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Tytułem wstępu

Z wielką przyjemnością oddajemy w Państwa ręce kolejny numer *Studia Scandinavica*, ukazujący się w roku niezwykłego jubileuszu. Rok 1945 to cezura szczególna dla skandynawskiej literatury dziecięcej. Wówczas na szwedzkim rynku pojawiła się książka *Pippi Pończoszanka*, pierwsza część trylogii (1945–1948) autorstwa Astrid Lindgren, a w Finlandii wydano *Małe trolle i duża powódź* – pierwszy z dziewięciu tomów serii książek (1945–1970) napisanych i zilustrowanych przez Tove Jansson. Tym samym obie postaci, Pippi i Muminek, świętują dziś osiemdziesiąte urodziny, hucznie obchodzone w Skandynawii oraz upamiętnione na łamach naszego czasopisma.

Popularność Muminków od lat nie przemija, a ich ponadczasowość przypisywana jest doskonałej dwuadresowości i życiowej refleksji, która wciąż jest zdumiewająco aktualna. O pierwszym tomie – *Małe trolle i duża powódź* – z intrygującej perspektywy torebki Mamusi Muminka przypomina Isabel Black w otwierającym niniejszy numer artykule „What’s in a (hand)bag? Moominmamma’s handbag in *The Moomins and the Great Flood* as an assemblage ‘bundle’”.

Z kolei Pippi, rudowłosa rebeliantka, odczytywana z początku jako kontrowersyjna i kwestionująca wiele norm społecznych, z czasem stała się ikoną i ulubienicą dzieci. Wytyczyła nowe ścieżki dla literatury dziecięcej, a nade wszystko kreacji postaci dziewczęcych, które uwolniła z genderowej klatki. Na jej fundamentalnym atrybucie, sile, skupiony jest zamykający niniejszą edycję czasopisma przekład artykułu „Czy tata Pippi był Kanadyjczykiem? Siła jako motyw przewodni w trylogii Astrid Lindgren o Pippi Pończoszance” Katariny Eriksson Barajas. Jego tłumaczenie jest owocem prac szwedzkiej sekcji Naukowego Koła Tłumaczy Literatur Nordyckich w Instytucie Skandynawistyki i Fennistki UG. Artykuł Isabel Black oraz prace studenckiego koła tłumaczy tworzą swoistą klamrę, mającą w zamyśle zwrócić uwagę czytelników na szczególne zjawisko, jakim jest skandynawska – lub szerzej: nordycka – literatura dziecięca.

W dziale „Literatura” oprócz refleksji nad prozą Tove Jansson znajdują Państwo artykuły poszerzające pojęcie nordyckości – ujęte z perspektywy komparatywnej bądź przybliżające teksty kultury eksplorujące mit i tradycję. Jürg Glauser przedstawia wybrane aspekty przemian średniowiecznej mitologii skandynawskiej w kontekście historycznym, badając ich obecność zarówno w narracjach pisanych, jak i w sztuce wizualnej. Katarzyna Maćkała zgłębia dialog, który Sławomir Mrozek prowadzi z Ibsenowskim *Peer Gyntem*. Violeta Basa, wychodząc od koncepcji

autoetnografii Mary Louise Pratt, analizuje *Moją książkę o Saamach* (1911, *Muitalus sámiiid birra*) autorstwa Johana Turiego. Z kolei Mateusz Kucab proponuje porównawczą analizę *Powtórzenia* Sorena Kierkegaarda i wiersza Emily Dickinson „I’m Nobody! Who are you?”, skupiając się na poetyckim i filozoficznym oglądzie świata prezentowanym przez oboje autorów.

Dział „Kultura i edukacja” otwiera tekst Magdaleny Tutki-Gwóźdź poświęcony stronie internetowej polskiego festiwalu filmowego w Norwegii (*Polske filmdager / Polskie Dni Filmowe*). Autorka ukazuje rolę strony internetowej w kształtowaniu tożsamości festiwalu oraz promowaniu idei dialogu międzykulturowego. Kolejne trzy artykuły podejmują tematykę edukacji i studiowania w kontekście nordyckim. Zespół badawczy z Uniwersytetu Babeşa i Bolyaia w Rumunii oraz Uniwersytetu Południowo-Wschodniej Norwegii (Sanda Tomescu Baci, Roxana-Ema Dreve, Raluca-Daniela Duinea, Ioana-Andreea Mureşan, Raluca Pop, Fartein Øverland) analizuje zawodowy rozwój absolwentów studiów licencjackich z zakresu języka i literatury norweskiej. Agata Rudnik i Laura Santoo przyglądają się fińskiemu pojęciu *sisu* definiowanemu jako wytrwałość, odporność i odwaga w obliczu trudności, rozważając jego potencjał w roli narzędzia psychologicznego wspierającego studentów w radzeniu sobie ze stresem, utrzymywaniu motywacji i budowaniu odporności psychicznej. Natomiast Agata Wicenciak-Szulc omawia zagadnienia związane z nauczaniem o Holokauście w ramach szwedzkiego systemu edukacji.

