daughter Helga, Bárðr and Skeggi's daughter Þórdís, and the quasi-incest of Sólrunn and Þórðr, both half-siblings of Gestr.

On the larger scale of narrative and generic affinity, miscegenation takes the form of wholesale borrowings from *Landnámabók*. They go well beyond what is needed to flesh out the biographies, and some 250 names are given in all. The result is a juxtaposition and association during the settlement era of Iceland of human settlers and their descendants on the one hand and the natural forces of the island on the other, be they well or ill disposed towards humans. Just as *Landnámabók* made a careful statement of Icelandic ethnogenesis which accounted for the Celtic slave contingent in the founding generation (acculturated or

eliminated, broadly speaking; Sayers 1994), the family etiology of *Bárðar saga* incorporates the very spirits of the landscape in the communal blood stream with frequent symbolic residence in caves. The distinct nature of Iceland is turned by the author to face Norwegian cultural advances in the form of Christian proselytizing by Óláfr Tryggvason in the tenth century, and of political and economic incorporation under Hákon IV in the thirteenth.

On two counts these are uniformly linear and positive developments in the author's view, promoting the Christian faith and furthering the successively (trans-generationally) more cultural than natural life of the Icelanders. Repeated scenes show the power of Christianity over demons and the sorcery associated with heathen belief. Even the old god Óðinn is summarily disposed of by Jósteyninn, who anticipates Óláfr's definitive assumption of the *bjargvættir* role. But while there is little that could be called nostalgia in the treatment of the old pagan religion, it is seen as an undeniable constituent of the Icelandic past and, indeed, Icelandic ethnogenesis, and tied to both the land and the people. The surrender of this tie was not a casual matter, since community identity and integrity hung in the balance. This conservatism, expressed as a concern for origins, is also reflected in the saga world by pagan figures who are ethically admirable but unable to effect the transition to the Christian faith, or by those, like Gestr, who are punished for abandoning the old ways, an act presented more as a cultural than a truly religious dereliction.

The increasingly prestigious and Europeanized Norwegian monarchy held undoubted attractions for medieval Icelanders, who also lived in a highly status-conscious society. This is inverted to Iceland's advantage in the numerous scenes of Norwegian rulers praising the worth of visiting Icelanders. Yet while the prestige the latter take back to Iceland may serve them well in domestic matters, other Norwegian gifts work for ill (the headdress in *Laxdæla saga*) or prove inadequate to Icelandic circumstances (the axe in *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*). Raknarr embodies the ominous side of royal rule. But, family sagas aside, by the late thirteenth century the course of Icelandic-Norwegian relations had been set—however rocky the road—and the future of Christian Iceland determined. Ideally, the Icelanders might have preferred to remember their acceptance of Christianity as purely voluntary as recounted in *Njáls saga* or as in Óláfr's reluctance to press Gestr on the matter. Nonetheless, in two important instances the Christian king Óláfr supplants the pagan Bárðr: as representative of political leadership (Bárðr had withdrawn from community affairs) and as tutelary spirit in the new dispensation. Bárðr's son

Gestr is similarly a symbol of the old order in the process of transition; he has no true career in Norway, dies after his conversion, and leaves no descendants, although his lateral kin is fully accepted into Iceland's future. Just as Bárðr had retreated to Iceland in the face of the expansion of Norwegian kingship, so Gestr before expanding Christianity remains caught in the Icelandic past, a hero but an outmoded one. Despite romance features, primarily the quest and its attendant episodic structure, *Bárðar saga* is not a romance, because it does not divest itself of the family saga concerns for genealogy and land ownership, and Gestr is not a free-wheeling romance hero, because, quite literally, he cannot loosen himself from the family tie that his vengeful father recalls in his act of blinding, shutting out the light of new ways. Behind the narrative there remains the sagaman's seemingly half-willed, atavistic attachment to Iceland's rustic origins, as if saying "They may be trolls, but they are *our* trolls."

*Gests páttir Bárðarsonar*, the latter portion of *Bárðar saga*, has a number of conscious recalls of *Eiríks saga rauða* in the course of the Helluland adventure to Raknarr's barrow: the slave/sorcerer couple, the proselyte for heathendom, the raging bull, the Christian priest in place of the pagan prophetess, the half-dead warriors in the ship in place of the natives who sleep under boats. The saga picks up these motifs, gives them a homiletic Christian turn, and proceeds to the next episode. But in so doing it does not refute the larger ideological message that emerges from the Vinland sagas, which could be summarized as the extraction of personal honour from an abortive colonization attempt and the furtherance of family interests in a Christian, Europe-oriented Iceland. The initial rejection of Helluland in *Grænlandinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða* is replicated on a larger scale when even bountiful Vinland proves too insecure for continued habitation.

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Helluland is the object of a syncretic view combining traditional pre-Christian attitudes toward the north with consonant Christian symbolism. It is not quite a cipher to be valorized at will, since a modicum of historical knowledge about Arctic North America was long preserved, as exemplified in Sigurður Stefánsson's map of the late sixteenth century, and the northern setting dictated the maintenance of other important associations (on early cartography and the north, see Chekin 1993). In conclusion we may draw up a set of criteria to characterize the treatment

of the motif of the remote and barren Arctic under the name *Helluland* in *Bárðar saga* and a handful of other Icelandic works.

*Textual:* Helluland is mentioned in passing in only three other Icelandic sagas and romances and, when more than another distant northern site as expressed in the tag 'Helluland's wastes', is tied to the story of Raknarr and his men in the barrow.<sup>20</sup>

*Geographical:* Helluland (Baffin Island) retains the sub-Arctic position southwest of Greenland to which the explorers assigned it, but it has slipped over the literary horizon almost beyond the Icelandic purview as one of many exotic settings for adventure. As Ultima Thule once was for Europe, so Helluland for Iceland.

*Topographic/climatic:* Native Norse cosmology assigned a negative valence to the north. The glaciers and rocky terrain of Baffin Island, like the winter cold and dark, are hardships overcome with the aid of magical objects and helpers, finally with supernatural Christian intervention. Like the deserts of the early Christian fathers, the Arctic landscape is home to ocular deceptions and temptations.

*Demographic/economic:* North American natives, Inuit or Amerindian, are absent. Raknarr offers an inverted image of colonization, turning to the most barren and inhospitable part of his northern realm to bury himself and his men alive with their boat and treasure.<sup>21</sup> Raknarr's self-imposed interment is the opposite of Christ's death and resurrection. This is a step beyond the failure of settlement, as in the Vinland sagas; it is purposefully anti-life. As further concerns demography and economy, *Bárðar saga* was composed after the termination of further colonization efforts from Iceland and Greenland, and at a time when Iceland itself was becoming a Norwegian colony in terms of exploitation.

*Cultural/religious:* As early Norse tradition had made the north the home of giants, trolls and sorcerers, the Christian Icelandic world-view could retain this negative valence, now equating cold and dark with evil and the devil's work. The north was the last area to be reached by Christian missionary efforts, both distant and, as a seat of pagan witchcraft, recalcitrant. The voyage to Helluland was initiated by the servant of demonic works, Raknarr, and draws the attention of the deceiver Óðinn. These two, however, are quickly neutralized and banished by the priest Jósteynn and the vision of King Óláfr.

*Historical/temporal:* Just as Helluland is spatially beyond Iceland in real and symbolic terms, it also belongs to the expansive heroic pagan past that Iceland abandoned, save in saga-writing, in its new involvement

in Christianity, Norway and Europe. But if Raknarr and Helluland are an externalization beyond Iceland of what may freely be discarded, Bárðar and Gestr stand for the more ambivalent attempt to retain something distinctively and independently Icelandic from the settlement era. Bárðr stands in relation to Iceland as Iceland might have preferred to see itself in relations with Norway: withdrawn, independent but ready for benevolent intervention in specialized functions. As a character, Gestr is caught on the threshold. The initial balance in such a relationship, represented by King Dumbr, cannot easily be replicated in a later, more complex age.

Gestr's first encounter with the Norwegian king leaves the hero to make his accommodation with the foreign ruler and new religion in his own good time and thus seems to flatter Icelandic memories of independence. But at the critical moment Gestr, having expended the force of his magical objects and finding his father's intervention inadequate to the circumstances—having spent his patrimony, as it were—has little choice but to turn to the Christian god and his royal representative if he is to survive. Although the issue of conversion had long since burned out, while that of ecclesiastical politics still smouldered, Iceland's dealings with Norway in the course of the thirteenth century were not that dissimilar to Gestr's acquiescence before Norwegian superiority. Independence was the price paid to smother the civil disturbances of the Age of the Sturlungs. If we continue the reading of *Helluland* as "Slab-Land" we may see the Arctic locus of adventure in *Bárðar saga* and a few other Icelandic sagas as one of the flagstones laid over the grave of the Icelandic past.

#### NOTES

1. Other principal recent studies are A. Ingstad 1985, H. Ingstad 1976, Jones 1964, Perkins 1976, Erik Wahlgren 1986, Ernst Wahlgren 1989, and Wallace 1991.

2. See Ólafur Haldórsson 1986, Baumgartner 1993, Sayers 1993, Ebel forthcoming.

3. General discussion in Vilkuña 1956, Olsen 1962, Þórhallur Vilmundarson 1967.

4. The Íslenzk fornrit edition of *Bárðar saga* 1991 will be the standard reference in the following unless otherwise noted, with English translation drawn from the somewhat earlier bilingual critical edition (1984); excerpts were published in English by Simpson in 1965.

5. *Bárðar saga* 1984: 2, representing MS AM 158; the ÍF edition does not explicitly name Helluland at this point.

6. Gestr's dealings with Óláfr Tryggvason, who ruled 995–1000, form a bracket around his last major adventure, as he leaves then returns to Norway. Similarly, royal Norwegian efforts towards internal hegemony were instrumental in the creation of

Iceland, if we accept at face value the etiological legend of self-imposed exile before the advances of Haraldr harðráði. Completing this larger bracketing effect is the later extension of Norwegian rule overseas that brought the new nation into the Christian European fold under Hákon IV.

7. For saga use of the motif of challenges in the royal court, see *Bárðar saga* 1991: 161n1.

8. See Jón Jónsson 1901 and *Bárðar saga* 1991: 161n3 for discussion of the names *Raknarr* and *Raknarsslóði*. Editors of the saga have called attention to the general similarity of the challenge scene to that in the Middle English *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, suggesting that both episodes 'may ultimately derive from an Irish model' (*Bárðar saga* 1984: xxiv). The allusion here is to scenes in the Irish tale from the Ulster cycle *Fled Bricrend (The Feast of Bricriu)*. The best known is the challenge delivered by the disguised Cú Roí to King Conchobar and his warriors to behead him and then the next day submit to a similar beheading. Only Cú Chulainn has the necessary courage. While the Green Knight is a handsome and imposing, if somewhat garish, figure, it is the Irish Cú Roí whose portrait more clearly resembles that of Raknarr, although he is cast as an elemental rustic figure:

Amal ro bátar and trath nóna deód laí co n-accatar bachlach mór forgrainne chucu isa tech. Indar leó ní rabi la Ultu láth gaile rosassad leth méite fair. Bá úathmar 7 bá granni a innas in bachlaig. Senchodal fríra chnes 7 brat dub lachtna imbi. 7 dosabili mór fair méit gamlías hi tallat .xxx.aít ngamma. Súili cichurda budi inna cind méit chore rodaim ... (1929: 276)

[As night drew on, they saw a huge ugly churl coming towards them in the house, and it seemed to them that there was not in all Ulaid a warrior half as tall. His appearance was frightful and terrifying; a hide against his skin, and a dun cloak around him, and a great bushy tree overhead [= his hair] where a winter shed for thirty calves would fit. Each of his two yellow eyes was the size of an ox-cauldron. (1981: 251)]

Affinities between Irish and Icelandic story-telling are discussed in Einar Ól. Sveinsson 1959.

9. Þórhallr's prayers to his namesake call up only a nearly inedible whale. Later Þórhallr forsakes the settlement to go north to look for Vinland but his ship is blown back across the Atlantic to Ireland, where he is enslaved and dies. The combination of heathen religion and 'northern orientation' clearly marks him as a non-normative figure, precluding his success or even survival in *Eiríks saga rauða*, which is filled with exemplary figures of various kinds.

10. Supernatural bulls and horses, often coming from the sea or shore, are common features in both Celtic and Icelandic tales and may well have entered the northern folklore and story-telling tradition with the Norse settlers from Ireland and the Hebrides and their Celtic slaves. A more pointed recall here is of the bull Glæsir in *Eyrbyggja*

saga which embodies both supernatural power from his mysterious sire, and a spiritual contagion from the shore-strewn ashes of the incinerated *draugr* or revenant Þóroldr *bægifótr*. In that tale the bull, formerly a stockyard pet although repeatedly pointed out as a source of danger by a prescient old woman, kills Þóroldr, who had ordered the burning of Þóroldr's corpse.

11. Early Norse funeral practices reflect a belief in a continued semi-active existence on the Other Side, and this finds expression in the deposition of grave goods and in stories of dead both benevolent and malevolent, sedentary and ambulatory. Gunnarr Hámundarson of *Njáls saga* celebrating in his barrow his final fight and his glorious reputation is a positive example, with the dead hero staying within the confines of his grave as a howe-dweller (*haugbúi*). The negative example is the *draugr* or revenant Glámr in *Grettis saga Ásmundarsonar*, a highly corporeal being motivated by the ill-will that marked his former existence and physically amplified by the contagion of a violent death at the hands of another supernatural being. It is a feature of the *draugar* to resist definitive burial, to stay active (Lecouteux 1984–85; Sayers forthcoming). The *draugr* is typical of the family sagas; one alienated in life returns to haunt the community, terrorize its members and drive them to death in madness, kill stock and destroy buildings. The movement is from the periphery of life's boundary with death back into the settlement. The *haugbúi*, on the other hand, a possessor of knowledge, endowed objects, weapons and treasure, is commonly the goal of the hero or heroine of romance. Movement here is centrifugal as the barrow dwellers are sought out in their own environment.

12. Discussion in Krappe 1937, Nesheim 1970. The effects are to invert spatial relationships, distort scale, create phantoms, or cloud vision with fog or drowsiness.

13. The closing chapter of the saga refers to several placenames in the Snæfellsnes area that incorporate the element *hellu-*; the motif is thus brought forward to the time of the saga's composition and is fully domesticated (1991: 170; Allee 1968).

14. Here, we may briefly consider the names in the principal family of the saga: Dumbr, Bárðr, and Gestr. Etymological speculation (de Vries 1959 *s.v.v.*) can tell us little about the connotive properties of medieval Icelandic words but it is thought-provoking that *dumbr* as 'dumb, mute', a quality that might be associated with the frozen sea, may have originally referred to darkness or mist, conditions otherwise frequently met along with far northern sorcerers. *Bárðr* was also used of topographical features such as knolls. *Gestr* as 'guest' may originally have described in early Scandinavia a member of a royal retinue drawn from another tribal grouping. This neatly fits Gestr's situation at the Norwegian court, but again, one must caution against relating putative semantic roots to later usage. The name *Gestr* recalls Óðinn's alias in other tales, *Gestumblindi*, and it in turn reflects the semi-blindness of the divinity; the circuit is closed by the pagan vengeance, blinding, visited on Gestr by his father.

15. In these developments Óláfr's role is consistent with that in many of the *þættir* preserved in *Heimskringla*: to effect a Christian intervention when the Icelander lands in (largely physical) difficulties.

16. The scene has general similarities with Grettir's combat with the revenant Glámr, which also concludes with the beheading of the defeated *draugr*. There, however, the moment of paralysis was visited on Grettir, providing an opportunity for Glámr's dire prediction of his future, before the outlaw hero recovers and overpowers his opponent. Here Gestr is at a more lasting disadvantage, until the positive power of the luminous apparition is supplied from the exterior. Gestr's venture into the barrow, his dealings with Raknarr, and the behaviour of his men on the surface have justifiably been compared to Beowulf's entry into Grendel's lair, but these resemblances should be seen as part of the common story-telling goods of the age, as other comparative studies of the 'Bear's Son's Tale' have shown.

17. More blunt is *Áns saga bogsveigis*: "Han hjó af honum höfuðit ok dró hann út ok stakk nefinu i klof honum, at hann gengi eigi dauðr" (1950 2: 388) [He hewed the head off him and straightened out the corpse and pushed his nose into the cleft (of his buttocks), so that he would not come back as a revenant (lit. not walk (as)dead)].

18. Cf. the similar fate of the convert Þiðrandi Síðu-Hallsson at the hands of *dísir* (female tutelary spirits; *Flateyjarbók* 1860–68, I: 419–21).

19. E.g., *Brennu-Njáls saga*, Ch. 100; rewarding discussion in Weber 1986.

20. Helluland's wastes: "í Hellulands hrauns óbyggðum," *Örvar-Odds saga* 1950: II.359, st. 61, *Hálfðanar saga Brönufóstra* 1950: 297; in association with Raknarr: *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar* 1950: 279, 283f.; cf. the treatment of *Glæsisvellir*, Simek 1986. In other romance treatment of retreat into barrows, conjoined with the Raknarr story (*Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, Chs 22, 26), the point is made that hoarding treasure, instead of circulating it in the cycle of reciprocity, turned men into monsters, what, to calque a Norse term, we could call 'trollification' (cf. *tryllast* used of Raknarr when he rises to attack Gestr). Cf. retreat into a barrow in the face of royal expansionism in the introductory chapters of *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*; later Egill hoards the silver given by Athelstan in compensation for Þórólfr's death and ends by burying it in the ground.

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## On the Origin of *Suomi* “Finland”

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RÉSUMÉ: *Depuis un siècle, différentes étymologies de ‘Finland’ et de ‘Suomi’ ont été proposées, mais aucune n’a reçu l’approbation générale des spécialistes. Jorma Koivulehto a publié une étymologie de ‘Suomi’ dans la revue finlandaise de linguistique Virittäjät en 1993, et nous sommes d’avis, avec bien d’autres, qu’il a résolu le problème. Son article n’a cependant été publié qu’en finnois, et notre intention est d’en faire connaître le contenu à un public plus étendu, et d’ajouter aussi des commentaires qui pourront être utiles à des non-spécialistes. Nous présentons aussi des observations complémentaires sur l’origine de ‘Finland’, et sur l’utilisation d’exonymes (noms utilisés par des étrangers) et d’endonymes (noms utilisés à l’intérieur d’une communauté).*

ABSTRACT: *For a century there have been various suggestions for the etymology both of ‘Finland’ and of ‘Suomi’, but none of these has been generally accepted by experts. Jorma Koivulehto published an etymology of ‘Suomi’ in 1993 in the Finnish linguistics journal Virittäjät, and in our opinion and in that of others, he has solved the problem. His article appears only in Finnish however; it is our purpose here to bring that material to the wider audience that it deserves, also providing some further commentary that may be useful to outsiders to the field. We also furnish some additional remarks on the origin of ‘Finland’, and on the use of exonyms (names used by outsiders) vs. endonyms (self-names, i.e., those used by a community for itself).*

The following is a presentation of and commentary on Jorma Koivulehto’s “Suomi,” which appeared in the Finnish linguistics journal *Virittäjät* in 1993. In essence what we are doing here is writing a review

article, but it is unconventional in that what we are reviewing is not a book, in fact not even an article, but a piece very modestly presented simply as an “observation” (*havainto*). Because it is presented as an “observation” and not as an article, *Virittäjä* does not include an abstract or summary in another language, normally English or German; thus the work would remain inaccessible to all who cannot read Finnish. But we feel that the result presented is sufficiently important, solving a long-standing problem, that it deserves to be brought to a much wider audience—hence our contribution here. We also present some additional background and related observations on the issues at hand.

The native name of Finland, *Suomi*, is basically known only to hockey fans, since it is written prominently on the team sweaters, and to philatelists, since it is of course displayed on the country’s stamps, before the Swedish alternative name of *Finland*. *Suomi* is the form on which the name of the country is based only in the neighbouring Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and in the German technical term *Suomi-finnisch*, which is used to differentiate Finnish from the wider *Baltic Finnic* (*Ostseefinnisch*) (the linguistic group comprising Finnish along with its closest relatives Estonian, Karelian, Livian, Ingrian, and so on).

For a century there have been all kinds of suggestions for the origin both of *Finland* and of *Suomi*, and none has been generally accepted by the experts in the field. What has been clear is that *Finland* is a Germanic designation, and that the term *Finns* referred originally to the Lapps (as in Tacitus’ *Germania*, where Tacitus uses the form *Fenni*) and was only later extended to the Finns themselves. In Norwegian the Lapps still rather recently were called *finner*. *Lapp* itself is currently becoming politically an incorrect term; the new name is their own self-designation *Sa(a)mi* (half a dozen other spellings are in use in English). Interestingly enough, *Samoyed*, the Russian name for various Uralic groups inhabiting northern parts of Siberia, appears to come from Lapp *Sāme-jennam* “Lapp-land” (not from Russian “self-eater,” which is a folk etymology). The name *Sa(a)mi* “Lapp” is identical in origin with the name of the central Finnish province of *Häme* (as in Sibelius’ home town of *Hämeenlinna*, literally “the castle of Häme,” the scenery around which inspired his famous “Finlandia”). No serious scholar now doubts the identity of *Häme* and *Saami*; both derive from an Early Proto-Baltic Finnic \*šämä, which itself is a loan from Baltic \*žemē “(flat)land(s)”; this is also found in various placenames around the Baltic, for example German *Samland* (a peninsula in the former East Prussia and now in the Russian Kaliningrad Oblast), the old Lithuanian western coastal province

and current designation of a dialect area *Žemaitic* (Latinized as *Samogitia*), and Latvian *Zemgale* (German *Semgallen*), an area south of the Dūna River. The same root is also found in Russian *земля* (*zemlja*) "land, earth."

As for the origin of *Suomi*, there have been several conjectures. One, achieving some popular currency, is that the first part of the word is the same as Finnish *suo* "swamp, bog," since after all a large portion of Finland has such bogs. But this would leave the second part of the word, *-mi*, unexplained. Any attempt to relate it to *maa* "land, earth" would fail, because the vowel correspondence (*i/e* and *aa*) is not possible. The followers of this "solution" will sometimes point out that (British) English *fen* ("marsh, swamp, bog," particularly prominent in East Anglia and deriving from Old English *fenn*, Germanic *\*fanja-*), and more directly relevant Old Norse *fen*, then also resemble *fin* in the Germanic form *Finland*. Again, the vowel correspondence (*e<a* and *i*) just doesn't work. Anyone with onomastic training approaching this problem might propose another solution. Since an extremely common means of naming one's own tribe ("endonymic ethnonym"), found around the world, is essentially a phrase something like "the people who are like us," one might be tempted to relate Finnish *sama* "same" (the Finnish form is itself a loan from Indo-European) to forms like *Saami* and *Suomi*. But this cannot work, since the first syllable vowel correspondences are totally incorrect. Another conjecture has been that *Suomi* relates somehow to *suomu* "[fish]scale." This is based on the similar appearance of the words, but the semantics doesn't work—is a bit fishy, one could say. The only way in which the semantics can be made to work a bit is by making it part of a larger picture, noting that the Germanic form *Finland* includes *fin* (Swedish *fena*), and that after all is yet another part of a fish. Both of these purported solutions, that with *suo* "swamp" and that with *suomu* "[fish]scale," are strongly folk etymological in nature. It is interesting to note that both of these (incorrect, folk etymological) "solutions" also try to note some sort of parallel between the Finnish form *Suomi* and the Germanic form *Finland*; we will return to the latter name below.

Against the easy solution of the identity between the apparently rather different *Häme* and *Saami*, the more similar-looking *Suomi* and *Saami* have resisted connection, because the correspondence between the vowels *uo* and *ā* could not hitherto be explained. This is what Jorma Koivulehto now does. Koivulehto's scenario runs roughly like this:

1. The Balts called the territory of the Early Baltic Finns with their own word for “land,” i.e., the land of X, something like later (now) in Latvian *sāmu zeme* “Finland” (literally “land of the *Sāma*”). (This landscape is of course better known through the related Russian *Novaya Zemlya*, literally “new land,” a large island—technically several narrowly separated islands—which is essentially a continuation of the Ural Mountains northwards into the Arctic Ocean.) We just do not know what the X was. Anyway, the Lapps/Finns adopted this *\*šāmā* as their own name. This shape then quite regularly yields Proto-Lapp *\*sāmā* and Finnish *hämä*-. Note that the same structure of designation is repeated with the Scandinavian land-word borrowed into (northern) Finnish as *lanta* and Lapp as *lad'de*, in that the Lapps refer to Swedes and Finns as Finnish *lanta-laiset* “(flat)landers”; there is also a cognate Lapp form. (There is additional wry humour in the fact that Finnish *lanta* means “manure” in the standard language: thus *lantalaiset* can also be interpreted as “shit-people.”)

2. Balts, or Baltic traders, got to know the Lapps and their territory and adopted the native name as *\*sāmas* (Latvian *sāms*). This would have happened around 800–600 B.C. (The earliest Baltic loans into Proto-Baltic Finnic are older than this.)

3. The same Balts extended the term *\*sāmas* also to the Baltic Finns, because the difference between the two languages (i.e., Lapp and Baltic Finnic) was not apparent or important to the outsiders. In other words, the same thing that happened with the word *Finn* (cf. Tacitus above) was repeated here.

4. The southernmost Baltic Finns (Livians, [western] Estonians, and southwestern Finns) adopted this term as a self-designation in the shape *\*sōma/\*sōme*. In other words, what happened with *Häme* was repeated—a form from Baltic was again imported as a self-designation in roughly the same geographical area. This is where Koivulehto now solves the vowel problem: in the earliest Baltic loans the source *ā* was rendered with Finnish *a(a)* (i.e., long or short *a*), whereas the later loans entered with *\*ō > uo*, obviously from a Baltic dialect that labialized the *ā* (such as, e.g., Lithuanian; note also a similar or identical change in Swedish, where, e.g., *skāl > skål*). This solution makes perfect sense, and there are other parallels, which we will leave out here. The chronology of loans typically becomes stratified like this, through slightly different sounds being used at different times in both the source language and the borrowing language. Thus, in English, the French loans *gentle*, *catch*,

*chant*, *likker/liquor*, and *saloon* are older than the later *gentile*, *chase*, *shanty*, *liqueur*, and *salon* from the same source (viz. French).

5. The term *Suomi* then survived as the name for the southwestern corner of Finland (today this geographical area is known as [English] *Finland Proper*, [Finnish] *Varsinais-Suomi*, [Swedish] *Egentliga Finland*); the rest of Finland was known as *Östland* "east land." Then later, in the historical period, *Suomi* was extended to all of Finland (necessitating the above-mentioned provincial designation with *varsinais-/egentlig* "proper"). This kind of geographical extension from one province or part of a country to the whole country is commonplace: for example, *England* (land of the Angles, a West Germanic tribe) for the whole country—including the parts inhabited by Jutes, Saxons and Frisians; Finnish *Saksa* (cf. Saxony) and French *Allemagne* (after the southwestern tribe, the Alemans—known as *Alemanni* in classical sources) for "Germany"; the name *France* itself, compared with the German state *Franken*, likewise named after one particular tribe—the Franks; and Finnish *Viro* "Estonia," after the northwestern Estonian province of *Viru*—the one closest to Finland. (As an aside, we would like to mention that the earliest Russian sources refer to Finland Proper with *Sum*, and that later a fair number of place-names of the shape *Sum*—are attested in Karelia and Ingria (also known as Ingermanland), obviously with the general meaning of "Finland" or "Finn" [Kirkinen 1984]).

6. The Balts then borrowed back the Finnish shape with *uo*: Lithuanian *suomis*, Latvian *suoms* "(Finland) Finn" (i. e., those specifically living in Finland, as opposed to for example Livians or Estonians). These terms now contrast nicely with the chronologically older forms in Latvian *sāmu zeme* and *sāmu sala* (literally "island of the Sāma") for the island off the Estonian coast known to us as *Saaremaa* (in Estonian literally "island(s)-land"; known in German as *Ösel/Ezel*), *sāmenis* "north(west) wind" (i. e., wind from Saaremaa), and Lithuanian *somenis* "northwest wind" (*o =ō*) in which the labialization of the *ā* is clearly attested.

Koivulehto has thus been able to establish, and in our minds, prove, the connection between *Suomi* and *Saami* by positing the Baltic mediation in the right directions. All the pieces fall nicely into place, not violating anything we know about the languages in question and the necessary background history and human contacts. And in fact we get further evidence about historical interaction of peoples. Once again, place-name evidence and human settlement history are shown to be closely intertwined, and a study of one is indispensable in resolving problems in the

other (for further discussion and exemplification, see Embleton 1990). Also, the proof of the final solution is in the total fit of all pieces of the puzzle—another example of “pattern explanation” (Anttila 1989).

For the layperson this kind of bandying back and forth of place-names and ethnonyms might seem confusing and unlikely. But this kind of thing is rather common, almost the norm, all around the world. *America* referred first to the area that is roughly Brazil today, *Canada* was the name of an Indian village on the St. Lawrence River, and so on. The modern Greeks also call themselves Romans (*roméiki*); the Estonians are named after a (disappeared) Baltic tribe. Finnish *Ruotsi* “Sweden” reflects the area north of Stockholm around Uppsala (*Roslagen*), which also occurs in *Russia* (the Vikings from the Roslagen area founded Russia). Finnish *ryssä* “Russian” and *Ryssänmaa* “land of the Ryssä” are extremely negative (or occasionally the opposite, viz. affectionate) and were officially banned during the Soviet period, when Finland’s relations to the USSR were so strictly regulated (exactly what came to be known disparagingly as “Finlandization”). The proper name for Russia is *Venäjä*, after the Wends (whoever they were exactly), over which the king of Sweden still rules, according to his “job specification.” And so it goes.

Furthermore, the same kind of borrowing of common nouns back and forth between languages is not that unusual. For example, Old French *soi de(s)porter* “to amuse oneself” gave English *disport*, which ended up as *sport*, and this has been borrowed back into French as *sport* (and from English into many other languages around the world too of course). Another exactly parallel example is *bar*—apparently of Celtic origin, Vulgar Latin *barra* “thick ends of bushes [collective],” used to form an obstruction or fence, via Old French eventually into English *bar*, which comes to have multiple meanings, of which the “place where alcoholic beverages are served” meaning is borrowed back into French, as indeed into many other languages around the world.

Note also the paradox typical of history and historical linguistics. Despite their huge apparent dissimilarity, it has been relatively easy for linguists to see that *Häme* and English *-chton-* (as in *autochthonous*, from Greek) are (etymologically) “identical.” The Proto-Indo-European root \*ǵh(dh)em- “earth, ground” renders the meanings “land,” “lowly,” and “man=earthling, groundling” (as in the related forms in English *-chton-* [from Greek], *humble* [from Latin], and *(bride)g(r)oom* [from Old English, where *guma* is cognate to *human*, from Latin]; these three forms

appear in Lithuanian as *žemė*, *žemas*, and *žmuo* respectively. Compared to all this, the "obvious" *Suomi* ~ *Saami* connection remained unproven because of one small sound correspondence problem, namely of *uo* (< *ō*) ~ *ā*. Koivulehto has now elegantly solved this. And in Finland, the result has been considered important enough, as well as interesting enough to a more general audience, to have been summarized in the leading national newspaper (Lyytikäinen 1994).

Now we can return to *Finland*, or rather the noun *Finn*, which we mentioned above with its original meaning "Lapp/Saami." Like *Suomi*, until now it has also remained without a convincing etymology. Martin Huld (1994) now has a new suggestion that by far surpasses the previous speculation. Apart from proper name function, *Finn* also carries the meanings "man, hero; dwarf" in the earliest Scandinavian contexts. Thus it is not unreasonable to assume that *\*finna-* reflects Proto-Indo-European *\*pes-no-* "penis," which also in Hittite *pesna-* has given "man, male" (cf. Latin *pēnis*, Greek *pēos* "penis"). The actual reconstructed stages, all of which exemplify totally regular changes, are: *\*pesno-* > *\*fezna-* > *\*fenna-* > *\*finna-*. The general semantics of the cluster fits quite well with other ethnonymic patterns. As for the meaning shift from the genitals to "man," note current Finnish (school) slang *munakas* "boy, man" (literally "with testicle[s]," from *muna* "egg; testicle"), a term quite facetious, because in the standard language *munakas* means "omelette" (i.e., "with egg[s]").

As mentioned above, hitherto the knowledge that the native Finnish name of Finland is *Suomi* has been largely restricted to hockey fans and philatelists. But a time may be coming when English speakers may need to be more aware of the endonym *Suomi*, and even have occasion to use it in preference to the exonym *Finland*. This is all part of the natural tension between the four relevant agents with any toponym, all of whom have some "rights" as far as the determination of the form of the name itself is concerned; for a full discussion, see Dorion (1993). These four agents are the original creator of the name, the inhabitants of the place named, the users of the name, and the official bodies charged with name regulation/standardization. This is a matter which has been much discussed by various United Nations working groups over the past 25 years, and although unanimity is still far off, a general tendency seems to be emerging. Exonyms would be recognized and used in certain restricted circumstances, such as in textbooks for lower grade-levels in schools, for documents only distributed locally. But for reference maps, documents intended for international usage, including for example

timetables and directories used in international communication, endonyms would be used. So far, these guidelines have only been partially followed. Some readers of this journal may for example remember that for several years Air Canada used endonyms on all the flight maps published in their inflight magazine *En Route*; thus, for example, Finland did appear as *Suomi* on those maps. Air Canada has now reverted to exonyms, because of consumer pressure. But if the United Nations working groups ever reach a consensus, it is likely to be similar to that outlined above, towards the greater international use of endonyms, in keeping with other world-wide trends towards self-determination, use of native names, etc. (cf., e.g., the use of *Saami* for "Lapp," *Inuit* for "Eskimo," *Rom* for "Gypsy"). Thus the endonym *Suomi* is likely to become significantly more well-known around the world—and maybe in preparation for this it is helpful to know a little more about its etymology.

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## The 'Heroic Age' in Ibsen and Hegel

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RÉSUMÉ: *Brian Johnston soutient la thèse que le théâtre réaliste d'Ibsen forme un cycle répliquant les thèmes particuliers à l'oeuvre de Hegel. Nous concédons que l'influence de Hegel est plus importante qu'il n'est conventionnellement reconnu. Toutefois nous sommes d'avis qu'Ibsen emprunte à l'idéologie de Hegel beaucoup moins que Johnston ne le suggère. Nous pensons plutôt qu'Ibsen s'inspire de l'analyse Hegelienne du théâtre classique dans son dessein d'intégrer l'Histoire dans la littérature moderne.*

*Ibsen expose clairement cette intention dans son article "On the Heroic Ballad and its Significance for Literature." Ceci se reflète dans le fait qu'Ibsen utilise ce que Hegel appelle 'la situation héroïque' dans laquelle le protagoniste existe dans une dimension au-delà de la société conventionnelle.*

*Cependant, le point de vue philosophique que Johnston attribue à Ibsen est en contradiction avec des questions centrales à la philosophie de Hegel, notamment le rôle de l'état, et la définition même de l'idéalisme. Ceci pose des doutes en ce qui concerne le lien entre Ibsen et Hegel tel que Johnston le décrit.*

ABSTRACT: *Brian Johnston has advanced the thesis that Ibsen's realistic plays form a single cycle, reiterating themes from Hegel. We maintain, however, that Ibsen does not draw from Hegel's ideology in the manner Johnston suggests. Rather, Ibsen employs Hegel's analysis of historical drama to lay a foundation for his own project of integrating historical materials into modern literature.*

*Ibsen articulates this project in the article "On the Heroic Ballad and its Significance for Literature." It is reflected in Ibsen's use of what Hegel calls the 'heroic situation,' in which the protagonist exists in a realm beyond conventional society.*

*However, the philosophical position which Johnston attributes to Ibsen opposes Hegel on central issues, including the role of the state and definition of idealism itself. This raises doubts that the relationship between the two was as Johnston describes it.*

In his three books, Brian Johnston has staked out a bold position in Ibsen studies. His thesis is first, that the final twelve plays of Henrik Ibsen's authorship are to be understood as a single great work, a 'cycle'; and second, that the key to understanding the relationship among these works rests in their affinities to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* by G. W. F. Hegel. In *The Ibsen Cycle* (1975), he seeks to demonstrate that the plays reiterate the themes and sequence of Hegel's work. More recently, in *Text and Supertext in Ibsen's Drama*, Johnston proposes that in composing the texts of his plays, Ibsen consciously drew upon a 'supertext,' a framework of ideology and allusion provided by German Romanticism and Hegel's philosophical idealism.

In the preface to *Text and Supertext* he asks "Whether Ibsen developed his version of this great argument because it creatively extended his tragic art, or whether his tragic art was the direct expression of his spiritual 'investment' in the argument." He concludes that although the answer is forever lost, it is finally immaterial, because "We can ... see that the two—the art and the ideology—were absolutely interdependent" (Johnston 1989: 4). But the nature of Ibsen's response to Hegelian philosophy cannot be so readily summarized. Did Ibsen, as Johnston implies, develop his drama in order to express adequately the profundity of the Hegelian system, or did he simply employ Hegelian thought, along with myriads of other influences, for his own dramatic purposes? There is a large body of evidence to support the notion that Hegel's influence primarily concerned Ibsen's technical apprenticeship as playwright. Hegel's discussions of drama, as found in *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, left a decisive mark on Ibsen the craftsman, and did so in a far clearer way than did the *Phenomenology* on Ibsen the thinker. Furthermore, the content of the idealist 'supertext' upon which Johnston contends Ibsen drew, far from being Hegelian, is at variance with Hegel's stated positions on several important issues.

In the 1850s, while working in theatres in Christiania (Oslo) and Bergen, Ibsen produced a number of critical writings. Of these the longest and most carefully thought out is entitled "Om Kæmpevisen og dens Betydning for Kunstpoesien" ["On the Heroic Ballad and its Significance for Literature"] (Ibsen 1902, 10: 350–372; Ibsen 1960–77, I: 672–684). As we shall see, this article is full of notions and even phrases taken directly from Hegel. Thirty years earlier, Hegel had delivered three lecture cycles on the nature of fine art. After his death, students compiled their class notes to produce the work we now know as the *Aesthetics*. The purpose of the lectures was to describe the development of art from

primitive times to the present, and to demonstrate the role of art in the self-revelation of Spirit. This work went on to play a decisive role in the artistic development of the Norwegian.

As is well known, Hegel's philosophical system is built up as a series of triadic structures, wherein two opposed forces meet and are resolved into a third force that preserves but supersedes or 'sublates' (*aufheben*) the other two. Hegel follows this pattern in arranging the various art forms into a hierarchy. He concludes that music is higher than sculpture, painting higher than music, and that poetry is the highest art form of all, because "speech is alone the element worthy of the expression of spirit" (Hegel 1975: 1159). Poetry is initially divided into two forms. The epic, or objective, is typified by the great narratives of Greece and India, which issue "from the national consciousness as such, where the poet has been as it were an impersonal tool for its affairs." The lyric, or subjective, on the contrary, "is the product of self-consciousness and original creativity, and therefore also the art and virtuosity of the individual author" (Hegel 1975: 1179). These two forms, in turn, find their sublation in the drama, which combines the broad sweeping perspective of the epic with the intimate focus of the lyric: "of the particular kinds of the art of speech dramatic poetry is the one which unites the objectivity of epic with the subjective character of lyric" (Hegel 1975: 1158). Hegel was particularly enamoured of Hellenic culture, so it is not surprising that he should devote particular attention to the drama.

The various art forms do not arise haphazardly; rather their development is intimately connected with nationality: "the different arts too are more or less national, connected with the natural side of a people" (Hegel 1975: 284). Therefore, drama does not arise until a people has reached a particular cultural and social level: "Drama is the product of a completely developed and organized national life. ... it presupposes as past both the primitive poetic days of the epic proper and the independent subjectivism of lyrical outpourings" (Hegel 1975: 1159).

Finally, drama is itself further divided into tragedy, comedy, and tragi-comedy, and each of these types are particularly associated with a distinct type of social organization. This is not to say that it has arisen in that social situation, but that it derives its unique characteristics from a *depiction* of that epoch. Hegel considers tragedy the highest achievement of Greek cultural life, and associates this form of drama with the 'world-situation' called the 'Heroic Age' (Hegel 1975: 1208). This age is

characterized by the absence of a state to protect life and property. Such security as exists depends "entirely on the personal strength and valour of each individual" (Hegel 1975: 185). Thus the individual is the "vehicle and sole actualization of these powers" (Hegel 1975: 194). Hegel names Hercules as the paradigm of this age, and also the heroes of the Trojan War: "Of course they too have an overlord in common, but their bond with him is likewise no previously established legal relation which would have compelled their subjection" (Hegel 1975: 186).

The 'Heroic Age' is therefore a 'world-situation' in which larger-than-life individuals emerge and seek their own ends, unrestricted by political institutions. Such a situation is the necessary ground for tragedy, Hegel argues, because "truly *tragic* action necessarily presupposes either a live conception of *individual* freedom and independence or at least an individual's determination and willingness to accept freely and on his own account the responsibility for his own act and its consequences" (Hegel 1975: 1205). A state organization mitigates this responsibility and seeks to join citizens together in a common purpose: "the position of separate individuals in the state is that they must attach themselves to this regime and its real stability, and subordinate themselves to it" (Hegel 1975: 182). Thus, while the state would seek to minimize conflicts between individuals, the unrestricted nature of the Heroic Age tends to exacerbate them. Each character lives by a distinctive moral code, and the tragedies document the various collisions among these: "In Greek tragedy . . . , the occasion for collisions is produced by the moral justification of a specific act" (Hegel 1975: 1212).

It is characteristic of all epic and tragic heroes that they are what Hegel calls 'one-sided.' Like Achilles, whose anger with Agamemnon causes him to sacrifice many Greek lives (including his comrade Patroclus), their natures or circumstances preclude them from compromising their own commitments for a larger good. It is this one-sidedness that drives the tragedy, pushing the protagonist inexorably forward to exile or death: "if the one-sidedness is to be canceled, it is the individual, since he has acted solely as this *one* 'pathos', who must be got rid of and sacrificed" (Hegel 1975: 1217).

Such sacrifice takes many forms, but Hegel delineates two paradigms that are found in a number of tragedies. The first may be called the drama of revelation. The best known example of this is Sophocles' *Oedipus* cycle, but the same patterns are found in the *Ajax* as well: "What is at issue here is the right of the wide awake consciousness,

the justification of what the man has self-consciously willed and knowingly done, as contrasted with what he was fated by the gods to do and actually did unconsciously and without having willed it" (Hegel 1975: 1214). Such dramas depict the internal growth of an individual, and examine the nature of individual responsibility.

The second type pits one against the other two acts or ways of life, each of which finds justification in an accepted system of values. Hegel illustrates this with the *Antigone*: "The chief conflict treated most beautifully by Sophocles, with Aeschylus as his predecessor, is that between the state, i.e., ethical life in its *spiritual* universality, and the family, i.e., *natural* ethical life" (Hegel 1975: 1213). In the absence of a third adjudicating force, one protagonist must bend to the other's will and be destroyed.

Of the ten dramas that Ibsen wrote preceding his international breakthrough with *Brand*, eight of them are set in medieval Norway, or are based on Norwegian folk motifs. Like many of the prominent Germanic writers of his time, Ibsen was a proponent of *Nationalromantiken*, the National Romanticism that grew from the study of folk songs and stories, such as those collected by the Brothers Grimm and their Norwegian counterparts, Asbjørnson and Moe. In Norway, followers of this movement were particularly ardent because Norway had never in modern times had complete political autonomy. Norway's royal line died out in the fourteenth century, and from that time Norwegians had been subjects first of the Danish king (till 1814), then the Swedish (till 1905). The scholars and artists who recovered the documents of Norway's past were performing not merely a historical and literary but a political service, reawakening knowledge and pride in the country's early, independent existence.

Among the proponents in this movement, the young Ibsen was in the first rank. His dramas articulated the values of stoic self-reliance that Norwegians considered particularly their own. In his article on the heroic ballad (see p. 48), Ibsen composes an apologia for such historically based writing, insisting that modern literature is enriched by contact with the myths and symbols contained in folk literature. The clear influence of Hegel is seen, both in the article's phraseology and in the nature of its arguments.

Ibsen notes that Norway shares the forms and themes of the heroic ballad with other Germanic countries. What is unique about the Norwegian versions, however, is that the ballads have been handed down

as part of a living folk tradition. They continued to be sung and embellished well into the nineteenth century, in a situation rather similar to the one Lord describes in Yugoslavia in *The Singer of Tales*. In this article, Ibsen takes several tacks in his consideration of these ballads. First, he discusses the unique role of the ballads as voice of the Norwegian people itself. Second, he discusses the ballads as source material for modern drama, comparing them with the scaldic (medieval court) poems and sagas already used by the Danish poet Oehlenschläger. Finally, he discusses the relative ages of ballad and scaldic poetry, and determines that the ballads were indigenous, and not simply translations into Norwegian.

Hegel wrote, "within poetry, folk-song is in the highest degree national and tied up with the natural side of a people's life" (Hegel 1975: 285). Ibsen seizes upon this view, stating, "The heroic ballad was not composed by any one individual; it is the sum of the poetic forces of the entire people, the fruit of its poetic talent" (Ibsen 1960-77, I: 672). Drawing the distinction from the philosopher, he says, the ballad is a product of the people's 'objectivity,' as distinct from the 'subjectivity' (Ibsen 1960-77, I: 672) of an individual poet. He follows this observation with a discussion about the natural artistic proclivities of different peoples, and specifically how 'Southern' peoples tend toward painting and sculpture, which required specialists, and even in poetry had developed the institution of the minstrel. In consequence, "the Southerner had artists to glorify him and his past; the Northerner glorified himself" (Ibsen 1960-77, I: 673). Ibsen cleverly implies the artistic inferiority of Southern peoples in the face of all empirical evidence by employing a mock Hegelian argument to the effect that the Southerners' facility in the plastic arts entails a lower level of cultural development (see Johnston 1980: 21).

As important as folk poetry was to the people as a whole, its objectivity prevented it from being presented to modern, subjective consciousness. It has vitality only as part of a living oral tradition, and that tradition is fast dying out. Even though scholars had combed the countryside finding and transcribing ballads, this was only a poor substitute: "In print, the ballad looks old and grey, indeed old-fashioned, if you will: on the lips of people, age does not concern it." However, although "[a]s folk poetry in any real sense it has virtually ceased to exist," Ibsen argues that another and happier fate awaits the ballad, for "it does hold within it the potential of some new and higher existence. The time will come when our national literature will turn to ballad poetry as

to an inexhaustible gold-mine: refined, restored to its original purity and elevated by art, it will once again take root in the people" (Ibsen 1960–77, I: 674). The modern poet can be the vehicle, not just of transcribing the letter of the ballad, but for resurrecting its spirit. In doing so the poet can articulate the spirit of the people itself (see page 683) for the modern age:

If the new is to appeal to the people, it must also in a certain sense be old. .... [I]t must be reproduced like some old family piece which we had forgotten but which we remember as soon as we set eyes upon it, because all kinds of memories are linked with it. (Ibsen 1960–77, I: 672)

This unique articulation of the spirit of the people can live, but only by incorporation into dramas that address contemporary issues or present them in the form of modern-day situations.

Different forms of ancient poetry lend themselves to different treatments; Ibsen contends that the ballad is particularly suited to drama. In his discussion comparing ballad and the saga, he notes that saga literature is completely epic. This is inappropriate for dramatic treatment, for, following Hegel, if "the poet is to create a dramatic work from this epic material, he must necessarily introduce ... a lyric element; because, as is well known, drama is a higher compound of lyric and epic" (Ibsen 1960–77: 675). In the heroic ballad, by contrast, "there are lyric elements [already] present ... and the dramatist who draws his material from the ballads does not have to subject his material to the kind of transformation necessary when it is drawn from the saga" (Ibsen 1960–77: 676).

Concerning the period in which the ballads first appeared, Ibsen argues that although the explicit subject matter of the ballads is from the Christian era, and "the poetic offshoot of Christianity, romanticism, manifests its influence" (Ibsen 1960–77, I: 676),<sup>1</sup> the central characters and situations of the ballads go back to 'heathen' times: "In many of the ballads it is the heroes and the events of the Aesir doctrine which form the actual content. ... [F]rom being gods and saga heroes, the characters have descended to being warriors and mortal knights" (Ibsen 1960–77, I: 677). The ballads therefore represent important survivals from pre-Christian times, and call forth a world quite distinct from 'romantic' Christian society. He comments, "to produce poetry, the people requires a strong and vigorous and urgent age, rich in events and in distinguished personalities" (Ibsen 1960–77, I: 675). Ibsen clearly alludes here to an era in Scandinavian cultural history that is the equivalent of Hegel's 'Heroic Age' of Greece.

It is evident that Ibsen was not only aware of Hegel, but strongly influenced by him in his conception of the origin and nature of drama.<sup>2</sup> Ibsen understood, quite apart from any philosophical commitments, that the 'Heroic situation' which Hegel had sketched out was a powerful engine for good theatre. Beginning with the earliest national dramas, Ibsen based his plays on such struggles of heroic individuals. I maintain, however, that this influence did not cease when Ibsen changed his settings to modern times. Indeed, the *nutidsdramaer*, or dramas of the present day, reflect the continuation of this Hegelian influence, and are the ultimate demonstration of Ibsen's thesis in "On the Heroic Ballad" that considerable dramatic power can be achieved by incorporating the 'world-situation' of the heroic past into the circumstances of the present.

Critics agree that the great accomplishment of Ibsen's realistic plays was to combine the immediacy of the bourgeois theatre with the resonance and depth of classical drama. The difficulty of this task is implied by Hegel himself, who states that bourgeois drama is condemned to a certain shallowness. The situation in *Antigone*, for example, cannot obtain, because in modern culture, the power of the state is much greater and the interests of the individual cannot stand on equal ground. Therefore modern drama is limited to "common domestic life, which has the honesty, worldly wisdom, and morality of its day as its substance, is portrayed in the complications of ordinary civil life, in scenes and figures drawn from the middle and lower classes" (Hegel 1975: 596). But as Ibsen moved from the historical dramas to his prose works, he refused to submit to this judgement. Though he drew on scenes of middle and lower class life, he was not content to describe the peregrinations of characters subordinate to the conditions of their society. Rather, seeking to maintain the gravity of great drama in the parlours of contemporary Christiania, Ibsen continued to draw protagonists who were the equal of their society, thus recreating the heroic situation in the modern age.

The first (and most callow) depiction we see of his modern tragic hero comes in several poems which Ibsen wrote early in his career, including "On the Heights" from 1859. This is an extended narrative concerning a young man who leaves his mother's cabin and his fiancée to go hunting in the mountains. When he arrives on the heights, however, the commitments of his daily life seem insignificant. This impression is deepened when he meets a stranger who shows him the secret of "den hule hånd" [the hollowed hand], whereby one can look upon events as having only aesthetic significance. The hero uses this technique to console himself as he sees his mother's cabin burn and his fiancée

wedded to another man. Whereupon, completely freed from social obligations, he resolves to remain in the mountains and pursue his lonely course of aesthetic experience:

Mitt lavlandsliv har jeg levet ud;  
her oppe på vidden er frihet og Gud,  
der nede famler de andre.

[My life in the low-lands has come to an end;  
Up here in the heights I find freedom and God  
The rest down below are just groping.]<sup>3</sup>

(Ibsen 1977: 371)

The poem has conventionally been interpreted autobiographically; Michael Meyer notes that at the time Ibsen was "torn between his ideals and his daily work on the one hand, and his instincts and nature on the other" (Meyer 1971: 174). There can be little doubt that this is substantially correct; Ibsen was in a period of extreme self-doubt about the direction of his career. However, the poem and its rather disagreeable protagonist may also be seen more universally as one in a long line of Ibsen characters who seek, through a variety of means, to lift themselves above the constraints of society and live heroically. In our mountaineer, as well as in many of the personalities that follow, the effort to do so reflects the characteristic that Hegel terms one-sidedness, which creates in Ibsen's dramas, as in those of his Hellenic predecessors, the ingredients for an effective dramatic situation.

The Ibsen hero most commonly matched with a figure from Greek drama is Nora Helmer. Comparisons between *A Doll's House* and Sophocles' *Antigone* go back to Ibsen's own time. The comparison seems apt, because both dramas play out the conflict of male and female laws. Errol Durbach has reviewed various feminist discussions of the two plays, and finds, however, that these approaches threaten to rob Nora of the gravity of a tragic hero (1982: 33). For example, taking her point of departure in Hegel's analysis of the play, Elaine Hoffman Baruch notes that while in *Antigone*, the drama hinges on the fact that each party is in some way justified, in *A Doll's House*, Nora alone clearly holds the sympathy of the audience (see Durbach 1992: 32). Furthermore, while *Antigone's* action issues from a divine decree concerning the sanctity of the family, Nora acts only on her own behalf. Baruch writes that Nora "has replaced Sophocles' law of the gods with the law of the self" (quoted in Durbach 1992: 32). These attempts to map Ibsen's play onto Sophocles' imply that crucial elements of what makes the latter tragic are

missing in *A Doll's House*, reducing Nora to simply “an *Antigone manquée*” (Durbach 1992: 32).