W dziale „Recenzje i komunikaty” czytelnicy znajdą omówienia trzech nordystycznych publikacji: Carina Damm przybliży rozprawę Dagfinna Skre, *The Northern Route to Kingship* (2025), rzucającą nowe światło na transkulturowy proces powstawania skandynawskich królestw, Diana Ciot-Monda przedstawia *Dyr og mennesker i norsk literatur* [Zwierzęta i ludzie w literaturze norweskiej] autorstwa Henninga Howlida Wærpa, natomiast Ewelina Bator recenzuje fennistyczną antologię *Oblicza romantyzmu* pod redakcją Magdaleny Roguskiej-Németh, Zoltána Németha, Anny Buncler i Łukasza Sommera.

Dodatkowo w tej sekcji zamieszczono trzy komunikaty autorstwa Mariusza Jakimowicza. Dwa z nich dotyczą wystaw malarskich: *Against All Odds – Historical Women and New Algorithms* w Statens Museum for Kunst w Kopenhadze (31 sierpnia – 8 grudnia 2024), prezentującej prace 24 nordyckich artystek działających na przełomie XIX i XX wieku, oraz *Hertervig – Hill. Dream and Reality* w Sztokholmie, poświęconej norweskiemu malarzowi Larsowi Hertervigowi (1830–1902) oraz szwedzkiemu artyście Carlowi Fredrikowi Hillowi (1849–1911). Trzeci komunikat to recenzja inscenizacji *Gry snów* Augusta Strindberga (reżyseria: Sławomir Narloch, premiera: Teatr Narodowy, Scena przy Wierzbowej im. Jerzego Grzegorzewskiego, 13 kwietnia 2024).

Inspirującej lektury

w imieniu Redakcji życzą

Maria Sibińska oraz Hanna Dymel-Trzebiatowska

Foreword

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the latest issue of *Studia Scandinavica*, published in a year of a truly momentous anniversary. The year 1945 is a significant milestone for Scandinavian children's literature. It was then that the book *Pippi Longstocking*, the first part of a trilogy (1945–1948) by Astrid Lindgren, appeared on the Swedish market, and in Finland, *The Moomins and the Great Flood* was published – the first of a nine-part series (1945–1970), written and illustrated by Tove Jansson. Thus, both characters – Pippi and the Moomin – celebrate their eightieth birthdays today, grandly commemorated in Scandinavia and featured in *Studia Scandinavica*.

The popularity of the Moomins has endured for years, and their timelessness is attributed to their excellent double address and reflections on life, which remain surprisingly relevant. Isabel Black highlights the first volume, *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, from the intriguing perspective of Moominmamma's handbag in the opening article of this issue, "What's in a (Hand)bag? Moominmamma's Handbag in *The Moomins and the Great Flood* as an Assemblage 'Bundle'."

Meanwhile, Pippi, the red-haired rebel initially perceived as controversial and challenging many social norms, has become an icon and a children's favourite over time. She paved new paths for children's literature, especially for female characters, freeing them from the gender cage. Her fundamental attribute, strength, is the focus of the closing article in this edition of the journal, "Was Pippi's Dad Canadian? Strength as a Leading Theme in Astrid Lindgren's *Pippi Longstocking* Trilogy" by Katarina Eriksson Barajas. The article has been translated by the Swedish section of the Scientific Circle of Nordic Literature Translators at the Institute of Scandinavian and Finnish Studies at the University of Gdańsk (UG). The article by Isabel Black, together with the works of the student translation club, forms a kind of thematic frame intended to draw readers' attention to a unique phenomenon: Scandinavian – or more broadly: Nordic – children's literature.

In the "Literature" section, alongside a reflection on the prose of Tove Jansson, readers will find articles that broaden the concept of Nordicity – approached from a comparative perspective or through analyses of cultural texts that explore myth and tradition. Jürg Glauser examines selected aspects of the transformation of medieval Scandinavian mythology in a historical context, analysing its manifestations in both written narratives and visual art. Katarzyna Maćkała investigates the dialogue that Sławomir Mrożek engages in with Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. Drawing on Mary Louise

Pratt's concept of autoethnography, Violeta Basa analyzes *An Account of the Sámi* (1911, *Muitalus sámiid birra*) by Johan Turi. Meanwhile, Mateusz Kucab offers a comparative analysis of Søren Kierkegaard's *Repetition* and Emily Dickinson's poem "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?", focusing on their poetic and philosophical projects.