In light of this, I suggest that the type for Nora is not *Antigone*, but rather *Oedipus*. For as much as *A Doll's House* chronicles the “clash between woman’s sensibility and the [male dominated] social system” (Durbach 1992: 29), it is more profoundly a drama of revelation of the type Hegel describes.<sup>5</sup> *Oedipus* is cruelly tested by the gods; the external struggle with his fate becomes an ordeal that both humbles him and brings him to an understanding of his truest self. Likewise, Nora faces an ordeal occasioned by the mendacity of her culture—a force as crushing and inescapable as fate. The truth and greatness of her character emerges in the course of this struggle. Nora’s fidelity to self is completely appropriate here, for this dramatic type is necessarily ego-centered. The central dramatic action concerns “The antagonism between [the hero’s] consciousness and intention in his act and the later consciousness of what the act really was” (Hegel 1975: 213). Furthermore, unlike the *Antigone*, this dramatic paradigm does not demand two equal values; its very premise is that the protagonist faces an unjust opposition. *Oedipus* must take responsibility for the fact that, through no fault of his own, his conflict and marriage have become murder and incest. Likewise, Nora must come to terms with the knowledge that her effort to save her dying husband has resulted in actionable forgery.

To find the correlate to the *Antigone*, we must look to Ibsen’s last play, *When We Dead Awaken*. This drama, which depicts a love (or loveless) triangle among a famous sculptor, Rubek, his younger wife, and his former model, Irene, brings us into a full circle with “On the Heights.” The concerns, and even the geography, are the same; it is apparent that Ibsen is returning to consider the conflict of life and art. Rubek is sick at heart over his earlier rejection of Irene. At the same time, he is fully aware of his earlier motivation (Ibsen 1973: 577–578):

*Irene.* Ja, du! Jeg stillet meg helt og rundt frem for deg til beskuelse—Og aldri en eneste gang rørte du meg.

*Rubek.* Irene, forsto du ikke at mangen dag var jeg som sanseforvillet av all din deilighet... . [Men] jeg var kunstner... . Først og fremst kunstner. Og jeg gikk der syk og ville skape mitt livs store verk.

[*Irene:* I presented myself to your full view without reservation. And never once did you touch me.

*Rubek:* Irene, didn’t you understand—there were so many days that I was driven half out of my senses by your beauty... . [But] I was an artist... . First and foremost an artist. And I was overcome by sickness, wanting to create my life’s great work.]

Like *A Doll's House* and *Antigone*, *When We Dead Awaken* pits the values of women against those of men. However, it does so in a far more balanced way than *A Doll's House*. The drama develops out of Rubek's attempts to reconcile Irene's intuitive, sensual ethos with his own drive to inhabit the ethereal world of the artist. The lure and danger of both paths is equally felt. Like *Antigone*, Rubek is finally unable to rise above this dilemma, and is condemned by his 'one-sidedness' to make a choice that destroys him.

Rubek, Nora, Hedda, and the protagonist of "On the Heights" are notable for being selfish, impulsive and almost criminally oblivious of the needs of the people surrounding them. This has led some to comment that Ibsen's heroes generally deserve what they get. But the same can be said of Achilles. These characters are driven by a vision, barely glimpsed, of a new mode of human existence. Nora articulates this in her final exchange with Helmer, when she says that the only thing that could keep her in his house would be *det vidunderligste*, the greatest miracle (Ibsen 1973: 114). This phrase, like many others in subsequent plays that are similarly vague, signifies the fragile but compelling nature of the motivation which drives these individuals. The tragedy of their situation, of course, is that this miracle will not occur. They are caught between worlds, awaiting the new era that has not yet dawned, and unable to return to society and reassume the roles which they have thrown off. It is no wonder that so many of them see no alternative but death. As Hegel states:

what is superseded in the tragic denouement is only the *one-sided* particular which had not been able to adapt itself to this harmony, and now..., unable to renounce itself and its intentions, finds itself condemned to total destruction.

(Hegel 1975: 1197)

Like the Homeric heroes, they are guilty of much, and face certain defeat, but their greatness is in no way diminished by this: "it is the honour of these great characters to be culpable" (Hegel 1975: 1215).

Ibsen's heroes are alienated from society, thrown back on their own resources; they live as the Greek heroes did, outside the bounds of the state. What is significant in the case of these characters is not that they are developed from classical models, but that they are developed from a distinct interpretation of those models. Ibsen drew from Hegel's analysis of historical drama in order to lay an intellectual foundation for his own project of integrating historical materials into modern literature.<sup>5</sup> This project, which Ibsen articulates in the article "On the Heroic Ballad,"

bears fruit in Ibsen's use of the 'Heroic situation' as a structuring principle, particularly in the last twelve plays.

It is clear in "On the Heroic Ballad," however, that Ibsen refers primarily to Hegel's technical and empirical observations about what makes a drama *work*. He makes little mention of the sections in the *Aesthetics* that articulate Hegel's philosophical position. It seems evident that Ibsen assimilated what he found relevant from the lectures and put it to his own use. This is where Johnston's thesis fails. To associate Ibsen with the *Phenomenology*, Johnston must show that Ibsen's ideology closely resembles Hegel's. But there are several key issues where their positions diverge.

First, Hegel and Ibsen are diametrically opposed concerning the relationship of the state and the individual. Hegel regards the state as the presupposition of freedom, for it is necessary to have an external authority to adjudicate the conflicting claims of individuals (a strong state would, for example, have resolved Antigone's dilemma in a more satisfactory manner):

This rationality the will actualizes in the life of the state. In a state which is really articulated rationally all the laws and organizations are nothing but the realization of freedom in its essential characteristics. (Hegel 1975: 98)

Ibsen's position is more inflammatory. Johnston characterizes Ibsen as a radical who "regretted he was not around to torpedo the Ark" (Johnston 1989: 62). Johnston equates Ibsen's own position with that of his son, Sigurd (as articulated in the latter's book *Human Quintessence*),<sup>6</sup> saying that, "the end of human endeavour ... is ... heroic individualism." This is the significance, Johnston claims, of the elder Ibsen's phrase, "the third empire of spirit" (Johnston 1989: 48). Significantly, the state does not figure prominently into this scenario.

Johnston tries to explain the difference between Hegel and Ibsen by characterizing Hegel's statism as a crude stereotype:

Hegel did *not* set the State above the Individual *ultimately*: for Hegel the highest realm of reality, above that of the State, was the realm of Art, Religion and Philosophy—spiritual realities that transcended the State... (Johnston 1975: 10)

But Hegel's high regard for the state is no stereotype. Here Johnston betrays his reliance on a particular, and not widely accepted, interpretation. The position that the *Phenomenology* depicts the ultimate transcendence of the state is associated in Hegel scholarship with Rosenzweig's book *Hegel und der Staat*. The argument runs that the fact that the state is not mentioned in the final chapters of the *Phenomenology* (Art, Religion,

and Philosophy) indicates its eclipse. However, as Jean Hyppolite comments,

If in the last chapter of the section on spirit Hegel does not actually speak of the state, it is not because the state has disappeared as the supreme form of world spirit and yielded its position to a moral subject or a contemplative soul, but because in that chapter Hegel considers only the novel aspect that spirit takes on when it grasps itself as subject. (Hyppolite 1974: 329)

The irony of Johnston's position is that Hegel is primarily interested in promoting the state, which is the very stage of human development that Ibsen, as Johnston portrays him, is most eager to overcome. Johnston's protest that Hegel and Ibsen share a common vision of humanity's future is therefore unconvincing.

Secondly, Johnston emphasizes that Ibsen sought to expose the falseness of the time he was living in and reveal the profound reality behind it:

Ibsen's realist method presents us with a version of our contemporary reality which it then proceeds to subvert, revealing the falsity of its claim to truth by unmasking the deception and bringing into the dramatic action, through archetypal 'echoes,' the idea of a more adequate, possible human reality.

(Johnston 1989: 98)

Although this view is arguably Romantic and idealist, it does not necessarily express Hegelian idealism. In fact, it has more in common with the kind of dualistic Kantian idealism that Hegel specifically critiques in the *Phenomenology*. The goal of Hegelian idealism is not to tear down the curtain of appearances, but to overcome the illusion that any such curtain exists at all: "Reason is the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality; thus does idealism express its Notion" (Hegel 1977: 140).

In Johnston's interpretation, characters like Nora and Hedda inhabit a two-story universe: they are torn between the lie they live and the truth they seek. Such dualism, however, is suggestive of the 'one-sided, spurious idealism' in which "consciousness, on the one side, [is] confronted by an *in-itself*, on the other" (Hegel 1977: 142). To call Hegelian this notion of replacing a false culture with a true one is to misunderstand Hegel's technical term *aufheben*, "to sublimate." Rather than simply describing the collision of contradictory terms, sublation represents a new reality that can hold together and fully preserve the former contradictions. Hegel's practice in the *Phenomenology* is to demonstrate both the inadequacy and the necessity of all earlier stages of human culture, and to show how each stage contains all earlier versions within it. If, indeed, it is Ibsen's project "to bring into the image of his contemporary, fallen world

of appearances the great universal human drama that he sees lying behind it, obscured by it” (Johnston 1989: 39), then there is little Hegelian about it. In fact, Johnston portrays Ibsen as the kind of chronic malcontent whom Hegel satirizes in the chapter of the *Phenomenology* called “Virtue and the way of the world” (Hegel 1977: 228ff.).

Johnston’s contributions to Ibsen studies have been seminal. There is no question that Hegel’s influence on Ibsen has been generally overlooked, particularly in English language scholarship. Johnston’s critiques in *Text and Supertext* of Freudian and other ahistorical interpretations are particularly penetrating. However, I believe he has overstated his case. I suggest a more modest picture of the relationship between Ibsen and Hegel. While I agree that the final twelve plays reflect important Hegelian themes, I maintain that the philosopher’s influence is more dramaturgical than ideological. Ibsen has used Hegelian themes in the service of his own distinct ends. Johnston does not, finally, convince us that Ibsen’s art and Hegel’s ideology are ‘absolutely interdependent.’

## NOTES

1. This equation of ‘Romanticism’ with Christianity is characteristically Hegelian.
2. See language and argument similar to “On the Heroic Ballad” (Ibsen 1902, 10: 350–372; Ibsen 1960–77, I: 672–684) also in “Professor Welhaven on Paludan-Müller’s mythological poems” (Ibsen 1960–77, I: 599–600).
3. All unattributed translations are my own.
4. The same observation is made by Merold Westphal, who comments (1985: 400): “When Nora says at the end of the play that the greatest miracle of all would be that she and Helmer could live together in a true marriage she confesses that she never experienced the very family principle which defines Antigone.”
5. Durbach offers a more nuanced analysis of the two plays and is more successful in showing root similarities between them. However, even he finally admits that interpreting *A Doll’s House* as a feminist tragedy requires playing with “oxymoron and paradox” (1992:40).
6. A different but complementary account of how Ibsen learned about dramaturgy by reading Hegel is found in Bjørn Hemmer’s article “Den hegelske konfliktstrukturen” [“The Hegelian Conflict Structure”] in “Kejser og Galilæer” (Hemmer 1978: 153–159).
6. Johnston characterizes this book as the *real* “quintessence of Ibsenism,” as opposed to Shaw’s version (see Johnston 1989: 48).

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## Forms of Address in Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*

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RÉSUMÉ: *Cet article se propose d'étudier comment les personnages d'Hedda Gabler s'adressent les uns les autres, comment, grâce à l'emploi de noms et de titres, et grâce surtout aux choix qu'ils doivent faire entre "De" ("vous") et "du" ("tu"), les personnages signifient leur place dans la hiérarchie sociale et dans leurs rapports de famille. Toutefois Ibsen dépasse la simple représentation sociale. Par les mêmes procédés les personnages nous font sentir—bien souvent contre leur gré—un sous-texte puissant qui vient du passé, de l'héritage de faits et de passions qui remontent à une époque révolue. Ainsi Hedda Gabler nous touche particulièrement par la façon dont le décorum extérieur d'une caste supérieure doit faire face aux forces cachées du désordre.*

ABSTRACT: *This paper investigates Ibsen's use of address forms in Hedda Gabler, how characters in speaking situate each other in the social hierarchy and in their family relationships. Of special significance in this regard are names, titles, and especially the choices personages make between the two second-person pronouns: "De" (formal) and "du" (familiar). However, Ibsen does not confine himself to straightforward social depiction. By the same forms his characters convey—often involuntarily—a powerful subtext of the past, the heritage of earlier deeds and passions. Thus much of the impact of the play resides in the way the outward decorum of a polished gentry is challenged by lurking forces of disorder within it.*

*Hedda Gabler* presents us with one of the most sophisticated societies Ibsen depicted in his realistic dramas.<sup>1</sup> The playwright situates his action in "Tesman's villa, in the western section of the city."<sup>2</sup> While no specific town is mentioned, we can infer that the play is set in the country's capital.<sup>3</sup> West Kristiania was indeed the most fashionable part of the city, and the elegant, spacious, well-appointed locale of the action was in-

tended as a focal point of high society. The previous owner was the wife of a minister of state, "statsrådinde Falk," obviously a likely inhabitant of the capital. Whatever the case, this is the world of the settled *embeds-klasse*, the establishment caste of high-ranking civil servants, the military elite, the intelligentsia. Hedda is a general's daughter, Brack is a respected judge, and the two other significant men, Løvborg and Tesman, are university intellectuals, Tesman holding a fresh doctorate.

It is no surprise, then, that high decorum sets the tone of this society. Its members have a keen sense of what is done, and what is not done—an idea that resonates darkly throughout the drama to the very curtain line: Brack's limp reaction to Hedda's suicide: "People don't do that sort of thing." Deference is shown where it is due, particularly in the virtually universal use of the polite "De" form. Titles and other formal prefixes are respected. Brack, the character with the highest social standing, is invariably addressed as "assessor" or "herr assessor," even by long-standing friends like Jørgen Tesman and his new wife. We never learn his first name, as no one in the play can have that degree of familiarity with him. When obliged to respect decorum the characters refer to each other with the polite "herr" or "fru" coupled with the family name. Sometimes men will use the respectful vocative, "frue." Thus in public both Brack and Løvborg call Hedda alternatively "fru Tesman" and "frue". For Hedda Judge Brack is always "assessor" even in their private bantering; with a couple of significant exceptions Hedda invariably calls Eilert "herr Løvborg." When Tea Elvsted and Hedda first meet, they address each other with similar formality—"fru Elvsted," "fru Tesman."

Even in the more down-to-earth Tesman family, the hierarchical relationship between mistress and servant comes through in the way Berte and frøken Tesman address each other—"du" and "Berte" on the one hand, "De" and "frøken" on the other.

More intimacy is allowed, of course, in certain relationships. Thus the duly married Tesmans use "du" to each other; for Tesman his wife is "Hedda," and she calls him by his surname, a custom not uncommon in Ibsen's time and observed frequently in his plays.<sup>4</sup> Two old friends and colleagues like Tesman and Løvborg are on a first name basis and use "du." But these are legitimate exceptions to the dominant use of "De" coupled with the equivalent of Mr., Mrs., or Miss plus a surname. In a word, outward propriety and respectful distance is the rule.

But rules imply constraint, and constraint implies impulses to be tamed. Much of the power of *Hedda Gabler* resides in the way outward propriety is challenged by lurking forces of disorder within this polished gentry. As with so many other Ibsen plays, the chief source of turmoil is the past, the heavy heritage of earlier deeds and passions. A number of ghosts prowl about the Tesman villa, the most significant being Hedda's dislike and envy of Tea at school, her tempestuous relationship with Løvborg,<sup>5</sup> Løvborg's own dissipations, and Brack's long-standing, stealthy courtship of Hedda. Indeed, the entire action takes place under the somber gaze of Hedda's long-dead father, the "handsome older man in a general's uniform" whose portrait, Ibsen tells us in his stage directions (193), hangs over the sofa.

While we do find then a familiar Ibsen theme, *Hedda Gabler* stands out from the other realistic dramas in the role that the playwright assigns to manipulation. This is certainly true in the case of Hedda, as Robert Amundsen demonstrates in his article on the "De/du" forms in Ibsen,<sup>6</sup> but Judge Brack as well proves to be a past master. Both characters embark on a deliberate, calculated strategy, the one to destroy the bond between Tea and Løvborg and become herself Løvborg's "inspiration," the other to cuckold Tesman comfortably as a trusted house-guest.

By uniquely allusive, oblique, and fragmented dialogue Ibsen conveys masterfully the tensions provoked by intrusions of the past and the cat-and-mouse games of the present. And as with no other play, save perhaps *Ghosts*, Ibsen uses fluctuations and uncertainties in terms of address to underline these tensions. Sometimes they are intended as comic relief. Thus, we note Tesman's confusion when he meets his "old flame" (as Hedda had reminded him a moment before). Tesman calls fru Elvsted "fru Rysing"—coupling her maiden name with the prefix for a married woman—and even unmarries her later with his inadvertent "frøken Rysing" (216). This awkwardness is yet more reason for Hedda's scorn. But Hedda herself calls Tea "Tora"—a slip all the more droll since she has made much of their presumed first-name relationship at school. Even the most self-controlled of all the characters, Brack, forgets himself with his "fru Hed—fru Tesman" in the first act (234), thus betraying in public his habit of calling Hedda "fru Hedda" in private conversation.

However, shifts or resistances in modes of address convey generally speaking a serious, even sinister message, as we shall soon see. At the very outset in the expository scenes, Hedda creates a troubled atmosphere in the Tesman household. Berte, always named by the Tesmans, is for

Hedda only “pigen,” the anonymous maid (literally “girl”). Hedda flatly rejects her husband’s entreaty that she use “du” to Miss Tesman; the most she will accept is the appellation “Tante,” or “Aunt” (205). But nowhere in the course of the play does she address the aunt as anything other than “frøken Tesman.” Indeed, both Miss Tesman and her bedridden sister Rina become for Hedda nothing more than an undifferentiated pair of tedious, “eternal” aunts: “disse evige tanterne!” (228). Thus Hedda transfers her aloofness and contempt for her husband upon his well-meaning if undistinguished family and makes herself an unsettling outsider in the easy and long-standing relationships of the Tesman clan.

Address forms thus signify constantly in the play and can reveal a complex web of emotions. A particularly dramatic example occurs during the first meeting of Tea and Løvborg in Act II. During this turbulent scene in which Hedda drives a wedge between the two lovers by revealing to Løvborg Tea’s earlier visit, the lovers shift back and forth between “De” and “du,” between “Tea” and “frue,” between “Løvborg” and “herr Løvborg” as affection, doubt, anger, regret compete for dominance. In their only other meeting, however, a poignant scene of leavetaking after Eilert’s fall from grace and the loss of his manuscript, Tea and Løvborg use “du” to each other and pick up what was their earlier mode of address: “Tea,” “Løvborg.” This is the counterpart of the way the Tesmans normally speak to each other (“Hedda”—“Tesman”) and suggests therefore a quasi-married relationship—an irregular one based on love and trust standing ironically in contrast to a proper, but lifeless marriage.

The most significant and powerful effects arising from modes of address occur in scenes where Hedda is a principal interlocutor. In the first act she imposes on Tea an alien and forced intimacy; in the second she compels Løvborg to accept what is for him an equally alien and forced distance, given their past; in several scenes with Judge Brack the roles shift: he takes the initiative and she is on the defensive; finally, her calculating and scornful attitude toward her credulous husband comes out in her deliberate, discordant shifts from “Tesman” to “Jørgen” at four dramatically charged moments of the play.

When Tea Elvsted’s name first comes up, Hedda reacts with revealing scorn: “She with that irritating hair that she went around showing off” (205). This belittling comment on their school-girl relations is in harmony with what Tea herself remembers of Hedda at the beginning of their conversation in Act I; Hedda was that intimidating,

wildly impulsive girl from a higher form who threatened at one time to burn off Tea's luxuriant head of hair. Contempt and envy on one side, raw fear on the other—such was apparently the reality of their school-girl relationship. Tea also infers a considerable social distance from the general's daughter: "Our circles were so totally different," she comments (210). Hedda realizes that to draw out Tea on the subject of Løvborg she must invent a pious fiction of close friendship: "Now listen! At school we said 'du' to each other and used our first names—." Tea breaks in protesting: "No, you are surely wrong in that." Indeed, one can hardly imagine that a contemptuous and self-absorbed Hedda would have used "du" very often with anybody outside of her family. But Hedda peremptorily imposes this false and unsettling relationship on Tea: "Now you will say 'du' to me and call me Hedda" (211).

Tea represses her residual fear of Hedda and, mistaking her interests as kindness, tries to adapt to the new address forms. She makes a couple of slips—earning thereby a diminishing reproach from Hedda—"De'! Fy ["shame"], Tea!" (211)—but settles in finally to this artificial intimacy. The cat-and-mouse game has begun. As Tea becomes more and more intimidated, unsure of herself, Hedda asserts her superiority more and more confidently. Her questions become almost inquisitorial; slighting, contemptuous terms slip into her way of addressing Tea and almost from the start: "Lille Tea," ("little Tea") (241), "søde Tea" ("sweet Tea") (241) and the like.

The most telling effect comes at the end of the second act. Tea is beginning to realize that Hedda is obeying hidden motives, and with surprising frankness Hedda virtually confesses that she has resolved to engage in a struggle for domination with Tea: "For once in my life I wish to have power over one human being's destiny" (246). And in one of Hedda's rare spontaneous utterances, one of genuine poignancy, she adds: "If only you could understand how poor I am; and it's your privilege to be so rich!" But Hedda overcomes quickly and violently this momentary vulnerability to revert to her school-girl identity. "She throws her arms passionately around [Tea]," as the stage directions specify, and says: "I think I will burn your hair off anyway." Tea reacts as she did years before (without reverting to "De" however): "Let me go, let me go! I am afraid of you, Hedda!" Hedda is again in full control. She refuses to let Tea leave, and with a final, demeaning "du lille tossehode" ("you little fool") Hedda forces Tea into the dining room where tea has been served (246).

Her all-consuming jealousy shows up in the way she addresses her absent rival at the unforgettable end of Act III. While thrusting the pages of Eilert's manuscript into the fire, she whispers: "I am burning your child, Tea—your and Eilert Løvborg's child ..." (263). Løvborg himself had already likened this joint venture to a "child" and had already set the true priority: "My and Tea's book" (260). But Hedda's rage is directed at the inspirer, not the inspired or the product of the inspiration. She hopes to create in Løvborg a new heroic identity and thus bring into being with him a new offspring of sorts.

Hedda's victory over Tea turns of course into a catastrophic defeat. She does gain power over one person's destiny, but far from freeing Løvborg to become a heroic god bedecked in vine-leaves, she destroys him as he sinks into the most sordid of *demi-monde* debaucheries and even botches his suicide after Hedda's entreaty that he do it "i skønhed"—"in beauty" (263). More intolerable yet, her infanticide results in a resurrection: thanks to Løvborg's draft notes that Tea has piously kept, she and Tesman will probably be able to rewrite the lost work. And that in turn is the most galling defeat: now Tea, after having been midwife to Eilert's brilliant book, will be able to inspire the dull, plodding scholar Tesman to a great life's enterprise, however vicarious.

As the play draws to an end Hedda hovers over Tea and Tesman as they try to sort out Løvborg's jumbled notes. She no longer belittles Tea verbally; only a slightly condescending tone, coupled with her gesture in ruffling Tea's hair, reveals the old Hedda. But as they talk the "du" form and the first names now betoken a seeming equality. Yet, the tables have been turned, and Hedda's casual composure hides utter despair. Tea has escaped Hedda's mastery, and Hedda has fallen under Brack's thrall. The cat has not only lost the mouse but finds herself firmly lodged in another predator's jaws.

The scenes between Hedda and Løvborg are both the obverse of the relationship just analyzed and its continuation. Løvborg is subjugated just as Tea was, faced with a powerful, domineering personality. But Hedda stamps out a previous, genuine intimacy rather than impose a false immediate one, as she did with Tea. For it is as natural for Eilert to use "du" and "Hedda" as it was for Tea to address Hedda as "fru Tesman" with the "De" pronoun.

While the scene in Act I between Tea and Hedda takes place in comfortable privacy—Tesman is sent away to write a letter to Løvborg—Hedda's first conversation in Act II with her former admirer is hedged in

with constraint, for they talk under the steady gaze of the jealously observant Judge Brack.

Until now they have respected the highest decorum. Hedda and Eilert have been "fru Tesman" and "herr Løvborg" in a formal, often bantering conversation. But the travel album gives them the pretext for a private talk. Løvborg's first words to Hedda are charged with pent-up emotion: "Hedda—Gabler!", her full—maiden—name which he repeats in the same low tone (237). After a hissing reproach from Hedda, he realizes that he can no longer address her in that way, but he uses "du" quite naturally in the ensuing conversation until Hedda firmly forbids him that liberty as well. "If you continue to say 'du' to me, I will not talk to you" (238). From then on, Løvborg uses dutifully the "De" form, but he still calls her "Hedda" as they quietly relive their past relationship. Hedda herself uses "De" of course and generally avoids naming Løvborg in any way.

During their first meeting, however, she does refer to him once by his full name, and at a particularly dramatic moment. "Shame on you, Eilert Løvborg," upbraids Hedda. "How could you have used violence on—on your trusting comrade!" She alludes thereby to the breakup of their "kamaratskab," an intense but probably platonic relationship that Løvborg's passion threatened to turn into a true love affair, or, as Hedda puts it, bring "reality into the relationship" (240). For Hedda this was a betrayal of trust, a would-be invasion of her being. Her typically extreme reaction—comparable to wanting to set fire to Tea's hair—was to threaten to shoot him if he did not keep his distance. This trauma continues to pain her and brings her back not only to the breakup but to what she now realizes was sheer cowardice, a fear of scandal that prevented her from accepting what could have been a passionately fulfilling, committed relationship. It is this complex subtext that is brought to light in the simple "Eilert Løvborg" quoted above.

When Hedda suggests obliquely that she now regrets such cowardice, Løvborg is jubilant at the inference that she loved him after all. In his passion he slips back into earlier habits of intimacy: "Å, Hedda! Hedda Gabler! ... Du og jeg—." But Tea's arrival brings conversation back into the social arena, and not until the end of Act III will Hedda have another, final private discourse with Løvborg.

Now Eilert is in disgrace, a pariah banished from all respectable society. He has just driven Tea away in despair over his fiction of having torn his manuscript to shreds. In confidence he tells Hedda the truth,

namely that he has lost it during his drunken meanderings after Brack's party. Hedda never lets on, of course, that the papers are in her possession, and if she had any inclination to do so, Eilert's words that "Tea's whole soul was in the book" (262) would have stifled it.

Their way of addressing each other does not change, despite the dreadful reversals of fortune. Hedda is still formal, calling him "herr Løvborg." For him she remains "Hedda." They use the "De" form with apparent ease. Only at the end, the moment of final farewell, does the tone become unexpectedly solemn. *La belle dame sans merci* is sending her knight to a hero's destiny so that he may be worthy of her. "Farvel, frue," says Eilert, resorting to a form of address suggesting courtly deference—"farewell, my lady." Hedda gives him one of the pistols and exhorts him to use it.

"Og så i skønhed, Eilert Løvborg..." ("And so, in beauty").

"Farvel, Hedda Gabler."

For the second time, Hedda has used her admirer's full name, and for the same reason: an earlier image has come into her consciousness, not the disloyal comrade but the romantic hero capable of an ennobling act, a "dåd", to use her later word (272), the man who can at least die properly, even if he failed to come back with vine-leaves in his hair. Likewise Eilert returns to the past, repeating his very first words in private conversation with her. Hedda Gabler's marriage was an absurdity that never took place.

With his typical fondness for grating effects, Ibsen brings us down from these quasi-epic heights to the spectacle of Hedda's infanticide as, in a whispering trance, she slowly stuffs Løvborg's manuscript into the fire.

Hedda's complex and ambiguous relationships with Tea and Eilert tend to draw attention away from a striking feature of the drama: more pages are devoted to conversations between Hedda and Brack, the crafty magistrate, than to any other pair of characters. Indeed, the judge's ominous shadow hovers over the entire play. We infer from the start that he has been spinning his web for some time. It is he who has arranged the rental of the villa, it is he who has overseen the security that Tesman's aunt has given for the purchase of the Tesman furniture. His motivation seems suspect; one can well imagine a Balzacian plot of financial entrapment.

Also he is throughout the play our contact with external reality, that lurid outside world of drunken stag parties and *demi-monde* escapades.

Thus his role is that of the archetypal Messenger reporting periodically to us what has happened in the wings. But unlike his commiserating counterpart in Greek tragedy, Brack exults in the disasters he relates. These defeats are his triumphs as the world appears to unfold according to his plan.

Already in Act I he is at work trying to eliminate the other candidate for the coveted role as Tesman's cuckold. Aware of how easily a reformed alcoholic can fall, he insistently invites Løvborg to his bachelor party. Ironically, it is Hedda who rescues Løvborg from Brack's entreaties. She has her own plan, but will unwittingly do the judge's work for him.

Brack wears a mask of elegance and social propriety, coupled with a *recherché* youthfulness, to cover a jungle predator's nature. He reveals much of his corrupt inner life in the way he addresses his quarry, Hedda. In the presence of others she is the respected "fru Tesman" or "frue." (As noted above [p. 51], he slips only once.) In private she is mainly "fru Hedda," just as she might have been "frøken Hedda" for him before her marriage. This is Brack's cautious middle ground, avoiding both the perhaps dangerously impertinent "Hedda" and a formality that might have hindered the *rapprochement* he expects eventually. He obviously needs to pick up the same bantering, self-protective intimacy that must have marked their previous relationship. Now that Hedda is safely married he can finally realize his goal of pleasure without commitment. He tells Hedda as much, with typical indirection, as they compare marriage to a railway trip (226). He invites her to "hop out" once in a while, a bargain Hedda rejects with polite firmness. For they are kindred spirits in their aloofness, their calculating nature, their love of ironic, gossipy repartee, and their horror of genuine commitment.

Interestingly enough, while Brack judiciously shifts from "fru Tesman" to "fru Hedda" as the occasion warrants, Hedda herself makes no distinction between the private Brack and the public Brack. She has no need to do so, as she plays exactly the same role with him at all times. Her attitude is a bantering deference to a prestigious *chevalier servant* who graces her with his respectful attentions. Only the subject matter varies, rarely the tone. Thus, even in the most revealing of conversations, he is always "herr assessor" or variations thereof, never "Brack," nor even "herr Brack"—an indication of the vital social importance of titles in Ibsen's upper-class world.

On the other hand, Brack's way of addressing Hedda changes slowly and subtly as the action unfolds. As he sees himself closer and closer to his goal of having Hedda in his power, his tone becomes rather sarcastic and belittling. Such condescending terms as "lille fru Hedda" (231) slip into his speech, reminding us of course of Hedda's slighting ways of addressing Tea. Thus Ibsen underscores the difference between Hedda as a would-be manipulator and as the unwitting victim of another's guile. Even when Brack confines himself to "fru Hedda," he repeats it with unnecessary frequency and gives it an increasingly triumphant, sarcastic inflection. This is especially obvious towards the end of the play when he reveals with contained exultation Eilert's drunken conduct, his bungled suicide, and particularly the catastrophic consequences of Hedda's impulsive decision to give Eilert one of her pistols.

Indeed, Brack's mode of addressing Hedda changes suddenly and unexpectedly at that very point, and with great dramatic impact. He now exudes triumph. With Løvborg out of the way Brack is finally the "eneste hane i kurven" (257) "the only cock in the basket," to translate literally. And Hedda is so compromised that he can blackmail her into accepting the "sådant trekantet forhold" (226), the "kind of three-sided relationship," which she had so confidently rejected earlier. In answer to Hedda's question as to whether she will have to face public scandal during an inquest, Brack answers: "No, Hedda Gabler, not as long as I remain silent" (278). This use of Hedda's full maiden name reminds us of course of Løvborg's last words to Hedda, but again with a strong ironic contrast. Løvborg was the hero going to his destiny for his exalted lady of past bliss and torment; Brack is the sinister schemer for whom Hedda is both the safely wedded Hedda Tesman on the marriage train and the Hedda Gabler who will now be forced to hop off from time to time at the judge's behest.

However, true to form, Brack continues to respect her married state in public. When invited by Tesman to "look after" Hedda while he and Tea are rewriting Løvborg's book, Brack cheerily answers: "Willingly, every single evening, fru Tesman!" (279). Only, this cat-and-mouse game fails too. Looking down on Hedda's lifeless body, the astounded judge reveals his shallow nature and his fundamental inhumanity by his lame reference to social propriety, the respectable cover that was supposed to protect him in his self-indulgence. People don't kill themselves, they learn to live with "det uundgåelige," the inevitable, however distasteful.

If Brack carefully adjusts his modes of address to circumstance and design, Hedda is generally consistent in the way she talks to others. Once she has imposed "du" and first names on Tea, these forms become natural, as does her way of addressing Løvborg after her first strictures. A more notable peculiarity is that she tends not to differentiate between private and public address. We have seen that she refers to Brack in exactly the same terms whether they are *en tête-à-tête* or in a large gathering; he is always the respected "herr assessor."

One important exception, however, confirms this rule. Where we might expect unflinching regularity we find shifts in address forms that are the more dramatic and compelling for their rarity. Ironically, they concern the person she is closest to and most estranged from: her husband. For Hedda, her spouse is "Tesman," a use of the family name entirely consistent with the customs of the time. But on four specific occasions, she calls him by his given name "Jørgen."

In Ibsen's Norway this shift would normally signify a greater intimacy, a new stage in a positive process of adjustment, a growing emotional attachment. But Ibsen's ironic bent is once again evident. Nowhere do Hedda's feelings of futility and entrapment seethe more agonizingly under the surface than in these moments where "Tesman" becomes "Jørgen"; nowhere is the empty shell of their marriage more nakedly exposed.

The first instance occurs at the end of Act I. Hedda has just learned to her horror that the social life on which she had counted, the status symbols of horse and groom to which she had assumed entitlement—all this was in jeopardy because Tesman could no longer be absolutely sure of his appointment as professor. "Well," she says, "one thing I still have to cheer me up with in the meantime." "Oh, thank God for that," cries Tesman ingenuously. "And what is that Hedda?" "My pistols—Jørgen" (221). Tesman is so shocked that he fails to pick up this apparent sign of affection. Why the first name? The stage directions give a clue. As she speaks the above, Hedda "looks at him with suppressed scorn ... with cold eyes" (221). It is contempt covering distress that drives her to become seemingly more intimate, a contempt reinforced by her jarring reference to the firearms.

The next episode, in which Hedda uses "Jørgen" twice, carries even greater dramatic effect and a yet wider set of implications. In Act IV, Tesman asks his wife for Løvborg's manuscript entrusted to her earlier.

She answers coldly and directly: "I have burned it up—all of it." Beside himself, Tesman demands to know why.

Hedda ("suppressing an almost imperceptible smile"): "I did it for your sake, Jørgen" (267). She explains that she could not tolerate the idea of anyone eclipsing Tesman, especially since the latter had confessed to being envious of Løvborg's intellectual gifts. The credulous Tesman swallows the whole, lame explanation. For good measure, however, Hedda hints—very obliquely—that she is pregnant.<sup>7</sup> Tesman's elation makes Hedda lose her self-control for a moment: "Oh, this is killing me—all this is killing me! ... " But her puzzled husband's questions bring back her composure: "All this ludicrous business—Jørgen" (268). Tesman ignores the ominous first part of her reply to note with delight only the final word: "You are beginning to call me 'Jørgen'!"

Here we see again Hedda's scornful, calculating nature. Her slight smile at the beginning of this exchange seems to convey contempt in anticipation: how easy it will be to mollify such a fool! And indeed the thought of the burned manuscript becomes through Hedda's guile a vague annoyance paling before more momentous news. At the same time, though, Ibsen makes us feel Hedda's unbearable torment as it breaks momentarily through her rigid cover of decorum.

Toward the end of the play, Tesman finds himself so consumed with the project of recreating Løvborg's book that he is willing to put off his own research. He is ready to dedicate his life to it, he declares with uncharacteristic resolution. Hedda picks him up: "Du, Jørgen? Dit liv?" ("You, Jørgen? Your life?") (273). Here we sense mocking scepticism in this use of Tesman's given name; she cannot imagine a really selfless gesture on her husband's part; moreover, she realizes at the same moment that Tea has "inspired" Tesman to a lofty life's purpose, just as she had done with Løvborg, while Hedda herself, galled by her failure to ennoble Løvborg, has lost the little true influence she had on her husband.

The same blend of mockery and despair is also exemplified when, only moments before her suicide, Hedda addresses her husband for the last time by his given name. She has just learned that she is now completely in Brack's power, but she covers her desperation with a false gaiety as she chats with Tea and Jørgen:

Hedda ("suppressing an involuntary smile and mimicking Tesman's tone of voice"): "Is it going well, Jørgen? What?" (278). After receiving his cautious assurances she continues in the same vein: "No, just think!" She sees once again to what degree she is now excluded from Tesman's

life and realizes with horror how eager Brack is to begin his new role in the Tesman household, and with the unwitting connivance of the husband. Thus her use of "Jørgen" shows desperate mockery once again, a mockery the more shocking as she not only imitates Tesman's tone of voice but his verbal tics as well ("Hvad?"—"Tænk det!"), the mechanical habits that have maddened her throughout the entire play. Only a kind of ostentatious, desperate insouciance born of bitter defeat can explain her actions here.

It is noteworthy that the last time she addresses her husband she reverts to his last name: "I hear everything you are saying, Tesman." And as a final, grating effect so typical of Ibsen, Tesman's last words, as he views his wife's body with stunned disbelief, end with a favourite tic just mimicked by Hedda: "Shot herself! Shot herself in the temple! Just think!" (279).

It is obvious from the foregoing that Ibsen's minute attention to every detail in his dramas extends to something as apparently banal and dispersed as address forms. When Hedda shifts from "Tesman" to "Jørgen" it is to fulfil a conscious design by the playwright, not just a simple variation. It is in Hedda's nature to use this mode of address to signify exactly the opposite of what it would normally mean: contempt rather than growing affection. Brack's scrupulous distinctions among "fru Tesman," "fru Hedda" and "Hedda" reveal as does no other trait his stealthy, duplicitous nature hiding under his respect for outward form. Løvborg's shifts reveal his confused, tormented, easily led nature. Tea also struggles with a false situation in her relationship with Hedda. Even Tesman, the character with the greatest consistency in the way he addresses others, flounders when he sees his "old flame" fru Elvsted for the first time.

Generally speaking, what emerges cumulatively from these particularities in modes of address is the image of a society torn between the imperatives of a rigid social rule and the human drives that make the rule necessary in the first place and yet constantly subvert it. Each character deals differently with this tension. Tesman feels it the least, perhaps, for he is naive enough to equate propriety with the order of things; he even accepts the burning of the manuscript because young women act oddly once in a while (268). Tea, a self-aware and moral person, yet has the courage to break with norms and pay the price if necessary. Løvborg is beset by the very appetite for disorder that makes social restraint necessary; to understand the ironies in his life one has

only to visualize the young rake confiding his scandalous exploits to a proper but curious young girl while the respectable General Gabler sits nearby reading his paper.

As has been contended in the foregoing, Hedda and Brack make a pair set apart from the others. They are both intensely aware of decorum and the need to give it homage, outwardly at least; both talk about what is done and not done. To Hedda, however, the rule of custom is stifling and brooks no challenge; she ends her life in a proper, military-style suicide. Even permissible love—for the young Eilert, for example—could not be tolerated by her deepest nature. On the other hand, decorum for Brack, thoroughly at ease in the human labyrinth, is a convenient tool for conquest and a defense against involvement. But he too is foiled at the end, for people *do* escape the inevitable.

In brief, *Hedda Gabler* seems to illustrate what a great admirer of Ibsen, Sigmund Freud, was to assert a few decades later: that human beings pay a heavy price of discontent for what we call civilization. And one could add, extrapolating from the play, that the price is heavier for women.

## NOTES

1. The first act of *The Wild Duck*, set in Grosserer Werle's sumptuous dwelling, portrays a similar level of society. The bantering small-talk among the various smug *kammerherrer* and fru Sorby conveys the kind of drawing-room wit we might have expected around Hedda if the social life promised to her had ever materialized.

2. Henrik Ibsen. 1914. *Samlede Værker*. Kristiania og København: Gyldendalske Boghandel. VII, p. 191. All quotations are from this edition. Translations are my own.

3. In establishing the settings for his realistic dramas, Ibsen never mentions a city by name. However, the early *Love's Comedy* takes place near Drammensveien, one of the main thoroughfares of the capital. At the other end of Ibsen's career, *John Gabriel Borkman* is set in a "family estate outside the capital ("hovedstaden")." It is possible as well to imagine such plays as *A Doll's House* or *The Wild Duck* as taking place in Kristiania, although Ibsen specifies no particular city in either case—only Helmer's residence, Werle's house, Ekdal's house.

4. Significant exceptions are: Torvald and Nora in *A Doll's House*; Tomas and Katrine in *An Enemy of the People*.

5. Whether Hedda and Eilert had a physical relationship is a moot point in Ibsen scholarship. Evidence in the text—oblique as it is—seems to suggest the contrary. Hedda and Løvborg evoke their past feelings as "kamaratskab," as if they were school-mates interested in the same subjects, enjoying an easy friendship with no disturbing

physical tremors. When Hedda threatened to kill Løvborg, it was apparently because he allowed his passion to violate their platonic mood. While she may now regret not having responded, one cannot imagine someone as aloof, self-controlled and obsessed by propriety as Hedda to yield up her virginity before marriage.

6. See Amundsen 1981.

7. The question of Hedda's pregnancy looms large throughout the play but is treated with the utmost indirection. Aunt Julle obviously assumes from the first that a child is on the way and tries discreetly to get confirmation whenever possible, but Hedda vehemently changes the subject anytime there is the slightest allusion to the matter. However, Ibsen's early reference to her "loose-fitting" morning dress would seem a positive indicator.

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## Heavenward Bound: Lewerentz's Vision of Funeral Architecture

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RÉSUMÉ: *Dans l'élaboration du plan pour la Chapelle de la Résurrection au Cimetière de Woodland à Stockholm, Sigurd Lewerentz a créé une promenade pour diriger le convoi funèbre de "la salle de la mort" à "la salle de la vie." Ce mouvement unidirectionnel à travers les espaces avait l'intention de remplir les plus proches du défunt avec l'espoir du futur. Pour construire cette promenade, Lewerentz supprima l'autel de la chapelle dirigeant ainsi le convoi en sens unique, sans retour sur le chemin d'arrivée. Cette disposition ne plaisait pas à l'Église. En conséquence, Lewerentz tourna le bâtiment de 90° pour créer un parcours avec l'entrée sur le côté et la sortie par l'arrière de l'immeuble. Avec ces changements, Lewerentz a conservé l'idée de la forme comme une combinaison de rituel et d'espace.*

ABSTRACT: *In planning the Chapel of the Resurrection for the Woodland Cemetery in Stockholm, Sigurd Lewerentz tried to have the mourners move from a "Hall of Death" to a "Hall of Life." This movement through the spaces in a type of one way street was meant to leave the mourners with hope for the future. To accomplish this, Lewerentz removed the altar from the chapel so that the mourners could continue in a single direction without returning over the path they had come. This was too much for the Church, and as a result, Lewerentz was forced to rotate the church by 90° so as to form a route which would enter the chapel at the side and leave by the rear. In this way, Lewerentz was able to retain the idea that form is a combination of ritual and space.*

Sigurd Lewerentz (1885-1975), one of Sweden's most prominent modern architects, devoted a relatively large amount of his time to the layout of cemeteries and the design of crematoria. His first project in this regard

was in 1911 when he worked together with Torsten Stubelius on a proposal for a crematorium in Helsingborg. This design was to be the ideal that he was to pursue for much of his life. It demonstrated two principles: first, a rational attitude towards life and death; and, secondly, a growing concern for the urban situation of the working class and for migrants to the city. The aspirations of the new city dwellers, though not as grand as those of upper class society, were equally important to Lewerentz, as can be seen by the fact that he, together with Stubelius, had also designed housing schemes for the working class.

While nineteenth century urbanization had all but destroyed the natural resources of the city, the landscape outside the cities gained in importance. Painters (e.g., Richard Berg) and poets (primarily Verner von Heidenstam) of this period strove to deepen "the organic affinity between man and the land he grew up on." (Wrede 1980: 23) This artistic movement is generally known as "National Romanticism." It had an influence on Scandinavian architecture; and prominent architects, such as Isak Gustav Clason (1856–1930) and his students Ragnar Östberg (1866–1945) and Carl Westman (1866–1936), introduced the National Romantic revival in architecture (see Wrede 1980: 1–26). The art of the period gradually turned "to capture the lyrical soul of the landscape, to focus on the totality and its emotional impact rather than on realistic detail." (Wrede 1980: 24) This direction could be termed "Romantic Naturalism" and it is this, rather than National Romanticism, which determined the views of Sigurd Lewerentz and his later collaborator Erik Gunnar Asplund—specifically their view on funeral architecture; specifically since one aspect of the art and literature of Romantic Naturalism used landscape to suggest a possible transformation from death to the life hereafter.

Also, in the late nineteenth century problems associated with urbanization pressed architects to deal with questions of public hygiene and quite aptly therefore, a new form of architecture in Scandinavia arose, nicknamed "The Sanitary Aesthetic." It is not surprising that one of the natural components of this architectural movement was a concern with graveyards—a concern which had been growing in the 1800s throughout Europe. Not only the extensive space cemeteries took up within the confines of growing cities, but also the hazard they posed to people's health, created the need for a new form of graveyard. One searched, therefore, for better soil conditions and a more rational placement of the graveyard within the urban context. In Sweden, the architectural response to this need for moving graveyards from the inner to the outer city was marked

by new attitudes towards the regenerative qualities of the landscape as well as a concern for alternative forms of burial and the overall aesthetic unity necessary for a graveyard serving people from different backgrounds.

Included in the concern over graveyards was the introduction of crematoria which had seen their beginning in Scandinavia in the 1880s. The leading light within the Cremation Society Sweden was Gustav Schlyter. In 1911, he not only held the position of General Secretary for the Cremation Society, but he formulated as well many of the principles which changed the form of funeral architecture. He was also quite aggressive in assembling the talent and the bureaucracy necessary to realize his ideals. Even before the 1911 proposal for the Helsingborg crematorium, Schlyter had had contact with Stubelius (Lewerentz's coproposer of the Helsingborg project); the latter had documented his intention regarding the question of crematoria in *Svensk arkitektur* [*The Swedish Journal of Architecture*], published from 1908-1924. Here he had commented on a book by Georg Hannig (a director of cemeteries in Stettin/Szczecin, Germany, now Poland) (see Hannig 1908; as mentioned in Johnsson 1964: 122) about how the aesthetics of church landscapes had led to a new perception of a more coherent visual order in the natural landscape. This idea, in time, was reflected in an understanding of the natural landscape among Swedish architects in general.

When in 1911, the city of Helsingborg was in need of a new and larger burial ground, Schlyter sought out Ragnar Östberg, who had just completed the design for the Stockholm City Hall, to draw up proposals for a crematorium. Schlyter's choice may have been motivated by Ragnar Östberg's use of the national romantic style of architecture, but it may equally well have been motivated by a political gesture in favour of a leading architect of the day.

Schlyter had worked together with people such as Nobel Prize Laureate Maurice Maeterlinck on the program for the Helsingborg crematorium—a project conceived according to an idea which was paraphrased as: "towards death ... towards life." And even though Schlyter had asked Ragnar Östberg to design a proposal for the Helsingborg crematorium, he found many more of his ideas expressed in a proposal offered by Stubelius and Lewerentz. Their proposal included both a "Hall of Death" and a "Hall of Life" (Illustration 1). The courtyard, which Lewerentz chose to call the "Hall of Life," terminated in a view across the channel from Sweden to Denmark. This example of a controlled view from the

"Hall of Life" continued to be a part of Lewerentz's idea about landscape in the later important Woodland Cemetery project.

After the Helsingborg proposal, Lewerentz's second involvement with funeral architecture came in 1914, when he built a model crematorium in Helsingborg as part of the Baltic Exhibition (Johnsson 1964: 120). It was sponsored by the Cremation Society of Sweden not as a functioning crematorium, but as a display of a design for crematoria in Sweden.<sup>1</sup> It was at this exhibition that Erik Gunnar Asplund, a former classmate of Lewerentz at the Klara School in 1910-11, is said to have proposed that they work together on a competition which had been announced that year for the Woodland Cemetery located on the southern outskirts of Stockholm (Johansson 1982: 26). The city of Stockholm had responded to pressures to locate graveyard space outside the city core by buying this 75 hectare piece of land in Enskede. It was just south of the Sandborgs Cemetery, established in 1895. The major criteria which had determined the purchase had been: long term planning for green sites, good soil conditions and accessibility by street-car. Nothing could be found to the north of Stockholm and the site in Enskede to the south seemed best for what was to become the Woodland Cemetery. The entry in the competition by Lewerentz and Asplund received the first prize and in 1915 they were awarded the commission.

The program for the competition had been formulated by, among others, K. G. Hellström of the Stockholm Church Council, who, in turn, had been in direct contact with Stubelius about the location of the cemetery. As previously noted, Stubelius had for his part been influenced by Georg Hannig's book on the aesthetics of church landscape. At the Baltic Exhibition in Malmö, Hannig had planned an urn landscape which Lewerentz and Asplund must have seen. (Hannig was also one of the judges of the Woodland competition.) Ulf G. Johnsson suggests that the Helsingborg drawings which Lewerentz and Stubelius had presented at the Baltic Exhibition influenced the formation of the plans for the Woodland Cemetery (Johnsson 1964: 122). In Asplund's and Lewerentz's documentation which accompanied the competition entry, it is clear that Schlyter's ideas were being put into architectural form and that it was the constant modification of the ideas of a Hall of Death and a Hall of Life which appear to have guided the creation of the various chapels in the Woodland Cemetery over the span of years from 1915-34 (Johansson 1982: 26). During this period, Asplund and Lewerentz were to work, sometimes together, sometimes apart, on various parts of the Woodland project. The largest problem seems to have been set by the size of the

project, much of which was heavily wooded. Most early criticism of the winning scheme was directed towards the need to create openings in the forest so that the public would not feel intimidated by the 'gloomy' surroundings. To that end, both architects worked on a variety of site plans with the buildings being ordered in a formal and classical arrangement. Bengt O. H. Johansson (1982: 26) places much weight on a sketch (which Lewerentz, in an interview in 1961, admitted to have been his) of a cross leaning away from a path which is bordered by graves on the sides and which curves out of view ["The Way of the Cross," Illustration 2]. The lack of a clear geometric position for the cross in the landscape appears to lead one into an unknown landscape. The leaning cross expresses a sense of searching in the landscape which seems to be very much evident in the sketchy quality of Lewerentz's drawings.<sup>2</sup>

The landscape as a theme for an architectural setting was constantly being transformed throughout the evolution of the Woodland project from a dark evergreen forest to an open and architecturally controlled landscape. After a general reworking of the overall site plan in 1917 the first part of the project was a smaller chapel, south of the proposed main building. This smaller Woodland Chapel was designed by Asplund and built between 1918 and 1920. At that time Lewerentz undertook the task of designing the portico to the cemetery and the larger landscape layout in principle. Next, it was Lewerentz's turn to design the Chapel of the Resurrection at the southern end of the site and it was here that Lewerentz ran into trouble with the Church. The architect's idea was that of a one-way procession through the chapel (the Hall of Death), emerging out the opposite end into a natural setting (the metaphoric Hall of Life). This proposal met with opposition from the Church authorities, for it implied that in order for a procession to proceed through the church without turning back the altar had to be removed—which was more than Archbishop Nathan Söderblom and the Church could allow. In spite of the Church's dogmatism, Lewerentz began to explore ways around the Church—both literally and figuratively. In fact, the elegance of his final solution for the Chapel of Resurrection seems to lie in one of Scandinavia's more admirable qualities: compromise.

As time went on, the landscape of the Woodland site changed, partially by the removal of the trees in its centre. These changes had suggested to the architects a whole new way of looking at the site—namely, as a landscape in which buildings could be sited and from which views to the landscape would become part of the architecture. This, in turn may have contributed to changes in the idea of a Hall of Death and a

Hall of Life, both of which had been proposed as buildings with courtyards—similar to the courtyard of the Helsingborg scheme. As Håkon Ahlberg, Asplund's friend and colleague, suggests, the architecture of death should not bear down on one, should not oppress: "It is not preaching that one needs in the dark house of farewell," but "the tranquillity and reconciliation" (cited in Ahlin 1985: 77), that peace which passeth all understanding. That peace began to take its shape in the newly formed landscape rather than in the courtyard with a view to the landscape.

In classical Greece, it was thought that through cremation "the dissolution of the body provided the means for the emancipation of the soul" and thereby the tranquility of which Ahlberg speaks. (Irion 1968: 6) As a more practical aspect, cremation also made ashes of the body transportable in the case where a soldier died on foreign soil. In both classical and Nordic cultures, there seems to be an idea of purging impurities by means of fire (Wrede 1980: 204). While it was probably the nineteenth century Romanticism which created the Nordic myth of cremation, there is archaeological evidence that in the first centuries A.D., cremation spread throughout the North by way of the Roman influence. With the rise of Christianity, little by little, due to the Christian idea of preserving the body for the resurrection, cremation fell into disuse and graves were marked where bodies were buried, and over time, grave markers became larger and more imposing.

The movement for cremation gained momentum first in France as a result of the Revolution and its anti-Church stance. In addition, the population began to implode on cities like Paris, leaving less and less space for the dead.<sup>3</sup> Opposition to the movement for crematoria came from the Church which was, however, more concerned with state intervention than with the doctrine concerning burial. This doctrine argued that the body should not be destroyed because it had been "the living temple of God, the instrument of heavenly virtue, sanctified so often by the sacraments." (Irion 1968: 79) This stance by the Church was eventually to be modified by the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) which thereafter permitted cremation "for reasons of health, economy, or of public or private welfare." (Irion 1968: 83) The interest in cremation in Scandinavia, as Bengt O. H. Johansson states in his article, "Skogskyrkogården i Enskede," came not only out of a concern for health but also through a romantic view of nature—albeit including the use of neo-classical buildings. Of influence on the building style of Scandinavian crematoria were those in Germany, notably the crematorium built in

Gotha in 1878 and the one built in Heidelberg in 1891. Both of these crematoria were built as classical temples rather than churches, and both of them were located within city limits.

The trend in Scandinavia, however, was to build crematoria outside of the city limits on land where the uncultivated form of the landscape supported ideals of Romantic Naturalism. And, although buildings were often developed in the style of classical architecture, there was less emphasis on the monumentality of the building in the landscape and more on making the building complimentary to the landscape. Nonetheless, it is important to understand that Lewerentz's derivations for the landscape came from Greek and Roman models. His attempts to manipulate the landscape were to control the focus of attention and a particular type of landscape rather than to leave the form of the landscape merely up to chance. The landscape was therefore always separate from the building and outside the building (with one exception—Valdemarsvik, where he covered the interior of a chapel with pine boughs [Ahlin 1985: 85]). The idea of an open landscape of gravestones was one in which the focus was brought to bear on the crematorium; in other words, in the treatment of the crematorium, a main concern was for an open landscape of gravestones. The overall effect of the crematorium was therefore centrifugal rather than centripetal and therefore independent of the periphery. The chapel was a landscape within a landscape.

While Asplund and Lewerentz had been influenced by the German examples of cremation, less than a decade before this time there had been (as we mentioned earlier in this paper) a movement in painting, theatre, music and the arts towards a recognition of the indigenous qualities of the Scandinavian landscape. Also, in the late 19th Century, there was an abundance of titles dealing with both death and nature. For instance in 1890 we have Knut Hamsun's *Hunger* (for this and the following references see *Dreams of a Summer Night* 1986: 314–317) while three years later we have the music of Jean Sibelius's *Swan of Tuonela*, and again in 1894 Knut Hamsun's *Pan*, in 1896 Edvard Munch's *The Scream* and *The Dead Mother*, and in 1898 Eino Leino's painting *Swan of Death*, followed by August Strindberg's *The Dance of Death* in 1901 and Henrik Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*, in 1899.

From Strindberg's *Dance of Death*, we have the Captain's: "Perhaps when death comes life begins" (Strindberg, trans. by M. Meyer, 1964: 109) and "... I have understood the act of living to be a question of blotting out the past." (Strindberg, trans. by M. Meyer, 1964: 102) In Michael Meyer's preface to *A Dream Play* there is a quotation from a

letter by Strindberg to Carl Larsson, "Life becomes more and more dreamlike and inexplicable to me. Perhaps death really is the awakening." (Strindberg, trans. by M. Meyer, 1964: 169) This last statement I find particularly interesting because it seems to reflect a Scandinavian attitude towards death in the period during which Lewerentz worked. Scholars, such as Ulf G. Johnsson, have used Arnold Böcklin's painting: *Island of the Dead* (1880) as an example of art which had direct influence on the architects of the late 19th century (Johnsson 1964: 120). For me, Böcklin's painting *The Sacred Wood*, painted in 1882 (*Dreams of a Summer Night* 1986: 43), with its pantheistic setting and its worship at the altar of fire, is even more pertinent to Lewerentz's work—this all the more when one considers that Lewerentz spent 1908-1910 in Germany and would most certainly have been introduced to Böcklin's work.

While at the same time, we must acknowledge the references to Italian landscapes with rows of cypress trees which appear in Lewerentz's sketches from his archaeological travel in Italy, the Italian landscape becomes modified by the Scandinavian setting.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps a further parallel between art and architecture can be seen in Lewerentz's sketches for a cemetery at Karlstad (Ahlin 1985: 61), if compared with Akseli Gallen-Kallela's painting *Waterfall at Mäntykoski*, 1892-94 (*Dreams of a Summer Night* 1986: 107) where the five strings of a musical instrument are stretched through the waterfall to magnify its acoustical qualities, and where the romantic ideal of the landscape may be seen as a regenerator of life. Although the connection with the *Waterfall at Mäntykoski* is tenuous, there is nevertheless attention paid to acoustical detail in Lewerentz's Helsingborg chapel. Here the Hall of Death and the Hall of Life are segregated by a staircase, above which the choir was placed so that the music would float out over the congregation. In other words, the music was of primary importance, and the choir was not to be a spectacle unto itself. This same location for the choir appears again ten years later in the Chapel of the Resurrection at the Woodland Cemetery.

Lewerentz strove for an amalgamation of the sentiments of the Romantic Naturalists with his own appreciation of classical architecture when he adopted the style of German temple crematoria. These temples, although lacking the altar found in the Swedish Lutheran church, were nonetheless places of involvement both with the death of the body and with the life of the spirit of the deceased. Schlyter saw cremation as a cleansing action of fire and as a return to nature (Johansson 1961). This idea is ritualized by Lewerentz, albeit within the framework of a classical

building, first in Helsingborg and later in the Chapel of the Resurrection in Stockholm—where now both buildings have altars. Yet, it was most of all the procession of the mourners from a state of mourning to a state of recovery which drove his designs for crematoria.

The idea of a ritual movement from a Hall of Death to a Hall of Life performing a key role in the way people accommodate death was practised in Småland, that part of Sweden which was first Christianized and yet held on to its old pagan customs outside the churchyard. For the burial of Elin Wägner (1882–1949)<sup>5</sup> the coffin was first placed within a circle of spruce trees outside of Flory Gate's house in the heart of Småland. From there the coffin was carried to the church along a road whose borders were lined with young spruce trees with their tops broken and bent over in the direction of the church so that the spirit of the deceased would meet barbs if it tried to find its way back to its terrestrial home (source: Mrs. Flory Gate, Rösås, Lamnhult, Sweden).

Lewerentz was probably unaware of these customs still practised in Småland. Yet, he tried in a way to reintroduce similar pagan customs by suggesting that in the Church of Resurrection, the procession should continue through the enclosed church to the landscape which had become the Hall of Life. Here, however, as mentioned earlier in this paper, he ran into opposition from the Church.

The people of Kronebergs Län in Småland made their compromise by avoiding pagan ways within the churchyard. Lewerentz, on the other hand, was less concerned with Christian taboos and more concerned with the classical ways of treating spaces, as previously mentioned, in the German temples for cremation. His confrontation with the Church brought about a compromise. He changed the orientation of the chapel from a north/south axis to an east/west axis. The procession still came from the north to a portico, entered a low ceilinged hall and turned at right angles eastward to the Hall of Death where the formal ceremony was held. After the ceremony, the mourners were to turn around and leave by the west wall to the Hall of Life (the natural landscape). In this way, Lewerentz was able to avoid having the mourners go back over the steps which they had taken to enter the chapel; he let them proceed onwards, purged by the ceremony and revived by the landscape. Lewerentz was concerned with the physical route of the people as an ideal, a way of facing death and the life after death, or, as Strindberg would say, "blotting out the past." In contrast, the people of Kroneberg's Län were concerned with preventing the return of the soul of the deceased to the warmth of the hearth. Lewerentz compromised by

keeping the altar and by turning the axis of the church towards the east while still keeping the sequence of a ritual movement from a Hall of Death to a Hall of Life as a sequence in which the mourner did not have to leave via the main entrance to the building. Here I believe is the start of a compromise with the Church for the sake of urban man. Lewerentz, by respecting the Church and yet guiding the procession through the spaces, was able to combine Christianity and nature worship.

Although Asplund and Lewerentz worked together on the Woodland Cemetery for a long period of time, I find subtle differences in their attitude toward Schlyter's program. Both men seem to accept the fact that there is likely to be a feeling of distress among the mourners concerning the disposal of the body. In the case of Asplund's Woodland Chapel the almost architecturally Gothic effect of light from above makes the ceremony room a Hall of Life while the low ceiling of the portico has the effect of a Hall of Death. Asplund makes the mourners return to the portico before moving into the landscape of deciduous trees. Lewerentz, on the other hand, seems to respect a Gothic quality of light, albeit in classical garb, while making the ritual of going from the Hall of Death to the Hall of Life more discreet and purposeful. Asplund orients his building according to the slope of the ground for functional reasons while Lewerentz appears to orient his building to the landscape for the effect demanded by a ritual of renewal.

The more Lewerentz developed his ideas the more his buildings seemed to take on the quality of the landscape and yet, not the qualities of a manicured French, English or Italian garden. Possibly the influence on Lewerentz by Camillo Sitte's book on planning (see Sitte 1901), a book which emphasized the picturesque streets of medieval cities, was substantial (as mentioned in Johansson 1961). In medieval cities the streets disappear around corners, much as they do in Lewerentz's sketch "The Way of the Cross" which was more akin to the Nordic mystery of nature than to Renaissance models of clarity.

In the final site plans for the Woodland Cemetery, the two architects perceived a modified surrounding which opened up to a view of the landscape in which the main chapel was no longer to stand on the highest point of land but to stand on the eastern side of the main axis. The effect at the Woodland Cemetery today of the slow rising knoll with the stubbed off cross to the side of the knoll lives more powerfully in one's memory than a symmetrically arranged graveyard filled with large monumental stones. It has the effect of drawing one on to discover more about the surroundings; at the same time, it is reminiscent of the sketch

mentioned earlier; the landscape is master, and the buildings its complement. When one experiences Lewerentz's later buildings, one sees them less as a pristine classical ideal and more as a sum of a series of experiences gained by moving through the buildings. The later churches seem to be, in fact, the "Way of the Cross." In the Resurrection Chapel the aesthetic of the building is strict, the landscape yielding. It isn't until the churches at Björkhagen (1956) and Klippan (1963) that the primitive rough materials together with bold moves show an architecture of mysticism. In Björkhagen and Klippan, the buildings are almost troll-like, as if they were a part of Johan Bauer's Saga world.<sup>6</sup> The structural steel in Klippan is so intuitive it is almost childlike, and the lighting so dim that you almost have to feel your way around the chapel (as though the landscape of a Swedish forest had taken over the architecture). The rituals enliven an almost pre-Christian grotto-like space.

In conclusion, 'compromise' is not a word that would appear compatible with Sigurd Lewerentz, but his solutions accommodate both the material needs of the new city dwellers and their needs for spiritual orientation at the time of death. This was a compromise between a building devoted to Christian dogma and a building developed as a sequence of architectural experiences of natural vitality. Indeed, through the idea of natural regeneration in a refined landscape we see the architectural parallel to a sequence of spaces leading to a ritual renewal of life. In finding a way around the confines of Church dogma, Lewerentz brought his buildings even closer to the common man and to the Scandinavian landscape which was itself a modification of nature.

#### NOTES

1. Malmö built its first crematorium not until 1931; by that time, six others had been built.

2. To my mind, there appears an uncertainty in the sketch which implies that the landscape is more than one can capture, at least in relation to the idea of death and the path we must tread. The discovery of the landscape as a mysterious part of the total composition seems to have gained greater significance after Lewerentz's work on the northern part of the site.

3. The movement to cremate was stopped temporarily by Napoleon as first Consul of France in 1804.

4. Lewerentz made his long trip to Italy in 1909. From this trip he imported the 'Italian' landscape into Sweden. He saw the landscape as a series of archeological layers.

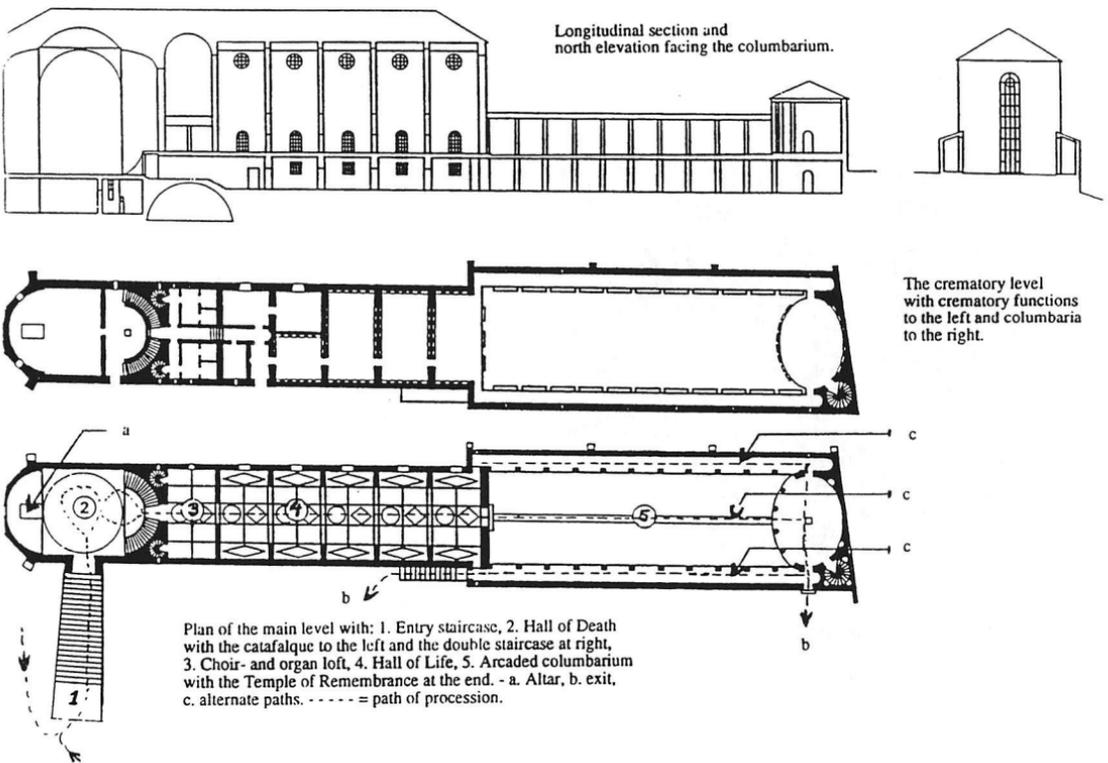
5. Elin Wägner is the author of *Tusen år i Småland* [*A Thousand Years in Småland*] (Stockholm: Wahlström and Widstrand, 1939), many novels and other works.

6. This refers to the work: Elsa Olenius, *John Bauers sagovärld: en vandring bland tomtar och troll, riddare och prinsessor, tillsammans med några av våra framtida sagodiktare* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1966).

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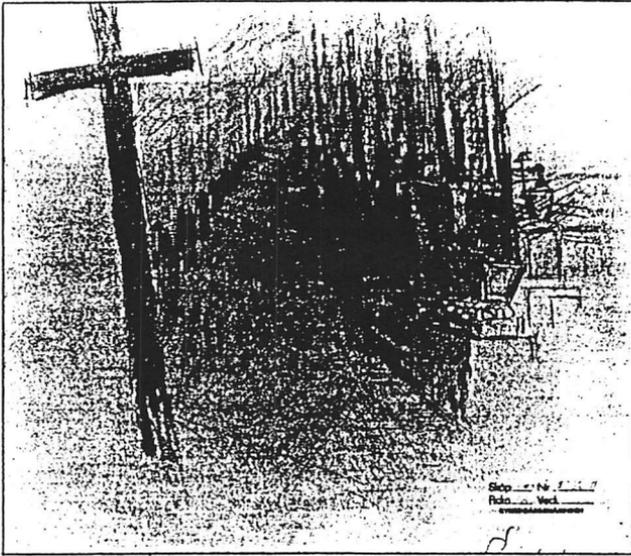
Illustration I



The Crematory Chapel in Bergäiden, Helsingborg exhibited at the Baltic Exhibition in Malmö by Leverenz and Stubelius in 1914.

(Source: Janne Ahlin, *Sigurd Leverenz, Architect, 1885–1975*, First English edition, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, Page 37; permission to reprint given by Janne Ahlin.)

*Illustration 2*



Study of grave on "The Way of the Cross."

Pencil on illustration board by Sigurd Lewerentz.

(Source: Janne Ahlin. *Sigurd Lewerentz, Architect, 1885-1975*. First English edition. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Page 40; permission to reprint given by Janne Ahlin. )

## Four Images in Bergman: Representation as Liminality and Transgression

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RÉSUMÉ: *Le gros plan d'un visage féminin inversé, fixant la caméra, apparaît au moins à quatre reprises dans trois films d'Ingmar Bergman, Tystnaden (Le silence, 1963), Persona (1969) et Viskningar och rop (Cris et chuchotements, 1972). Dans cet essai, je démontre que l'image médiatise des rapports tels que le semblable et le dissemblable, le familier et l'étranger, l'incarnation et la désincarnation, particulièrement en regard de la sexualité et la mort; toutes deux mises de l'avant comme centre du déroulement narratif de ces films. Par conséquent, l'image sert à la représentation de l'oscillation liminale (telle que définie par l'anthropologue Victor Turner) entre limites et transgressions.*

ABSTRACT: *A close-up image of a woman's face, upside down, looking straight into the camera, occurs at least four times in three Ingmar Bergman films, Tystnaden (The Silence, 1963), Persona (1966), and Viskningar och rop (Cries and Whispers, 1972). In this essay I claim that the image mediates such aspects as like/unlike, familiar/alien, body/disembodied, particularly in relation to sex and death, both explicitly posited as at the heart of the narrative movement of these films. Thus, the image functions as the representation of the liminal oscillation (as defined by the anthropologist Victor Turner) between boundaries and transgressions.*

### I

I am haunted by four images:

(1) in *Viskningar och rop* (*Cries and Whispers*, 1972), during the terrifying death scene, a shot from behind the head of the bed, down along the length of Agnes's body; her head cranes backward, and looks at us upside down as she screams;

(2) in *Persona* (1966), in the frame narrative in the morgue, after all the shots of the still bodies, an upside down shot of an old woman's face; as the telephone rings, she opens her eyes;

(3) in the same film, after the violent confrontation between Alma and Elisabet in which Alma has threatened to throw boiling water at Elisabet, and then asks her for forgiveness, there is a shot of Alma, horizontal, on her bed, her torso tensing repeatedly, and then, from the head of the bed, a shot of her head upside down shaking repeatedly sideways until it stops and she looks at us directly;

(4) in *Tystnaden* (*The Silence*, 1963), there is a scene of Ester alone on her bed, putting her hand inside her pyjama jacket; as the camera moves back to behind the head of the bed, she puts her hand down between her legs; and at the moment of intense feeling cranes her head back, and looks straight at us, upside down.

My question then is this: these images are obviously so similar, in their representation of the upside down face, that they can be said to constitute a cluster; but does this cluster constitute a theme, a motif, a metaphor, a myth, a personal obsession, or is it simply a stylistic quirk? And in asking this question I want to be concerned with not so much what the image means but what went into its making. Or in the words of Jean-Luc Godard, not what the image means, but what it is that means the image (Godard 23).<sup>1</sup>

## II

Let us begin with the simplest level, that of content. The first image records the intensity of the moment of suffering and death of Agnes. What is striking here, however, is the specific camera angle. Agnes's bed stands in the middle of her bedroom with the headboard against the wall. To shoot down on her face as the scene indicates, Bergman has had to remove the wall and dismantle the bed. The level of artifice seems high, but then, the scene requires a strong effect.

In the second scene from *Persona* the death motif is again dominant; the face appears in a morgue. But the morgue sequence is, above all, significant in providing the so-called 'frame' for the story of the nurse and the actress. The face of the woman 'awakened' by the telephone, is followed by a shot of the young boy also being awakened by the phone, and eventually the giant projected image of the two women. The shot of the woman is thus associated with the birth of narrative, metonymically with the idea of incarnation.

In the third scene, Alma is defending herself against the feeling that her ordinary common sense 'nurse' self is being absorbed by that of the actress. In the scene that follows, Elisabet Vogler's husband addresses her as his wife and makes love to her, despite her protestations that she is not the one he thinks she is. What is stressed in this sequence is the illusory nature of identity, and its deliberate construction in the narratives of personal interactions.

In the fourth scene, the image is associated with the sexuality of Ester's masturbatory orgasm. Yet that sexuality is defined as incestuous in nature, towards her father, her sister, her self—a breaking out of forces that she cannot control. In this context we may also wish to remember that in *Viskningar och rop* Agnes's illness, like that of her predecessor in Strindberg's *Spöksonaten* (*The Ghost Sonata*), is cancer of the womb, another emphasis on the theme of sexuality and its denial.

In short, on the level of content, these images emphasize death, sexuality, the dissolution of the self, and narrative; or better yet, perhaps, death and sexuality and their inscription in narrative. Simply put, if desire is what propels a narrative forward, death is its conclusion, and the conclusion of the narrative is itself a kind of death, the end of desire; death is the proper summing up of all that desire has driven before it.<sup>2</sup>

Walter Benjamin, in his essay "The Storyteller," has discussed the notion that the meaning of a man's life is revealed only in his death, concluding that in narrative, death provides the very 'authority' of the tale; it is the sanction of everything that the storyteller can tell. Witness the deathbed scene in the nineteenth-century novel "as a key moment of summing-up and transmission" (Brooks 94). At the same time, as we all know, it is no accident that the male orgasm is known as *la petite mort* and that the word *die* in English poetic diction is synonymous with the orgasm, male and female. Death then is the end of desire, that which it moves towards in a satisfactory climax.

In *Persona* the narrative is visibly, concretely bracketed by death, by the scenes set in the morgue; and the awakening of the upside down woman's face is the signal of the birth of the kind of desire that will drive the narrative: the phone rings; why is it ringing? who is calling? But inside the narrative itself, ironically, the situation is reversed; the nurse tells narratives (about desire) that signal the death of her established self definition. The most significant of her narratives is the confession, in which she describes unexpectedly having sex on a beach with a teenage boy she had never met before. Even more significantly, she emphasizes

the inexplicable and extraordinary power of her orgasm; and when she returns to her fiancé, they have better sex than they have ever had before. The result is an abortion. Thus, the narrative that drives her to a climax is one that effectively challenges and destroys her own image of herself as nurse, woman, fiancée. The narrative that she tells is a direct contradiction of the narrative she is acting in. It has led to an unexpected and inexplicable death of her established self; in effect, she spends the rest of the film trying to come to terms with that loss.

In *Tystnaden* the masturbation is coupled with Ester's statement that "Man prövar attityder. Och finner dem alla meningslösa. Krafterna är för starka, jag menar krafterna, *de ohyggliga*. Man får röra sig försiktigt bland spöken och minnen" (164) [We try out many attitudes. And find them all meaningless. The forces are too strong, I mean the forces, the terrifying ones. One must move carefully among ghosts and memories]. The forces of the body, as Carol Brightman puts it, its "secretions and excretions," prove too strong for the assumptions of the will. (Brightman 248) Appropriately, Ester identifies the moment of euphoria just before the moment of death:

Det var likadant med far. Han skrattade och berättade roliga historier. Så såg han på mig: "Nu är det evigheten, Ester," sa han. Han var så snäll, fast han var förfärligt stor och tung, han vägde nästan tvåhundra kilo. Man hade velat se minen på karlarna, som bar kistan. (164-65)

[It was the same way with Father. He laughed and told anecdotes. Then he looked at me: "Now it's time for eternity, Ester," he said. He was so kind, though he was terribly big and heavy, he weighed nearly two hundred kilos. It would have been something to see the expressions on the men who had to carry the coffin.]

Ester's moment of orgasm signals the emergence of the repressed desire, and the end of her heroically willed narrative of her self; all that remains of it now is the image of the gigantic dead father she has been carrying with her all this time.

In *Viskningar och rop*, the relationship between death and the narrative is equally self-evident, from the beginning: "Agnes sjukdom har hastigt förvärrats och enligt läkaren kan hon inte leva länge. De båda systarna (hennes enda släktingar) har kommit till hennes dödsbädd" (156) [Agnes's illness has suddenly deteriorated and according to the doctor she will not live much longer. Her two sisters (her only relatives) have come to her deathbed]. Our only question is, how soon is she going to die? and by what route is this life going to be brought to a completion? In fact, we know that she will probably die in approximately ninety minutes or so after the moment in the first scene when Agnes starts the

clock in her bedroom since we can expect that her death will mean the end of her narrative. While this is exactly what happens, Bergman tricks us, by having her die, at least apparently, halfway through the film, and then having the corpse insist that she is not capable of finding peace yet; her narrative is not yet concluded. As Peter Brooks points out, "it is characteristic of textual energy in narrative that it should always be on the verge of premature discharge, of short-circuit. The reader experiences the fear—and excitation—of the improper end, which is symmetrical to—but far more immediate and present than—the fear of endlessness" (109). The moment of Agnes's death, her agonized look at us, is a deliberate echo of the images in *Persona* and *Tystnaden*, suggesting that the end of her narrative can be seen in relation to the dissociated woman in the first film, and the confrontation with sexuality in the latter. It can be argued that the rest of the film responds to the latter in Karin's selfmutilating flashback, and to the former in the celebration of touch and closeness in the final diary excerpt. The upside down image, held only briefly here, is itself therefore a question rather than a statement about the proper time of her end.

### III

In the context of narrative short-circuits or interruptions, it may also be noted here that of the sixteen numbered sections in the original Swedish version of the script of *Viskningar och rop*, only six can be said to contain pure drama, uninterrupted dramatic action; the remaining ten contain blatant authorial interruptions. These are of different kinds: hesitations, doubts about the technical capacities of the medium itself, unwillingness to put things on paper, physical pain, disgust, exhaustion, boredom; the overwhelming impression of course is that the idea of narrative itself has been fragmented and has lost its authority. The author frankly admits he is unable to explain what is going on, abdicates all responsibility, and—in trying to explain why Agnes is coming to life—describes himself as victimized, rendered helpless by his vision, humiliated by his own paralysis and impotence. Above all the sense of desire, "den orimliga och aldrig stillade längtan efter gemenskap, de tafatta försöken att upphäva avstånd och isolering" (180) [the unreasonable and never stilled longing for community, the awkward efforts to negate distance and isolation], comes up against common sense, rationality, accusations, sensible objections, production values and economics.<sup>3</sup> And a great many of these interruptions are marked off by brackets or parentheses, giving a visual emphasis to the idea that certain things are

outside the narrative and others are inside it; there are at least five sections within brackets that are a paragraph long or longer.

Very little of this remains in the *film*. Here the fifth section, the visit by the doctor, is introduced by the male narrator, played by Ingmar Bergman, who offers us two sentences setting up the situation: this truncated appearance of the traditional male voice-over is all that remains of the patriarchal narrative tradition. (This is very much the same case with films like *Persona* and *En Passion* where the narrator also makes only symptomatic appearances.) In the film instead, authorial presence is indicated by other devices of stylization: the fade-overs into red; the use of Agnes's diary; the refusal to clarify whether Agnes's resurrection is a dream or not; the deliberate use of the primary colour scheme.

#### IV

But it is also quite clear that the power of this image or cluster of images does not primarily reside in its content, or its ability to evoke ideas of desire and death in narrative. It resides instead in two formal features: the direct confrontation with the camera and its gaze, and the upside down position of the face. The first of these has been dealt with at great length by many commentators, most recently and most thoroughly, perhaps, by Maaret Koskinen.<sup>4</sup> Here it is enough at this point to indicate the self-reflexive nature of the gaze, its challenge to the frame of the narrative itself, its suggestion that the self-contained narrative is only an illusion.

But the second feature, the upside down position of the face now strikes me as more complex and difficult.<sup>5</sup> The displacement of the image is radical and unsettling. (In fact, it is so unsettling that in the montage of all the central images of the frame narrative printed in Björkman, et al., *Bergman om Bergman* the two upside down images have been reproduced right side up [217].) Of course the use of upside down imagery is well established in literature, from Shakespeare's *Lear* to children's literature. The world of Lewis Carroll is filled with reversals, inversions, mirrors, reflections, all creating absurd imitations of ordinary reality. In these four images by Bergman there is a specific ambivalence: they are recognizable, yet different and strange; familiar, yet alien; the face is there, yet not quite there at the same time. In short, the paradoxical status of the image brings to mind Godard's suggestion that it is hard to know if a photograph of oneself is a fact or a fiction; the idea is given its explicit formulation in the *grand théâtre* of the seven widows in *För att inte tala om alla dessa kvinnor* (*Now About These Women*, 1964), mourning their dead master with the untranslatable phrase "Han är lik

och ändå inte lik sig,” in which the word “lik” means both “corpse” and “like” so that the statement reverberates with meanings from “it’s a nice reproduction but not quite like him” to “he may be dead but he still lives.”

This is quite explicitly the idea of the morgue, in which the dead are not alive but somehow still with us, not yet departed. The idea of death in life appears of course in any number of Bergman films, for example in *Ansiktet* (*The Magician*, 1958) in which the actor Spegel (whose name meaning “mirror” is the very principle of representation) *seems* to die, only to reappear in order to intervene in the plot and become the convenient corpse for Dr. Vergerus to perform his autopsy on. He says:

Jag dog inte. Men jag har redan bärjat gå igen. Egentligen gör jag mig bättre som gast än som människa. Jag har blivit övertygande. Det var jag aldrig som skådespelare. (*Bilder* 170)

[I didn’t die. But I have already become a ghost. In fact I am a better ghost than a human being. I have become convincing, which I never was as an actor.]

In fact, Spegel’s dream of what Bergman has called the pure artistic activity is explicitly rendered as an autopsy:

Jag längtade alltid efter en kniv. En egg som skulle blottlägga mina inälvor. Lösgöra min hjärna, mitt hjärta. Befira mig från mitt innehåll. Skära bort min tunga och mitt kön. Ett vasst knivblad som skrapade ut all orenlighet. Så skulle den så kallade anden höja sig ur detta meningslösa kadaver. (*Bilder* 171 )

[I always longed for a knife. A sharp edge that would lay bare my innards. Remove my brain, my heart. Free me from my content. Cut off my tongue and my sex. A sharp knife edge that would scrape away all impurities. That way the so called spirit would rise out of this meaningless cadaver.]

Clearly the morgue, as a site for the confrontation of body and spirit, provides a particular fascination for Bergman. In *Laterna magica*, he describes in detail being shut up in a morgue, at ten years of age, and inspecting the body of a dead young woman, until he feels that she is observing him, and he flees in terror. He notes himself that he tried to portray the event in *Vargtimmen* (*Hour of the Wolf*, 1968) but cut it out, and that the theme recurs in the prologue to *Persona* and gets its definite form in *Viskningar och rop* (*Laterna magica* 237). In fact, even in *Vargtimmen* the theme remains in the confrontation with Veronica Vogler who lies naked on a table, covered with a sheet; Johan removes it and almost voluptuously caresses the naked body from head to toe when she suddenly sits up and laughs at him.

Somehow, then, the dead do not always stay dead but speak to us from a land somewhere in between life and death. Many critics have pointed out that most of Bergman’s films seem to take place in a border

zone, a liminal territory, between land and sea, life and death, power and powerlessness, language and silence. That territory, as Leif Zern has put it most recently, is the place where “det som borde vara fasta relationer—mellan föräldrar, barn, syskon—har brutit samman i ett växelbruk av roller, gränser som markeras och negligeras, identiteter så nebulösa att de förflyktigas i samma ögonblick de uppstår... ” (Zern 137) [what ought to be fixed relationships —between parents, children, siblings—has broken down in an exchange of roles, boundaries which are marked and then ignored, identities so nebulous that they disintegrate the moment they materialize...].<sup>6</sup> At the same time, in another place, Zern points out that “bland alla Bergmanbilder är det framför allt två kategorier som blivit emblematiska för hans filmstil: ansikten och silhuetter” (Zern 43) [among all Bergman images there are two categories that have become emblematic of his cinematic style: faces and silhouettes]. In other words, the horizontal boundary line, and the portrait of the face transgressing it. In *Persona*, for example, the horizontal shoreline between sea and land is reiterated in the ramp that separates the actress from her audience, her mask from her self, as well as in the repeated horizontal arrangement of bodies in the morgue, at the same time that this boundary is repeatedly transgressed by closeups of people looking directly into the camera: the actress Elisabet Vogler when she first falls silent, Elisabet when she takes a photograph of “us” or the camera, and so on. Not surprisingly, the story of Alma’s sexual transgression is set on a beach. And as Alma lies sleepless we see her torso stretched out horizontally, tensing in protest, and in the very next shot her upside down face confronts us head on; the contiguity itself makes this an archetypal sequence, proposing the way that representation itself is defined by liminality (as defined by the anthropologist Victor Turner) and transgression. The horizontal shoreline of representation is always a negotiation between signifier and signified, and the face that looks at us upside down is the insistent transgressive sign declaring a simultaneous likeness and difference.

The concept of liminality is particularly useful in dealing with the function of some of these images and their semiotic negotiation between likeness and difference. For Turner, all rites of passage involve three stages: separation; transition or liminality; and incorporation. When individuals change rank, function, role, status, or position in society, there is some kind of ritual celebration to signify or celebrate the end of the current status, followed by a liminal period of preparation for the initiands, and then a final series of rites of incorporation, in which the initiands assume their new roles. A typical rite of separation is a funeral,

whereas marriage is a rite of incorporation; the transitional liminal states include such conditions as pregnancy, betrothal, initiations. Turner's specific interest is in the middle liminal stage, the in-between stage, neither this nor that, which has several extraordinary characteristics. For one thing, it is a period and area of ambiguity and social limbo (Turner "Liminoid" 57), characterized by a denial of established social structure (i. e., anti-structural features), in terms of clothing, food, personal appearance, sexual discrimination, hierarchical distinctions, and so on. Liminality is thus a kind of anti-structural comment on structure itself, a parody of social form, a subversion of cultural authority and meaning:

Liminality is a complex series of episodes in sacred space-time, and may also include subversive and ludic events. The factors of culture are isolated, insofar as it is possible to do this with multivocal symbols (that is, with the aid of symbol-vehicles—sensorily perceptible forms) that are each susceptible not of a single but of many meanings. Then they may be recombined in numerous, often grotesque ways, grotesque because they are arrayed in terms of possible rather than experienced combinations. . . . In other words, in liminality people "play" with the elements of the familiar and defamiliarize them: Novelty emerges from unprecedented combinations of familiar elements. (Turner "Liminoid" 69)<sup>7</sup>

In *Viskningar och rop*, for example, Agnes's in-between condition, her position between loneliness and community, serves as an oblique commentary on all the different positions in the film, in the sense that anti-structure "can generate and store a plurality of alternative models for living, from utopias to programs which are capable of influencing the behaviour of those in mainstream social and political roles" (68). It is thus a *potential* mode, pointing to possibilities rather than realities; it is, as Turner says, "in the subjunctive mood" (Turner *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors* 127); in that sense *Viskningar och rop*, in its liminal aspect, can be said to be an instance of "subjunctive cinema" rather than a horror movie or a ghost movie. Above all, *meaning*, which Bergman found so problematic in dealing with the logical inconsistencies of the film, tends, in Turner's sense, "to be *generated* at the interfaces between established cultural sub-systems, though meanings are then institutionalized and consolidated at the centers of such systems" (Turner "Liminoid" 72). In this way, then, the film can be seen as a way of generating a set of meaningful commentaries at the interfaces of such sub-systems as class, economics, art, religion, kinship, gender and sexuality. Agnes's liminal position highlights the conflicts of class between the privileged (males in particular) and Anna's role as servant; her diary and the value ascribed to it by Anna is placed in the context of Fredrik's assumption that Anna is a healthy woman and doesn't need a financial reward for having taken care

of Agnes, and—on the other hand—Maria's and Joakim's conventional and surreptitious offer of a bill as they leave; as artist Agnes is (more so in the script than in the film) charged with presenting the difference between her reality and their reality ("Jag undrar om deras verklighet är så mycket påtagligare än *min* verklighet, jag menar sjukdomen" (*Viskningar och rop* 184) [I wonder if *their* reality is so much more concrete than *my* reality, I mean my disease]); as the minister makes clear, she is in religious terms an intermediary, who is able to pray for a meaning with *our* lives (*Viskningar och rop* 168); her unmerited cancer of the womb highlights the amoral libertinism of her sister Maria, the perverse sexual self-mutilation of her sister Karin, and the uncomplicated sensuality of Anna; and finally, in terms of kinship and gender she is the occasion for the partial but nonetheless real reconciliation of Maria and Karin, as well as the contrasting attitudes toward Anna. Thus Agnes, after her death, functions as a kind of question mark focusing attention on the interfaces of the meaning generating cultural sub-systems of her world.

It would be only too easy to claim that this simply highlights a structured idealist symbolic system around the idea of loneliness and community. For indeed the dying of Agnes seems to provide for a great many moments of brief feelings of belonging, the presence of community; Agnes and Anna hiding under the diningroom table in a thunderstorm (*Viskningar och rop* 158); Agnes's recollection of feeling really close to her mother (*Viskningar och rop* 161); the touch between Maria and Karin (Karin says, in the script, "Det är jag, men ändå inte jag [*Viskningar och rop* 177] [It is I, yet not I], indicating the breakdown of her individual integrity induced by this monstrous postmortem liminality); and of course the final reading of the diary with Agnes's recall of the presence of those she loves ("jag kände närvaron av deras kroppar, värmen av deras händer" [*Viskningar och rop* 187] [I felt the presence of their bodies, the warmth of their hands]). These all become images affirming a structural emphasis on loneliness/community as a central theme. But I would like to argue that the liminal features of the film, embodied by the upside down face, are much more than simply a cluster of symbols. In fact, they articulate the much larger contrast between structure and anti-structure in terms of issues of class, money, art, religion, sexuality, kinship and gender—all rather specific (not only symbolic) features in terms of the concrete and central social issues of the film's narrative. Thus, the anti-structural liminal elements serve as a commentary or reconfiguration of the social and political features of the hierarchical structure portrayed in the film.

In the model of narrative proposed by Peter Brooks which provided the starting point for this article, the middle of the plot is always seen as detour, as “a struggle toward the end under the compulsion of imposed delay” (Brooks 107). This necessary distance between beginning and end is marked by “the way in which metonymy and metaphor serve one another, the necessary temporality of the same-but-different” (Brooks 108). It has been my contention here that the inverted face (familiar/alien, like/unlike, body/disembodied) in its relationship to sexuality and death stands at the center of the “deviance and detour” of the middle of the plot where forms of repetition help in the generation of significance, in moving elements of metonymy towards the perception of the text as metaphor. The liminal features of the image, its simultaneous establishment and transgression of boundaries, make it a focal point for the idea of representation itself in these films and its challenge to the complexities of the gaze and the articulation of narrative desire.

## NOTES

\*An earlier short version of this article was presented as a paper at the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies Annual Meeting in 1994. I am indebted to Marilyn Johns Blackwell, Berkeley Kaite, and Gitte Rose, for a number of helpful comments and suggestions.

1. Some of the images to be discussed here have been noted by previous critics though not commented on explicitly as a group. Kawin (1978) writes about the dead woman in the morgue in *Persona*, that when the eyes open “it is as if they have opened by cutting or as if the *image* has opened its eyes” (111), but he does not remark on the inversion of the face. Livingston (1982) uses Bataille and Mauss to discuss masks in relation to stable or disordered identities in *Persona*, and discusses social structure in relation to “antistructure” (192–195) in ways similar to my own concerns, but he does not deal with the specific images discussed here. Gado (1986) notes that the shot of Alma in bed corresponds exactly to the shot of the old woman in the morgue (335); like him, Cohen (1993) repeats the observation without interpretation. Blackwell (1986) notes the images in *Persona* discussed here as well as some others I find less obviously similar; her comment that “this unusual camera angle serves to shock us out of our customary expectations of visual representation, in effect turning our visual field on its head and disorienting us” (26) is virtually the only comment on the significance of the inversion of the face. There are no comments on the relationship of these images in *Persona* to those in the other two films discussed here.

2. I am following here some of the arguments in Peter Brooks’s *Reading for the Plot*, in particular the chapter on “Freud’s Masterplot: A Model for Narrative,” 90–112.

3. It is worth noting that this discussion, described by Bergman as a "kort avbrott" [a short interruption] but in fact a two-page meditation (179-181) was omitted in the translation published in *The New Yorker* in 1972.

4. In *Spel och Speglingar*, particularly chapter II, "Spegeln i spegeln; en spelplats för blicken," 61-152, which also contains a fine discussion of the gaze in relation to desire in *Tystnaden*.

5. Iconographically, the unusual body position and the foreshortened perspective can of course be traced to the stylistic features of mannerist art. In addition, there are a number of cinematic prototypes for the effect of the inverted face, most notably Murnau's *Variété* (1925) which Bergman knew well.

6. This is of course also true of gender boundaries: witness the continuous exchange of roles between the actress and the nurse in *Persona*.

7. In its stress on "subversive and ludic events," on the defamiliarization of the grotesque and the parody of social forms, Turner's concept of liminality is clearly related to the notions of polyphony and carnivalization in the works of Bakhtin; see, in particular, *Rabelais and His World*, as well as *The Dialogic Imagination*.

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## REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

**Lars Vikør.** *The Nordic Languages: Their Status and Interrelations.* (Nordic Language Secretariat, Publication No. 14.) Oslo: Novus Press, 1993. 255 pages.

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Before detailing the contents of the volume, let me begin by demonstrating that the Nordic language situation is anything but simple, by asking a seemingly simple straightforward question: "How many languages are spoken in the Nordic area?" One answer might be that the Nordic Language Secretariat (formed by the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers in 1978, and located in Oslo) has representatives of Greenlandic, Icelandic, Faroese, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Sámi, and Finnish—eight languages in all. But Norwegian should maybe be counted twice, because it has two distinct, codified, standard varieties, known as Bokmål and Nynorsk. That would make nine. The Sámi language also has several distinct varieties: North Sámi, Enare Sámi, Skolt Sámi, Lule Sámi, Pite Sámi, Ume Sámi, and South Sámi. So maybe Sámi should be counted as seven, rather than one, making a total of fifteen Nordic languages in all. On the other hand, Norwegian (both varieties), Swedish, and Danish are so closely interrelated that they are in many cases mutually intelligible. Are they, then, one language, or three, or four? The Sámi varieties are to a large extent mutually unintelligible, and yet are often called "dialects" of the Sámi language. This gets us to territory familiar to all linguists, the impossibility of separating and defining "dialect" and "language" in any satisfactory way. Strictly linguistic criteria for language vs. dialect involve the notion of "mutual intelligibility": if two varieties resemble each other enough that people can communicate with one another using their own variety, then they are dialects of one language. According to this definition, North Sámi and South Sámi would certainly be different languages, whereas Danish, the two Norwegians, and Swedish would all be dialects of one language. Even "mutual intelligibility" is not so simple a notion, since it is not necessarily symmetric—e.g., a Dane might be able to understand a Swede, but that same Swede

might not be able to understand that same Dane so easily. Clearly a purely linguistic definition is not enough, and sociological and political criteria intervene. We could say that any variety which is standardized in its own right, and which functions as a written and spoken standard of a national speech community, needs to be defined as a "language," regardless of its degree of linguistic difference from other varieties. This will indeed allow us to consider Swedish, Danish, and the two Norwegians as separate languages. But any definition of "language" that relies on there being a well-defined and codified standard form is going to be problematic when dealing with the Sámi varieties. Without prolonging this terminological discussion further (although it can be quite interesting as well as politically important, and forces one to sharpen up one's notions a bit), let's just be practical and combine the two types of criteria, stating that there are fifteen Nordic languages—Greenlandic, Icelandic, Faroese, Nynorsk, Bokmål, Danish, Swedish, Finnish, and seven Sámi languages.

"Nordic languages," as used in this book, means "the indigenous languages of the Nordic countries," i.e., (from west to east) Greenlandic, Icelandic, Faroese, Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Sámi, and Finnish. The book is concerned with what sociolinguists have come to call the "ecology" of these languages—their interrelationships with each other and with the communities in which they function. This is easily the best, and certainly the most current, book in English on this topic, and can be recommended to anyone with an interest in the Nordic area, linguist or not. Vikør's style is very readable, and he seems to have a knack for making complicated material accessible to non-linguists as well as to linguists who may specialize in other areas. In addition, then, to a fairly general academic audience, the book could also be used in upper-level undergraduate or graduate courses in the sociology of language or in Scandinavian studies.

The book begins with a Preface (9–12), much of which clarifies terminology to be used in the book, and a note on pronunciation (13–14), which explains in simple terms how to pronounce words in the various languages given only the spelling. Chapter 1, "The area" (15–26), has subsections "Definition: Nordic vs. Scandinavian," "Common characteristics," and "Historical background." The latter is a compact, yet skillfully done so as to be remarkably complete, capsule history of settlement patterns and political developments since the dawn of the Christian era. Chapter 2, "The languages" (27–77), begins with the question raised above, viz. how many languages there are in the Scandinavian area, and the demonstration of the fact that the languages belong to three different

genetic groups. Each of those three (North Germanic, Fenno-Ugric, Greenlandic) is then dealt with in turn, beginning with relevant aspects of the linguistic history of the family, and then a concise linguistic history of each language in that family which is spoken in the Scandinavian area. In addition to these linguistic histories, Vikør also manages to weave in a brief structural sketch of each language, highlighting some of the main characteristics of each. He seems to do it so effortlessly that the immense skill involved here can only be truly appreciated by those who have struggled with doing this kind of thing themselves. All sorts of interesting details are also included. For example, for all those who have ever wondered why it is that Swedish and Danish (and hence Norwegian) have made opposite choices in the symbols used to represent the low front vowel (ä vs. æ) and the mid front rounded vowel (ö vs. ø), the reason is most likely that the “codification of a Swedish written standard, based on the speech of central Sweden and in particular of Stockholm, was deliberately undertaken in such a way that its differences from Danish were stressed as much as possible” (49) for sociopolitical reasons. Sámi appears to have originally shown what linguists call a “dialect continuum,” where there are no sharp boundaries between the varieties, but just gradual changes between varieties, with adjacent varieties always being mutually intelligible, and sufficient differences to impair communication only accumulating over greater distances. “However, the strong impact of the majority populations (Scandinavian and Finnish) has destroyed these continua in many places, so that we now have a number of more or less isolated varieties often spoken by small populations spread over wide areas and interspersed among the totally dominant majority population” (69–70)—hence the large number of “separate” Sámi languages mentioned above. The fact that Sámi grade alternation results in three consonant lengths (72; short, long, and “overlong”) doesn’t seem to have percolated through to the general linguistic literature yet, where linguists persistently deny that *any* language has more than a two-way length distinction. So far the only serious counterexample to the general claim appears to be the three-way vowel length distinction in Estonian, long a well-established fact among those who work on Estonian and Finno-Ugric, and despite having been brought to the attention of the general linguistic community, still consistently ignored, because it is inconvenient for theories obsessed with binarism. One can only hope that this Sámi consonantal evidence will not be similarly ignored. This chapter concludes with a very brief consideration of the Gypsies (or Rom) in Scandinavia, and their two languages, Romani

(a creole of the late medieval form of the Indo-Aryan that they brought with them to Scandinavia with the relevant local Scandinavian language) and Romanes (the "international" Gypsy language of today, brought to Scandinavia in the 19th century by a new wave of Rom immigrants, clearly Indo-Aryan but influenced by various Balkan languages). Only minor criticisms can be made in this chapter. The section on the two contrasting Swedish tonemes (38) would have been clearer if either a description of the contour of the tonemes or a graphic representation of them had been included. In the same section, it is stated that the occurrence of the glottal stop in Danish "shows a significant degree of correspondence with one of the two tonemes of Norwegian and Swedish," without saying which corresponds to which. The paradigm illustrating the fourteen Finnish cases would have been clearer if the final column had been labelled "plural," since the glosses given are only of the singulars. The short paragraph about North, East, and South Sámi and mutual intelligibility (70) is written in a confusing manner.

Chapter 3, "The internal relations" (78–111), examines the internal relations between indigenous Nordic languages (in their standard varieties) within each Nordic country. Vikør uses "internal relations" to mean "the sociolinguistic, linguo-political and legal positions of the languages used in each country and of the groups using them" (78). In general, then, this means the relationship and status of minority groups to majority groups, which varies from the formally equal positions of Swedish and Finnish in Finland and of Nynorsk and Bokmål in Norway to the fairly marginal position of Finnish in Norway. Thus there are sections covering Swedish in Finland (including Åland's special situation), Finnish in Sweden and Norway, Sámi in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, Nynorsk in Norway, German and Danish in Schleswig, Danish and Faroese in the Faroes, and Danish and Greenlandic in Greenland. The latter two cases are similar to each other, but somewhat different from all the others, in that Danish is not so much minor as retaining official status because of its former position as the language of government; thus the *majority* language here shares some of the problems faced by minority groups elsewhere.

Chapter 4, "The inter-Nordic relations" (112–137), covers "Nordist" ideology, the policy of promoting Nordic unity and solidarity in general and mutual linguistic comprehension in particular, the Scandinavian "semi-communication" as it works in actual fact (this comes back to some of the questions of mutual intelligibility raised earlier), and the various communication strategies used in different inter-

Nordic contexts. Six communication strategies are discussed in some detail (127 ff.): 1) “a limited adaptation of one’s natural speech (slowing it down, pronouncing more distinctly, avoiding particular words)”;

2) “a more systematic adaptation, involving deviations from the norms of one’s own language”;

3) “speaking some kind of ‘common Scandinavian’”;

4) “using a language other than one’s own”;

5) “relying on professional interpreters to and from the non-Scandinavian languages” such as Finnish; and

6) “using a non-Nordic language, in practice English.” The chapter closes with a section on the Nordic Language Convention, a convention between the Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish governments, which came into effect in 1987, concerning the rights of their citizens to use their own language in each other’s countries.

Chapter 5, “The external relations” (113–150), is brief, treating these relations both “inwards” (the impact of non-Nordic languages in the Nordic area) and “outwards” (the role of Nordic languages in the rest of the world). “Inwards” is naturally bigger—immigration, “guest workers,” refugees (various statistics are provided) and the impact of Anglo-American culture. “Outwards” begins with the effect of Old Norse on English in the Viking era, but is mostly devoted to immigrant groups abroad, particularly in the United States, and the efforts of the Nordic governments to provide lecturers abroad.

Chapter 6, “The agencies” (151–178), gives brief descriptions of the official and semi-official language planning (both “cultivation” and “codification”) agencies. These concern themselves with both general and technical usages, and their number is truly astounding (as one can even tell by the sheer length of this chapter, despite the fact that only a brief sketch is given of each agency). Each country is treated in turn, followed by sections on the Sámi community and the pan-Nordic level.

Chapter 7, “The linguistic climate” (179–224), treats “the ideological climate with regard to language use, language correctness and language planning. What is taken for granted in a particular country at a particular time, what is generally regarded as desirable, what is controversial, what is inconceivable?” (179). The main topics are questions of spelling (conservatism vs. reformism), vocabulary (“purism” vs. liberalism in the treatment of loan words), and the position of dialects and colloquial speech in relation to the standard. There is a general overview of these topics, then a more detailed section for each of Denmark, Sweden, Swedish Finland, Finnish Finland, the Sámi community, Norway, Iceland, the Faroes, and Greenland, concluding with some pan-

Scandinavian considerations. One particularly interesting feature is a table (182) of the spelling of 37 loan words in Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, and Finnish, together with an English gloss, enabling one to see for oneself various effects, such as the degree of acclimatization of the word in each language with respect to spelling, or the simple fact that Finnish has adopted fewer of these than have Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish, but that Icelandic has adopted even fewer.

Chapter 8, "The future" (225–228), speculates briefly on the effects of such phenomena as the media, computerization, and the gradual integration into the European Economic Community, as well as on whether certain trends evident since 1945 will or will not continue (e.g., "that informal urban usage is pushing back both traditional dialects and traditional stylistic norms of the standard spoken and written languages" [225]). The book concludes with a multilingual bibliography (229–241), an index of names (242–243), and a list of addresses of the Nordic language "cultivation" agencies (244–245). It would have been handy to have a subject index as well; for example, to be able to look up "Åland" and get all the sections referring to it all at once—instead one has to hunt through all the potentially relevant sections, just using the table of contents.

The book is written in English by a non-native speaker of English, and yet it reads just as if it were written by a native speaker. I only found a few non-native lapses (a complete list is: "in the passing" for "in passing" [28]; "divided in" for "divided into" [61]; "in the Swedish society" for "in Swedish society" [86]; "for all the three years" for "for all three years" [114]; "at the second place" for "in second place" [142]; "regardless whether" for "regardless of whether" [143]; "at a large scale" for "on a large scale" [148]; "who lived ... since" for "who have lived ... since" [149]; "remit" is not a noun in English, only a verb—even if it were a noun, it wouldn't mean what Vikør is trying to make it mean on page 157, which is something like "mandate" or "mission"; "much controversies" for "much controversy" [162]; "a point in using" for "a point of using" [205]; "refer" for "refer to" [220]; "Europeization" for "Europeanization" [225, 226]; and the use of "a.o." as an abbreviation for "among others" [228]), and very few typographical errors ("exercized" for "exercised" [49]; "a dieu" for [French] "adieu" [190]; "creaping" for "creeping" [196]; "proficiencie" for "proficiency" [227]; the inclusion of a period after "et" in "et al." [230, 231, 234]). The term "teletext," used first on page 154, should be explained, as it will be unfamiliar to most anglophone/North American readers, since the service is not one

available here. The book is handsome and of excellent quality in its design, typeface, binding, and especially maps. Given its large potential audience, the fact that it has no competitors, and the ever-changing nature of most of the topics discussed, I can only recommend to Vikør and his publisher that they update and reissue the book every three or four years.

**Marina Mundt.** *Zur Adaption orientalischer Bilder in den Fornaldarsögur Norðrlanda. Materialien zu einer neuen Dimension altnordischer Belletristik.* Frankfurt am Main, etc.: Peter Lang, 1993. 282 pages.

Reviewed by KIRSTEN WOLF  
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This book presents, as its title announces, a study of the so-called *fornaldarsögur*, focussing on the adaptation of oriental images ("Bilder") in this particular literary genre. It seeks, on the one hand, to demonstrate, "daß die Anzahl solcher adoptierten oder adaptierten Bilder und Sequenzen in den Fornaldarsagas sehr viel größer ist als bisher angenommen" (23; that the number of such adopted or adapted images and narrative sequences in the *fornaldarsögur* is much larger than hitherto assumed), and, on the other hand, to show "daß häufig Parallelen aus dem westlichen Europa fehlen, zumindest aus der Zeit, die wir frühes Mittelalter nennen" (23; that often parallels from western Europe are lacking, at least from the period which we call the early Middle Ages).

The introduction ("Einleitung," 9–36) is devoted to a discussion of the nature and extent of oriental influence on the culture of Norway and Icelandic in general. In subsections, Mundt surveys the results of archaeological excavations ("Richtungweisende archäologische Funde"), discusses the role and significance of Kiev ("Die Rolle des Hofes von Kiev ca. 950–1150") as well as of the Varangian Guard, the trade-routes, and the contacts in general between East and West ("Zu Voraussetzungen und späterer Wirkung der Waräger in Skandinavien"), offers comments on the dating of the *fornaldarsögur* ("Wie alt sind die Fornaldarsögur denn nun wirklich?") and previous work on the question of oriental influence on these sagas ("Die Welt der Fornaldarsögur im Urteil der Philologen"), and explains her choice and use of the word "Bild" ("Zum Begriff 'orientalische Bilder'"), which, in Mundt's view, is more suitable than "Motif"; the latter is ambiguous and not clearly defined, whereas the former is more tangible and encompasses also non-literary models. Indeed, Mundt argues that "[g]erade wo es eine direkte literarische Quelle

vielleicht nie gegeben hat oder ich sie nur nicht kenne, läßt sich nämlich die Herkunft einer Vorstellung gelegentlich dadurch bestimmen, daß nachgewiesen werden kann, was für ein Bild oder eine Skulptur der Erfinder einer bestimmten Episode oder Motivkette selbst gesehen oder beschrieben bekommen haben kann" (32; exactly where perhaps no literary source existed or where I simply do not know it, it is sometimes possible to determine the origin of an idea because it can be demonstrated which image or sculpture the inventor of a certain episode or series of motifs has himself seen or received descriptions of).

The next section ("Corpus," 37–53) is concerned with the corpus of *fornaldarsögur*. Mundt includes all twenty-eight sagas listed in Kurt Schier's *Sagaliteratur* with the exception of *Þiðriks saga af Bern* and *Hemings þáttur Áslákssonar*, the former due to its non-Norse content and the latter to its somewhat special profile. To these twenty-six sagas she adds from Guðni Jónsson's edition (*Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda*) *Yngvars saga víðfjörla* and *Sjörta saga sterka*. She also includes *Finnboga saga ramma* and *Eymundar saga* (or *þáttur Hringssonar*, both of which have features in common with *fornaldarsögur*, although they are not normally classified as such. Mundt acknowledges the fact that the extent and nature of oriental influence vary in these sagas and that such influence is found also in other Old Norse-Icelandic works, notably the saga of Haraldr Sigurðarson, to whom she devotes a lengthy discussion ("Harald der Harte und seine Gefährten," 55–66).

Following these three chapters, the book is comprised of an analysis of oriental material in each of the following *fornaldarsögur*: *Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks konungs*, *Gautreks saga*, *Sögubrot af fornkonungum*, *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*, *Qrvar-Odds saga*, *Hálfs saga ok Hálfsrekka*, *Hrólfs saga Gautrekssonar*, *Sturlaugs saga starfsama*, *Friðþjófs saga ins frækna*, *Ásmundar saga kappabana*, *Hálfðanar saga Eysteinnssonar*, *Norna-Gests þáttur*, *Yngvars saga víðfjörla*, *Finnboga saga ramma*, *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*, *Bósa saga*, *Egils saga einhenda*, *Hrólfs saga kraka*, *Hálfðanar saga Brönuþóstra*, *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*, *Ketils saga hængs*, *Hjálmþés saga ok Qlvis*, *Áns saga bogsveigis*, and *Hrómundar saga Gripssonar*. Five of these sagas, *Hálfðanar saga Brönuþóstra*, *Þorsteins saga Víkingssonar*, *Ketils saga hængs*, *Hjálmþés saga ok Qlvis*, and *Áns saga bogsveigis*, are treated together, since, as Mundt notes, oriental influence is limited in these late works and has come second- or third-hand by way of other Old Norse-Icelandic texts. *Hrómundar saga Gripssonar* is discussed at the end of the study, since it occupies a somewhat unique place due to its late date of composition.

Each analysis is comprised of a discussion of the characteristics of the respective saga along with notes on its transmission and date of composition. The particular features that suggest oriental origin, whether it be specific episodes, motifs, themes, or objects, are then treated in detail. As might be expected, some sagas, such as *Friðþjófs saga frækna*, *Yngvars saga víðförla*, *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*, and *Egils saga einhenda*, in which oriental parallels or analogues are quite numerous, receive more detailed discussion than, for example, *Bósa saga* and *Norna-Gests þáttur*, in which oriental influence is very limited. When several episodes or themes within a saga can be traced to the Orient, they are usually treated under separate subheadings as in the case of, for instance, *Göngu-Hrólfs saga*, where the horse DúlCIFal, the story of the unreliable servant and the maiden with the golden hair, and the episode about the demonic seducer in the figure of the dwarf are discussed separately.

In her conclusion ("Übersicht und Einsicht: Ergebnisse," 249-262), Mundt challenges the general notion of the *fornaldarsögur* as representatives of a decline in Icelandic literature. She emphasizes that the many elements of the supernatural, which scholars have normally attributed to decadent fantasy, have parallels in oriental art, and that the extraneous material has not, as has generally been argued, all come from or via the British Isles (especially Ireland) and France. In her view, these "misconceptions" are due to what she calls the enigma of the eastern path ("[d]as Enigma des östlichen Weges," 252): literary scholars have not concerned themselves with the manner in which oriental material was transmitted to the West and have left this question to archaeologists, historians, and folklorists. She also maintains that her examination has necessitated a revision of the dating of some of these sagas and feels that in a number of instances, the sagas should be dated to an earlier period. As for the actual process of the adaptation of oriental images, she proposes that as the Varangians told native stories abroad for the purpose of entertainment, so the Icelanders related what they had heard or seen in the East when they returned. In the course of time, their experiences and exploits were magnified and glorified, and the wonders of the East would be used to enliven their stories. As the demand for such stories increased while at the same time new impulses from the East decreased or ceased and the material from the older sagas had been exhausted, narrators would attempt to create new combinations of effects and motifs whereby a younger group of *fornaldarsögur* came into existence.

The book concludes with a bibliography and a name index. Illustrations appear throughout the book, but are unfortunately not numbered;

since the illustrations do not always appear in the context in which they are discussed and often are not directly referred to in the text, the usefulness of these illustrations is somewhat limited. (The illustration of a pair of bulldog's feet in the middle of a discussion of the corpus of *fornaldarsögur*, for example, seems rather out of place.)

There is no doubt that the interdisciplinary approach which Mundt calls for and which she herself has attempted in this book would in many cases be beneficial to the study of Old Norse-Icelandic literature and would answer a number of questions. For such approaches to be successful, however, a clearly stated theoretical methodology is imperative, and this is where Mundt's study fails: it lacks a solid folkloristic foundation. Mundt has managed to bring to the fore many oriental "Bilder" in the *fornaldarsögur*, but the critical reader has an uncomfortable feeling that Mundt discovers what she sets out to find, and the similarities between, say, an episode in a saga and an eastern sculpture, are not always adequately weighed against possible differences. Often they are comparable only in a very general fashion. Moreover, Mundt's presentation of many of these images as direct sources is not always convincing; a more clearly defined distinction between sources, analogues, and parallels would have been desirable. While the larger view of oriental influence is certainly to be acknowledged (as critics before Mundt have done), and while Mundt is to be commended for addressing the topic at length, the book fails to convince at the level of detail needed to sustain its argument. The use of "Bilder" here, fundamental to the book, is also fundamentally flawed: the "here is one, here is another" approach cannot legitimately be sustained.

**Birgit and Peter Sawyer.** *Medieval Scandinavia: From Conversion to Reformation, circa 800–1500*. The Nordic Series, Volume 17. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1993. 265 pages.

Reviewed by WILLIAM SAYERS  
*Silver Spring, Maryland*

The authors have taken aim at a gap in survey literature on the Scandinavian Middle Ages and have filled it forcefully, effectively, and, to little surprise, somewhat idiosyncratically. Writing from their documented strengths in the study of medieval institutions, especially rulership, social and economic history, family and women's studies, historiography itself, they have produced an excellent textbook and

introduction for the general reader that brings into sharper focus the huge human and geographical backdrop to more conventional histories of 'Great Men'.

With the prospective student and teacher in mind, I call attention to the especially rewarding concluding chapter, "Uses of the Past," which provides an overview of the way in which these centuries were viewed by their near-contemporaries and succeeding generations in Scandinavia and abroad. Medieval histories from Denmark, Norway, Iceland and Sweden in Latin and the vernaculars under various patronage are shown to have a perspective, often an agenda, and at times a purposeful ideology, to have been read by other historians, explicitly commented on, and frequently refuted. Varying combinations of institutional interests (the Church, the monarchy, magnates, king's men) are detailed, as "history writing" is revealed as "crisis symptom" in the emergence of the early nation states (230). A typical statement on Icelandic writers' recreation of their countrymen and Norwegian rulers in the pre-conversion era will illustrate the level of the authors' argument and the clarity that informs their writing: "It may be suggested that, by making the pagans spokesmen for common sense in contrast to the cruelty and impetuosity of the missionary kings, Snorri [Sturluson] was commenting on the contemporary conflict between Icelandic chieftains and the Norwegian archbishop and king and indirectly criticizing the Norwegians for their disregard of traditional Icelandic values" (224). The chapter and book end with cogent comment on the 'non-uses' of the past, for example, nineteenth and early twentieth century national historians' frequent disregard of the centuries when Iceland and Norway were under Danish rule, or Finland under Swedish.

These concerns are limned in the "Introduction" which calls sharply into question theoretical models that presuppose movement from simple to complex societies and the dated, though still prevalent, view of early Scandinavian society as "an aggregation of extended families forming free peasant democracies that were guided by an innate sense of justice and in which all free men were equal and women were independent" (xiii). The authors also state in brief their principal conclusions: that medieval Scandinavia was more similar to other parts of Europe than has been generally recognized and, looking now inwards, differences within Scandinavia were also great.

The chapter on "Sources" is also reflective of the authors' desire to show how history can get written and how different data sets may reflect discrete segments of society. Interest centres on media that have recently

come under profitable re-examination, including Icelandic sagas, provincial law codes, runic inscriptions, and on media that might once have been considered ancillary, such as coins and place-names. Conventional archaeology gets rather short shrift. And surely the interesting discussion of 'rune stones as a crisis symptom' and of the attendant royal/familial, pagan/Christian and male/female tensions, inheritance and other issues belongs elsewhere than in this inventory of evidence and methodologies, and typology of legitimate conclusions. To comment on points of detail in the matter of the Icelandic sagas, *Íslendinga saga* has independent status within the thirteenth century compilation known as *Sturlunga saga* and is not an alternative title; Sturla Þórðarson, not Thorðasson, is its author; accusations of homosexuality are only one expression of *níð* or defamation.

At several points the discussion of "Sources" is so detailed, so engaged in contemporary critical issues, that the following chapter, "Lands and Peoples," seems like the introduction to a new book. It is a largely uncontroversial chapter, but illustrates general conditions for the interplay among settlement patterns, population growth, trade, political control over land, then subsequent conscious demographic expansion under emerging rulers. Here *Finnic* is to be preferred over the Sawyers' *Finnish* for the language group, and *Old Norse* is a more common linguistic denominator than *Old Nordic*. "Political History" is in the nature of an obligatory chapter in an overview work, but is nonetheless well integrated, and is followed by chapters in which the authors come into their own, the heart of the volume. Subjects here are "Things and Kings," "Christianization and Church Organization," "Landowners and Tenants," "Trade and Towns," "Family and Inheritance," the last-named with perhaps the sharpest polemical tone. These chapters, generally chronologically organized, deal with social infrastructure rather than high deeds, but repeatedly we learn how coalescing royal authority turned to advantage as tool or model such pre-existent institutions as local assemblies, inheritance law and the flexibility of a bilateral descent system, or newer organizational structures, such as that introduced by the Church. These are subjects on which Birgit and Peter Sawyer write with authority and their lucid exposition will benefit both specialist and beginner. Every reviewer will think to find inaccuracies or have cavils, e.g., the curious, undated, unlocated verb *bö* 'to dwell' (ON *búa*?); the Saami tribute of ship-ropes was more likely made of seal and *walrus* skins, than of whale skin; the one Icelandic nunnery is identified as Kirjubær rather than Kirkjubær and is not noted in the index; Skálholt

appears on the map as Skáholt. The conclusion: "In the Icelandic family sagas ... some marriages to which women explicitly consented are total failures, while marriages arranged without consulting them last" (177) is at best questionable. The choice not to deal with early historians among "Sources" means, for example, that "Ari" [Þorgilsson] pops up here unidentified in a passing reference the reader is expected to recognize (103). But these are solid and rewarding chapters, firmly based on the prior achievement of the two contributors. One might have wished, however, for more information on Scandinavian expansionism—the Kiev-Dublin axis—in addition to the focus on the core concept 'Scandinavia.'

Problematic in a rather different way is the penultimate chapter "Women: Ideal and Reality," under whose bipartite title the authors stimulatingly review the evidence for contrasting conceptions of woman and their resulting tensions. Originally drafted by Birgit Sawyer, the chapter displays a firm command of a variety of often marginalized sources whose treatment requires caution. It begins as follows: "Until recently little attention has been paid to the different ways in which the sexes were affected by the religious, political, and cultural changes that occurred in Scandinavia during the early Middle Ages, and even now, despite the great advances that have been made in the past two decades in women's studies, the results that have been achieved have not been satisfactorily integrated with each other and with what is known about medieval Scandinavian society in general" (188). One readily understands why a contemporary academic readership would welcome such a chapter, and it has great merit. But this is special pleading on behalf of a strong essay that ironically further postpones the integrated human history whose absence it laments. The book's earlier treatment of sponsorship of runestones, landholding in law and practice, inheritance and marriage alliances, etc., shows that the authors are well positioned for a more ambitious, two-gendered synthesis.

If one accepts, as I have suggested, that the book has important potential as classroom text, a number of features will be found of particular value. Unfamiliar terms are given a lucid explanation on their first use, although this courtesy flags in later chapters and "free but unprivileged landholders" goes without a gloss; maps reflect almost all the placenames met in the text (but not Österbotten); notes are kept to a minimum and the index is serviceable; suggestions are made for further general reading; and the bibliography of primary and secondary literature is quite generous. Yet while the book proper seems keyed to this future

role, much of the bibliography is based on the assumption of competence in the Scandinavian languages, a perhaps necessary expedient in resolving the quandary between desired fullness of reference and available resources. This disparity is most noticeable in the frequent conclusion of discussions with a reference to the relevant entry in *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for nordisk middelalder* (1956–78), with no mention of other, admittedly less full, treatment in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (1982–89) or *Lexikon des Mittelalters* (1977–). Now on the scene is also *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia* (1993). On the level of detail, length marks over Icelandic vowels get spotty treatment in the bibliography and elsewhere; Tromsø makes one appearance as Trømso; Carol Clover's influential article is incorrectly identified as dealing with the "sex role" not "sex ratio" in early Scandinavia; the Aksel E. Christensen *festskrift* is stated to have marked his *treårsdagen* (third, not his sixtieth) birthday; the English translation of Sørensen's *Nørønt nid*<sup>3</sup> is not mentioned; the journal title *Mediaeval Scandinavia* is given in variant orthography that will mislead the beginner. Finally, with the resources of modern typography, there seems no reason not to employ Icelandic þ, when ð is met at every turn; as a consequence the index has such hybrids as *allthings*, italics suggesting a native term in orthography and pluralization.

All told, *Medieval Scandinavia* is a highly competent and thoroughly engaging work; although perhaps a bit hastily assembled, it seems assured of a well earned success.

#### NOTES

1. Carol Clover, "The Politics of Scarcity: Notes on the Sex Ratio in Early Scandinavia," *Scandinavian Studies* 60 (1988): 147–188.

2. Christiansen, Tage E., Svend Ellehø and Erling Ladewig Petersen, eds., *Middelalderstudier, tilegnede Aksel E. Christensen på tresårsdagen 11. September 1966* (København: Munksgaard, 1966).

3. Preben Meulengracht Sørensen, *Nørønt nid: forestillingen om den umandige mand in de islandske sagaer* (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1980). Translation: *The Unmanly Man: Concepts of Sexual Defamation in Early Northern Society*, translated by Joan Turville-Petre (Odense: Odense University Press, 1983).

**William Richard Mead.** *An Experience of Finland.* London: Hurst & Company, 1993. 164 pages.

Reviewed by J. DONALD WILSON  
*University of British Columbia*

This is an unusual book. It is a very personal memoir by an English professor of geography of his experiences with Finland over a fifty-year period. But it is more than that because as a scholar, Professor Mead has concerned himself intimately with both the history and geography of Finland. The author of five books on the country, Mead is a genuine Fennophile. This book is in the tradition of the British scholar who takes it upon himself to learn all there is to about an exotic location, such as Albania, Tibet or Inner Mongolia. The result is not for the uninitiated. Mead assumes the reader already is quite well acquainted with Finland; failing that, one would find the book a very tough read. Full enjoyment comes from already being knowledgeable about the main features of Finnish history, geography, and culture.

Aside from Finland's past, the Finns, with whom the author is most conversant, are those he has socialized with, namely academics (like Eino Jutikkala), diplomats (such as Max Jakobson) and professional people. From reading the book one gets no sense of the life of the common Finn. Churches, museums, fortresses, the arts and music, even sports are important to or mentioned by Mead, but there are no restaurants, pubs, or nightspots in his account. The pleasures of the common Finn are of no interest to him. No mention is made, for example, of Finnish television or of Finnish drinking habits. But any visitor to Finland learns quickly how important alcohol is to the average Finn. Over the years, the basic pattern of Finnish drinking habits has remained practically unchanged. Beer and vodka are the preferred drinks, and wine at meals still remains uncommon. Where drinking is concerned, intoxication plays a central role, and both sexes participate. A 1992 study showed that as much as 41 percent of the alcohol drunk by women was taken in situations leading to intoxication; for men, the figure rose to around 60 percent. But beer, wine and vodka are not even mentioned in this book, let alone popular nighttime entertainment.

That said, if you approach this book as one man's personal account of his own experiences with Finland and Finns, you will not be disappointed. The author does a marvellous job of evoking the sights, smells and sounds of the country, with a particular love for Åland and eastern Finland and certain Finns from the past such as Pehr Kalm, a

student of Linnaeus, and Johan Jacob von Julin, the nineteenth century industrialist. He demonstrates a special interest in Anglo-Finnish relations whether economic, social, cultural or military, today and in the past, although, again, there is no mention of "Sky Channel," the popular TV station that is beamed from England by satellite. The story is upbeat and positive, even though Finland was (and still is) experiencing levels of unemployment in the range of twenty percent before this book was published. The economic dislocation occasioned by the collapse of the Soviet Union is acknowledged but not dwelt upon, whereas my contacts in Finland speak gloomily of its economic prospects over the next decade even taking into account its impending entry into the European Union. Does one really sense in going to Finland that one is, as Mead asserts, "walking into the future" (154)? Such a statement would evoke laughter from my Finnish friends. So, what Mead offers us is a very rosy picture indeed of things Finnish, one that the Finnish Chamber of Commerce and national tourist bureau would love to perpetuate with foreigners.

It is impossible to write about Finland without acknowledging the Finn's attachment to the land and nature. Topelius, the nineteenth century historian, put it well when he said, "Our land is of us and we are of the land" (51). Mead shares a similar outlook which, as a geographer, he draws on to the fullest. After all, the transformation from a pre-war agrarian economy took hold only since the sixties, and now employment in agriculture and forestry has declined to 10 percent of the Finnish labour force. But the myth of the land survives. Now the majority of urban-based Finns either possess, or aspire to possess, a place in the country. Like most Canadians, Finns are continually conscious of the dominance of winter in their lives. As Mead reminds us, Finland has been called a land of three winters—autumn winter, high winter and spring winter extending well into April. Perhaps the darkness of winter accounts for the pervasiveness of candles in Finnish life, used both for coziness and for commemoration, such as found at every grave site throughout the cemeteries of Finland on Christmas Eve. These very cemeteries also have sections devoted to the graves of war dead. The practice is to honour the memory of each one; Finland has no tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Canadian academics will be fascinated to learn of the practice among Finnish professors of living in one city but holding an academic appointment at a university in another. Convenient air and train travel, and the opportunity to schedule your own class times, make this quite possible. Thus one finds that a professor living in Turku may hold an appointment at Oulu University in the north, or a professor at Joensuu

University in eastern Finland may actually live in Helsinki. The daily commute by train twice a week between Helsinki and Tampere where there is another university is not uncommon. I am aware that this pattern of academic appointments occurs in southern Ontario universities, but I gather it is somewhat frowned upon by the colleagues of people who do it. In Finland, by contrast, it is considered quite acceptable. The author also notes that "the hierarchy of university teachers seems to be jealously guarded, with a prestige being attached to chairs that no longer exists in many countries" (132). Consequently it is very difficult for young professors to scale the academic ladder, and so they must be much more patient than in Canada.

Mead understands what makes Finland tick. He underlines the importance of flowers and the practice of flying flags on holiday occasions, the continuing use, or at least awareness, of titles in an otherwise very egalitarian society, and the prevalence of church ceremonies, such as weddings and funerals, for a non-church-going people. Tradition dies hard in Finland. Certain national holidays are celebrated by everyone, such as Midsummer and *Vappu* (May 1). And a Finn wouldn't be a Finn without "going to sauna" at least once a week, summer and winter. The author also shows us evidence of other certainties in Finnish life: the coastal-interior dichotomy, the north-south split, and the Swedish-Finnish language and cultural split. A Canadian can relate quite easily to these features. In this respect Mead makes us continually aware of the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland, not least because of his numerous references to the population of Åland and its special relationship to the rest of Finland.

Of errors, there are few indeed. It is very amusing, though, to those of us who know her, to find Varpu Lindström referred to as "Pirkko," and to see her university given as Toronto rather than York. And while I would agree that "the intrusive English language raises problems" (132) at the university level, it is the number of years of Swedish-language instruction required in the elementary and secondary schools which annoys many Finnish-language students and their parents, not the English requirement to which they submit quite willingly.

The Finns have a saying, "oma tupa, oma lupa" which means "In your own house you can do as you please." In writing this book, W. R. Mead has followed a variation of this proverb, namely in writing such a reflective account as this is, you can write what you please. This he has done and in a very delightful, stimulating and readable fashion.

**Will C. van den Hoonard.** *Reluctant Pioneers. Constraints and Opportunities in an Icelandic Fishing Community.* New York: Peter Lang. 1992. xi + 173 pages.

Reviewed by RICHARD APOSTLE  
*Dalhousie University*

Ethnographic work on fisheries-related topics in the social sciences has predominantly been done by anthropologists interested in communities and their cultures. In *Reluctant Pioneers*, Will van den Hoonard has chosen a more specific focus: the occupational culture of shrimp fishermen in northwestern Iceland. Further, by utilizing the sociological literature on occupational cultures, van den Hoonard places a conceptual framework at the centre of his analysis. This immediately poses a series of theoretical questions which the author tries to address in the course of his study.

Van den Hoonard conducted his basic fieldwork over a year long period during 1973 and 1974. He supplemented this research with follow-up visits in May of 1980 and August of 1983. He concentrated on the activities of fifty or so shrimp fishermen in the village of Kaupeyri (a pseudonym), one of the major communities in the Westfjords. In his own words, the author wants to construct a "descriptive ethnography" of the occupational culture which exists among the shrimp fishermen and create a "detailed record of contemporary Icelandic society [emphasis his]."

Van den Hoonard begins with an examination of a predominantly American collection of literature on occupational culture. In particular, he employs a conceptual framework from Everett Hughes which distinguishes between the culture or code of an occupation and its techniques or policies. Van den Hoonard expands this framework to incorporate the notion that occupations develop images of themselves which may in turn lead to changes in the occupations. Following this scheme, shrimp fishers distinguish themselves from their potential "clients," the public at large; they develop an occupational image of "assertive marginality." Ideologically, marginal status may help groups to define and maintain occupational boundaries, as well as make claims that their exploration of a resource is in the public interest.

Two brief chapters follow on the history of the Westfjords and the contemporary community setting of Kaupeyri. These accounts emphasize the transition from a Danish trading town, to a fisheries-oriented community of 2,500 people which continues to exhibit a relatively high level of independent business activity and entrepreneurial ethics. The

community possesses diversified harvesting and processing sectors. Vessels range from small inshore shrimp boats to small and large longliners as well as stern trawlers. Interestingly, the shrimpers have considerable influence over the processing capacity in the community, controlling three of the six plants (including the two largest).

The shrimp fishery in Kaupeyri accounted for approximately 200 jobs—77 fishers on 42 vessels and about 120 plant workers. The 120 or so plant workers were predominately women, older men and youth. Van den Hoonard estimates that 100 families were completely or partially dependent on the fishery for a living. The shrimp fishermen are described as “reluctant pioneers” because their involvement in the shrimp fishery was necessitated by the collapse of the herring fishery in the late 1960s, and a parallel decline of the dragger fleet. Since this period, the shrimp fishery has gone from an unregulated activity to one which, by the mid-1970s had “every conceivable form of regulation,” with limited entry and quota management being the primary tools involved here.

Van den Hoonard provides a detailed account in Chapter 4 of the specific organization of the fishery. The shrimp season runs from October to April and is closely governed, especially on by-catch issues, by the National Ministry of Fisheries. After a short period in March, for repairs and maintenance, the vessels then turn to summer hand-lining activities. For a small boat fishery, some owners and crew members make good annual incomes by Icelandic standards. In 1983, a good shrimp fisherman could make about \$15,000. By comparison, a deck hand on a stern trawler made approximately \$7,000 for nine months work. A part of the shrimpers’ affluence is associated with the upscale market among overseas restaurateurs and well-to-do locals. The two-person crews on the shrimp vessels are involved in a variety of ownership relations, but the work ethos is basically a democratic one. Only 12 of the 42 vessels are co-owned; 24 have a single fisher-owner, with 6 being operated solely by the owners. Seven vessels have absentee owners and five are owned jointly with land-based concerns. While prevailing work ideologies discourage the recruitment of family members as crew on the same vessels, twenty-five percent of the two person crews did in fact involve agnatic relations. Success in shrimp fishing depends on particular specialized ecological knowledge of the fjords. The best catches are to be found ‘along the edge’ as opposed to ‘in the deep,’ but fishing on the edge is risky because of the prospect of gear damage. Shrimp fishers begin their careers young, tend to own vessels by age 35 and retire at 50.

The occupation is dangerous, in terms of loss of life, and a few of the fishers have ended up as alcoholics.

As a marginal group within Kaupeyri, the shrimpers had to contend with traditional community support for other fisheries and fleets. Because shrimp is regarded as an important feeder stock for other major species, there is persisting resentment at the prosecution of the shrimp fishery. In addition, debates over the by-catch of young cod is an ongoing management issue which generates hostility. The shrimpers have attempted to legitimize their position in the community and the larger society by developing a fisheries association (The Association of Small-Boat Owners). The Association has been reasonably effective in representing group interests against both the traditional fisheries and government authorities in Reykjavik.

The shrimpers, given the day-trip nature of their fishery, have the advantage of being quite active in local organizations. "Leadership in the Kaupeyri organizations rests entirely in the hands of the shrimpers" (90). Van den Hoonard describes the Association's relations with government, and particularly the Marine Research Institute, as conflictual. When the Association is 'going south' to Reykjavik to make representations to government, it does so as a representative of a 'hinterland' area. As in other parts of the world, their experience with government is one of an "impersonal, last-minute, style of decision making" in which there is "only a reaction to crisis after crisis" (103), rather than long-term policy setting.

The basic theoretical problems posed by van den Hoonard's analysis about occupational culture remain, to some extent, unanswered. Sociologists have generated a substantial amount of literature on occupational cultures which has been constructed out of urban/industrial cultures, particularly professional ones. The difficulty which this raises for maritime social scientists is the question of how one extends these categories to rural activities which bear some similarities, but clearly have to be distinguished in important ways. In particular, fisherfolk possess "an impressive amount of knowledge" (45) which in important ways is quite specialized. However, the relative low levels of education which prevail in fishing communities, and the lack of generality in fishing knowledge would, by conventional standards, disqualify fishing as a 'professional' activity. Nevertheless, observers, including van den Hoonard, are typically impressed by the depth and range of wisdom required to be a good fisher. Further, we know that fishers, including

these Icelandic shrimp fishers, place a high value on the independence and freedom their work gives them. In fact, the level of work satisfaction associated with such work stands out as rivalling the very high level of satisfaction typical of urban professional work. What requires more investigation is the comparative position of fishing as a work activity among occupations in advanced western economies. Superficially, one might be inclined to draw parallels between fishing knowledge and the intensive knowledge necessary to do craft work in urban settings, but this analogy also has shortcomings.

Further, we have to take account, as van den Hoonard does in Chapter 8, of the conflicts which arise from the differing knowledge bases of fishers, on the one hand, and professionals, like marine biologists, who are employed in fisheries bureaucracies. Van den Hoonard characterizes the difference in knowledge systems as that between 'ethno-science' on the part of the shrimpers and 'desk-science' on the part of the marine biologists. Given the mutual lack of understanding, shrimpers have been known to withhold valuable data for fishery officers and major conflicts have ensued over the creation of workable quota systems.

Van den Hoonard closes his study by returning to his main themes regarding occupational culture. He acknowledges that the shrimpers even after forty years of history are still regarded as 'newcomers' and, given their marginal status, are particularly inclined to develop a "mythical occupational image." Further, they engage in typical mystification of the specific knowledge they possess about successful fishing activities. However they have difficulty maintaining occupational ideologies or rationalizations because "there is very little that is not familiar to lay persons" (130). Finally, the shrimpers have not been particularly successful in articulating a claim that their activities are in the public interest. These 'reluctant pioneers' remain decidedly on the 'occupational fringe' of their industry.

This book is directly written and organized. It should appeal to a broad readership interested in work and fishing communities in marginal regions across the North Atlantic.

**Janet E. Rasmussen.** *New Land New Lives: Scandinavian Immigrants to the Pacific Northwest.* Seattle and London: University of Washington Press and Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1993. xiii + 320 pages.

Reviewed by JØRGEN DAHLIE  
*University of British Columbia*

The past three decades have witnessed a satisfying growth in both the quality and quantity of research on Scandinavian immigration. Students of migration and settlement patterns have by and large exorcised the filio-pietism and predestinarian emphasis of an earlier era, thanks in part to the work of such scholars as Ulf Beijbom,<sup>1</sup> Odd Lovoll,<sup>2</sup> Rudolph Vecoli,<sup>3</sup> and Ingrid Semmingsen,<sup>4</sup> to name just a few. Typical of the new, more analytical approach is Kristian Hvidt's 1971 *Flugten til Amerika*,<sup>5</sup> an incisive study of Danish emigration based on exhaustive manuscript and census data. But it is also Hvidt who warned that too much emphasis on statistics might make it difficult to identify the human aspect of immigration. The appearance of Rasmussen's new book is a timely reminder that migration experiences of individual Scandinavians, telling their own stories, can add much to our understanding of immigration in all of its aspects.

*New Land New Lives* is oral history and as such has limitations in the same way as history based on immigrant letters. A careful researcher will bring to this kind of evidence the same judgement, analytical skills, and conclusions one would apply to traditional documentary evidence. Rasmussen has written extensively elsewhere on the topic of Scandinavians, paying particular attention to the neglected role of immigrant women. Her pioneering work in establishing an oral history archive at Pacific Lutheran University grew out of a conviction that the so-called 'undistinguished' people were often omitted from the standard histories. *New Land New Lives* is the culmination of a decade of research and represents a model for further studies in the field of immigrant history.

The book comprises some forty-five interviews with Danes, Finns, Icelanders, Norwegians, and Swedes in the State of Washington, selected from over two hundred in the Pacific Lutheran University Archive. More than half of the interviews are of women whose roles in the acculturation and assimilative process has had little scholarly attention so far. All of those interviewed arrived in the Pacific Northwest in the first three decades of this century; their testimony speaks eloquently to the very

human and personal drama of settlement in a new and often unreceptive milieu. In making her selections the author has been candid about the process: her choices were "...dictated by the desire to offer a balanced selection, as well as the desire to highlight lively and engaging storytellers" (11). In her view, that objective required a substantial representation of women's stories.

The book is divided into several logical sections with a brief first part dealing with the immigrants' reflections on their home countries. In turn, we can follow the newcomers' reaction to the country itself, then the work experience, the changing family relations, and a final section which speaks to the traditions and cultural heritage which Scandinavians cherished. Each section has been set in context by Rasmussen with appropriate references as well as explanatory notes and comments. Also included is an appendix detailing the questionnaire used in the interviews in addition to a map of the five Nordic countries and the birthplaces of the respondents.

Overall, I am impressed by the author's deft handling of non-traditional sources and her ability to make of them a highly readable volume. This book is a substantial contribution to immigrant history: the first person accounts have the ring of authenticity, they enlarge our understanding of the migration process. If further proof were needed, Rasmussen has added another refutation of the thesis that immigrants were largely passive actors, unsure of their prospects, and largely subject to forces beyond their control. The voices of these immigrants speak of resolution, drive, success, and yes, sometimes failure but they tell their own stories. Finally, the joint publishers, the University of Washington Press and the Norwegian-American Historical Association have produced here a volume which meets their exacting publishing and editorial standards.

#### NOTES

1. Ulf Beijbom, *Swedes in Chicago: A Demographic and Social Study of the 1846-1880 Immigration*, translated by Donald Brown. Series: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia historica upsaliensia: 38 (Stockholm: Laromedelsforlagen, 1971).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Amerika, Amerika: En bok om utvandringen* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1977).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Utvandrama och Svensk-Amerika* (Stockholm: LT, 1986).

Ulf Beijbom and Rolf Johansson. *Drömmen om Amerika* (Stockholm: Forum, 1971).

2. Odd Sverre Lovoll, ed., *Makers of an American Immigrant Legacy: Essays in honor of Kenneth O. Bjork* (Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1980).

\_\_\_\_\_, *The Promise of America: A history of the Norwegian-American people* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; in co-operation with the Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1984).

\_\_\_\_\_, *A Century of Urban Life: The Norwegians in Chicago before 1930* (Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association; Chicago, Illinois: Distributed by University of Illinois Press, 1988).

\_\_\_\_\_, ed., *Nordics in America: Future of their Past* (Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1993).

3. Rudolph Vecoli and Suzanne Sinke, eds., *A Century of European Migrations, 1830–1930*. Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Series (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).

4. Ingrid Semmensen, *Norway to America: A history of migration*. Translated by Einar Haugen (Translation of *Drom og dåd*) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978).

\_\_\_\_\_, ed., *Scando-Americana: Papers on Scandinavian emigration to the United States* (Oslo: American Institut, University of Oslo, 1980).

5. Kristian Hvidt, *Flugten til Amerika eller drivkraefter masseudvandringen fra Danmark, 1868–1914* (Århus: Universitetsforlaget i Århus, 1971). Translated as: *Flight to America: The social background of 300,000 Danish Emigrants* (New York: Academic Press, 1975; 2nd edition, 1992).

**Sven H. Rossel, ed.** *A History of Danish Literature*. Volume I of *A History of Scandinavian Literatures*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992; in cooperation with the American Scandinavian Foundation. xvi+709 pages.

Reviewed by HANS MØLLER  
McGill University

This publication represents the first major effort since P. M. Mitchell's *History of Danish Literature*<sup>1</sup> to prepare a scholarly, English language book on the history of Danish literature. Since 1957, Mitchell's excellent book has served us well, but limited by its 300 pages, it did not go into as much detail, nor did it cover as many authors and approaches as Rossel's new book. English speaking students and scholars have really never before had access to such a complete and rich treatment of the history of Danish literature. It is the first volume in a series of five on the *History of Scandinavian Literatures*, two of which have now appeared. This is an extensive project of describing the rich literature of Denmark, Norway,

Sweden, Iceland and Finland, with highly respected experts from the Nordic countries as well as North-America contributing to each volume. The literatures are viewed not only as part of an interrelated Scandinavian tradition, but as part of World Literature. A comparative approach is used with emphasis throughout on social and cultural history.

Volume I deals exclusively with the history of Danish Literature covering the Middle Ages, the Reformation, the Age of Enlightenment, Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, the literature between World War I and II, and after WW II until 1990. The general editor, Sven Rossel from the University of Washington (Seattle), mounted a monumental and ambitious project and attracted many distinguished scholars from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean as contributors, such as F. J. Billeskov Jansen, David W. Colbert, Poul Houe, Faith Ingwersen, Niels Ingwersen, W. Glyn Jones, P. M. Mitchell, and Flemming Mouritsen.

Each of the ten chapters covers its particular area extensively but avoids elaborate enumeration of titles and authors—this is not an encyclopedia. The text in most chapters reads very well, but some sections, notably in Chapter 1 on the Middle Ages, do appear somewhat heavy due to the use of rather complex vocabulary; this is, however, an exception to the generally well written text. Considering the size of the volume and the scope of the topic, the 700 plus pages cover an enormous amount of material and a vast array of evaluations and analyses. The editor allowed the contributors the freedom to choose their own approach and style. As a result, a diversity of approaches is found in the text ranging from philological scrutiny to essayistic discourse, from sociological methods to the development of genres, styles, and ideologies.

For centuries, Denmark dominated the culture of Scandinavia, and indeed the whole of “Norden,” and its culture had an influence on such works as *Beowulf* and *Hamlet*, and even on major philosophical movements in Europe: Humanism, Romanticism, Realism and Existentialism. This book reaches back to the ancient runic inscriptions and the ballads; it analyses the distinctly Danish literary tradition of story telling: Steen Steensen Blicher, Hans Christian Andersen, Meir Aron Goldschmidt, Martin Andersen Nexø, Jens Peter Jacobsen, Herman Bang, Gustav Wied and Karen Blixen; as well as critical prose: Søren Kierkegaard and Georg Brandes; religious and secular poetry: Thomas Kingo, Hans Adolph Brorson, Johannes Ewald, Bernhard Severin Ingemann, Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, and dramatic stage plays:

Ludvig Holberg, Johan Ludvig Heiberg, Kaj Munk, Kjeld Abell, Carl Erik Soya, et al. While the first six chapters are of nearly equal lengths, the seventh, dealing with Danish literature from 1940 to 1990, is by far the longest (157 pages)—and wisely so, since this part of the literature is the most difficult one to access from outside Denmark. Of special interest are the last three chapters covering Faroese literature, women's literature and children's literature. Of these chapters, the last two represent an innovation inspired by the desire to show various critical approaches within the fields of women's literature and children's literature. Many of the writers discussed here are also dealt with in other parts of the book.

Another innovation is the use of the original Danish titles of books and literary works, followed by English translations. In addition, an extensive bibliography (23 pages) is provided, relating to each of the ten chapters. This bibliography is selective, limited in its scope by available translations, although some Danish titles are also listed. The index (50 pages) comprising authors, titles (Danish and English), and subjects is useful.

There are no illustrations except for three maps giving the most frequently mentioned place names. The book is attractively produced and well printed on acid free paper. The type-face is handsome, but the fairly dense text may be somewhat difficult to read as the text-block is quite large; there is an average of 40 lines per page and a fairly narrow margin.

The last 30–40 years have seen a growing interest in Scandinavian Studies in England, the United States, Canada and elsewhere. It has been difficult to supply universities and colleges with useful material to support these studies. This new *History of Danish Literature* will no doubt prove to be indispensable to educational institutions offering programs in Comparative Literature, and in Danish literature and language, as well as all major research libraries and many public libraries in English speaking countries.

#### NOTE

1. Phillip Marshall Mitchell, *A History of Danish Literature*. With an introductory chapter by Mogens Haugsted (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1957; also: New York: American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1957). 2nd augmented ed. (New York: Kraus-Thomson Organization, 1971).

**Palle Bo Bojesen.** *New Denmark, New Brunswick: Udviklingen i en dansk udvandrerkoloni 1872-1914.* Århus, Denmark: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 1992. 292 pages.

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER HALE  
*University of Alberta*

As the subtitle suggests, Palle Bo Bojesen's book is a History of the Danish colony of New Denmark in New Brunswick during the period from its founding in 1872 to the year 1914. It is the result of a decade of research into the settlement on the part of the author, and it became his thesis for the doctoral degree at the University of Aarhus in Denmark.

Bojesen tells us in his introduction that his father lived in Canada from 1909 to 1914 and that he himself travelled in Canada working for a Danish radio network after World War II. At that time he also visited many of the Danish settlements on the prairies, but he did not visit New Denmark for the first time until 1982. He became especially interested in the colony after looking through the *Legislative Council Journal* in the Provincial Archives in Fredericton, as he realized how well the early years of its existence had been documented. A second trip was made in 1985 and a final one in 1988 to complete the research.

In the next thirteen chapters Bojesen tells the story of New Denmark in as minute detail as possible, based on official records such as the *Legislative Council Journal* and other official government records, papers in Anglican Diocesan Archives among other church documents, and in Denmark, *Politiets Udvandringsprotokoller* and *Københavns Politis Journaliserede Udvandrings-sager*. In addition he has gleaned data from, for example, census statistics, land titles, maps, newspapers, local histories, and private letters. Use has been made essentially of any shred of information on the settlement that Bojesen has been able to locate. Bojesen frequently writes in a conversational style, addressing the reader, and in places he exploits the human interest potential.

The main part of the book begins by surveying the history of the establishment of New Denmark and the reasons why the Government of New Brunswick wanted to bring European settlers to the province. After the passage of its *Free Grants Act 1872*, the province contacted a certain Captain S. S. Heller to bring Danish immigrants over, and the Surveyor General, B. R. Stevenson, subsequently parcelled out land for them near the Salmon River. Each immigrant was to receive one hundred acres of free land under certain conditions and work for two years for a dollar a day. A brochure was prepared for circulation by the provincial govern-

ment which painted a very favourable picture of the area intended for settlement, but nothing was mentioned in it about the fact that it was entirely covered by forest. In Denmark, Captain Heller was able to recruit about 30 people in a very short time to return with him to Canada. These people came to the allotted site on June 19, 1872, and lived for the first period in a building called "Emigrant House," which had been built for them. The settlement was first named "Hellerup" after Captain Heller, though later changed to "New Denmark," and in the following year several more shiploads of immigrants arrived. At this point, Bojesen compares the Danish colony to New Sweden, located nearby in Maine, and the Scottish settlement of New Kincardineshire, situated south of New Denmark.

One of the most interesting sections is Chapter 8, dealing with the coming of Niels Mikkelsen Hansen as the first pastor in New Denmark. In order to be able to establish a church and survive, Hansen of the "Inner Mission" was persuaded to convert to Anglicanism and be ordained as an Anglican priest. Thus the first church in New Denmark was in fact one of The Church of England, though it was given the name St. Ansgar's and functioned very much like a Danish Lutheran church in its early years. In other chapters, Bojesen gives a history of the later years of St. Ansgar's, its attempts to find Danish-speaking priests after Hansen's retirement, and its relations with the Lutheran congregation, which was established in 1906.

The book also follows the career of Hans Lysgaard Petersen, one of the early leaders of the colony. He was a member of a number of very influential organizations and even served in the County government. However, this controversial character later became involved in fraud, which caused him to flee the province and settle in Maine. The lives of other early settlers such as Anders Carlsen and Anton Jensen are also dealt with. Bojesen looks at the economic history of the colony, in particular how the main livelihood changed from dairy farming in the first years to the growing of potatoes after the turn of the century.

Chapter 14 deals with New Denmark today, in particular the situation between the two churches and the annual festivities which are held on June 19, Founders' Day. A few comparisons are made between New Denmark and Danish settlements on the prairies. There follow three appendices—a collection of copies of tapes made of reminiscences of some of the older members of the community, a summary of material that was used in Bojesen's thesis but which was left out of the major section

of the book, and some background information on New Brunswick, Victoria County in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Anglican Church and the difference between the "Happy Danes" (followers of Grundtvig) and the "Holy Danes" (Inner Mission people). Finally there is a twelve-page summary in English.

In a number of cases, one would have liked to have some more information about an event or a person, or at least a statement to the effect that more information simply is not available. For example, Niels Mikkelsen Hansen is called "pastor" before he is ordained an Anglican priest, but it is not mentioned whether or not he had been ordained as a Lutheran minister. The reader might also want to know more about Captain S. S. Heller. In Bojesen's account, he appears out of nowhere with no mention of who he is except that he is a captain. There is evidence that in all likelihood he was a Dane. In the *Legislative Council Journal* for New Brunswick, which Bojesen has made extensive use of, his first name in several entries is written as Saren, quite likely an English corruption of the Danish Søren, and Heller could be a Danish name. Also in P. Poulsen's *Canada, som det møder Emigranten* (1929) mention is made of the Danish captain who brought the first pioneers to New Denmark. If Heller was in fact a Dane, this might help clear up the mystery as to how he and the Allan Line agent were able to get together so quickly a group of Danes willing to emigrate.

These criticisms, however, do not detract from what is a very thoroughly researched work, giving a valuable and detailed, perhaps in some cases too detailed, insight into the life of a Danish immigrant community in Canada. Thus it should be of interest not only to Scandinavianists, but also to anyone interested in Canadian or North American immigrant history and culture. Perhaps the heaviest criticism that could be levelled against the book is the fact that it is written in Danish and thus not readily accessible to a potentially large audience which does not read a Scandinavian language.

**Chris Christiansen.** *Seven Years among Prisoners of War.* Translated by Ida Egede Winther. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1994. 221 pages.

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For the last twenty years the historiography of the plight of thousands of innocent victims of the Second World War who found themselves

prisoners, helpless and consigned to an uncertain future, has been dominated by studies of the Holocaust. However, in the contemporary awareness and historical memory of observers of the time, the disappearance from the home front of thousands of young men as prisoners of war was at least as important. For governments on both sides of the conflict, the conditions to which their captured servicemen were subjected and the prospects for winning their early return were pressing, national priorities. For example, Vichy France under Marshall Petain was preoccupied with the plight of the thousands of Frenchmen held captive in Germany. They provided the occupying force with a powerful economic, social and diplomatic lever which increased the subservience and pliability of the occupied power. The welfare of prisoners of war was clearly on the national policy agenda of the belligerents. Unhappily, we now know, to our shame and our cost, that this was not the case with regard to Jews, ethnic and racial minorities, and the politically suspect who entered, many never to emerge, the maw of the concentration camps of Eastern Europe.

The distinction between prisoners of war in camps run by the military, and political prisoners of whatever description consigned to concentration camps run by para-military agencies, such as the Gestapo, is central to Christiansen's study. His concern is with the prisoners of war. Whatever humiliations, scarcities, deprivation and suffering the prisoners of war had to endure, they were not of the magnitude, one is convinced, of those inflicted upon the concentration camp inmates. Nevertheless, they were severe, as much psychological as material, especially for those held in captivity for years. Christiansen experienced the problems which confronted prisoners of war from both outside and inside, and on both—one might say all three—sides of the conflict. On the outside, the author acted as representative of the World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations in visiting allied prisoners of war in the eastern portion of the German *Reich* for four years before 1945. He served in the same capacity in visiting German POWs in England in 1946 and Italians in Egypt in 1947. With respect to his view from the inside, his official role led the Soviet authorities who occupied Berlin and eastern Germany in 1945 to suspect him of being a tool of the Nazis and to imprison him in degrading and stressful circumstances for a year before repatriating him to Denmark.

As delegate of the YMCA, Christiansen's mandate was to visit the 24 camps and six field hospitals in his jurisdiction and to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid to the prisoners as provided for by a

succession of Geneva Conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war which had been signed among the belligerents, with a few notable exceptions, since the middle of the nineteenth century. Aid raised by international subscription and by the activities of the YMCA, especially in neutral countries, took the form of reading materials, sports equipment, musical instruments, liaison with the resident chaplains and unobtrusive attempts to minister to the spiritual and psychological needs of the prisoners. (Humanitarian aid in the form of food packages, mail and clothing, fell to the International Red Cross.) He has interesting details to report on the physical circumstances of the camps with regard to overcrowded and primitive housing and sanitary facilities, the ever-present challenge of boredom and "barbed wire psychosis," and the inventiveness and good humour with which the prisoners themselves, with a little outside help and spiritual inspiration, were able to improvise on the spot in order to palliate the worst effects of camp life. In all of this, whether the camp was German or Allied, delegates like Christiansen had to walk a narrow line in order to defend from official suspicion their objectivity and neutral status. While his reception was, in many instances, polite if not cordial, he had a real job of subtle and unobtrusive education with regard to both the camp authorities and the prisoners whose needs he came to assess and respond to. In his experience most authorities came to recognize that their own nationals would be treated overseas only as well as the camp authorities themselves treated the prisoners under their jurisdiction. The German camp officers, many of whom had been prisoners of war in the 1914-18 war, were especially open to the logic of this line of argument. However, not all nationalities of prisoner were equally received. He is convinced that the Americans and British were best treated in Germany, the Poles less so, and the Soviets, with the failure of their government to adhere to the Geneva Convention, abysmally. The case of German prisoners in the Soviet Union, judging from the impressions the author garnered during his service in Germany and his captivity in Moscow, was as tragic.

Along with this chronicle of the singular efforts made by a relative handful of men (there are no women in this account) to meet almost overwhelming challenges goes the saga, understated but no less interesting, of the author's own experience. Aged 26 and a recent graduate in theology when summoned to embark on a task which dominated the next six years, Christiansen emerges as a man of integrity, decency, honesty and tolerance. He himself was not immune from barbed wire psychosis. However, his faith sustained him in the darkest hours, even when his own

confidence in himself and in his will to survive was severely tested in a Moscow prison. For this narrative of personal courage as for his contribution to our knowledge of an overlooked area of Second World War studies, Christiansen's memoir is welcome. The editors have provided a clean copy in a pleasing typeface and the translation is generally fluent, exhibiting only a few instances of literal translation from the original Danish. Readers are likely to come away better informed as well as pleased to have made the acquaintance of a genuinely humane person who did his best in challenging circumstances to serve his fellow man.

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