The "Culture and Education" section opens with an article by Magdalena Tutka-Gwóźdź, dedicated to the website of the Polish Film Festival in Norway (*Polske filmdager / Polskie Dni Filmowe*). The author highlights the role of the website in shaping the festival's identity and promoting the idea of cross-cultural dialogue. The following three articles explore various aspects of education and academic life in the Nordic context. A research team from Babeş-Bolyai University and The University of South-Eastern Norway (Sanda Tomescu Baciú, Roxana-Ema Dreve, Raluca-Daniela Duinea, Fartein Øverland, Ioana-Andreea Mureşan, Raluca Pop) examines the professional development of graduates from the bachelor's programme in Norwegian Language and Literature. Agata Rudnik and Laura Santoo focus on the Finnish concept of *sisu* – understood as perseverance, resilience, and courage in the face of adversity – exploring its potential as a psychological tool for helping students cope with stress, maintain motivation, and build mental resilience. Agata Wicenciak-Szulc, in turn, investigates issues related to Holocaust education within the Swedish educational system.

In the section "Reviews and Commentaries", readers will find reviews of three publications in the field of Nordic studies: Carina Damm reviews Dagfinn Skre's monograph *The Northern Route to Kingship* (2025), which offers new insight into the transcultural process behind the formation of the Scandinavian kingdoms; Diana Ciot-Monda discusses *Dyr og mennesker i norsk litteratur* [Animals and Humans in Norwegian Literature] by Henning Howlid Wærp; and Ewelina Bator examines the Fennistic anthology *Oblicza romantyzmu* [Faces of Romanticism], edited by Magdalena Roguska-Németh, Zoltán Németh, Anna Buncler, and Łukasz Sommer.

Additionally, this section includes three commentaries by Mariusz Jakimowicz. Two of these concern art exhibitions: *Against All Odds – Historical Women and New Algorithms* at the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen (August 31 – December 8, 2024), featuring works by 24 Nordic female artists active at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries; and *Hertervig – Hill. Dream and Reality* in Stockholm, dedicated to the Norwegian painter Lars Hertervig (1830–1902), and Swedish artist Carl Fredrik Hill (1849–1911). The third commentary discusses the staging of *A Dream Play* by August Strindberg (directed by Sławomir Narloch; premiere at the National Theatre, Jerzy Grzegorzewski Stage at Wierzbowa, April 13, 2024).

Wishing you an inspiring read,
on behalf of the Editorial Board,
Maria Sibińska and Hanna Dymel-Trzebiatowska

LITERATURA

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What's in a (hand)bag? Moominmamma's handbag in *The Moomins* and the Great Flood as an assemblage 'bundle'

This article argues that Moominmamma's handbag serves as a prime example of a bundle, a collection of items for medicinal, personal, or ceremonial use commonly associated with the archaeology of Indigenous peoples of a range of cultures. Here, I draw together examinations of archaeological bundles and Ursula K. Le Guin's Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction (Le Guin 1988 [2016]) to demonstrate the importance of the handbag as a participant in the Moomins' first literary appearance. The bag holds the keys to the Moomins' progress, a repository for healing and thriving in dark times, and plays a vital role as both a personal and medicinal bundle in *The Moomins and the Great Flood*. Using examples drawn from the new English translation of *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, I show how Moominmamma's handbag contributes to the journey undertaken through the flooded valley, and how it acts as a critical example of Le Guin's conception of the bag as an essential tool for survival against the dangers of a hostile fictional world.

Keywords: Moomins, Tove Jansson, materiality, Ursula K. Le Guin, new materialism

Introduction

This article presents an analysis of *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, specifically concentrated on Moominmamma and her handbag. The starting point for this is Ursula K. Le Guin's challenge to novelists and storytellers to shift away from considering a pointed weapon as the primary tool of survival in stories and to consider the importance of bags and containers. From here, it is possible to conceptualise Moominmamma's handbag as a bundle, a collection of objects held within a bag or container that can be carried about and used or held for both practical, emotional, and spiritual reasons. Drawing on the recent work by Meereboer and others considering the Moomin stories from a new materialist perspective,

it is possible to conceive of Moominmamma and her handbag as an assemblage committed to the preservation of the group.

In 1939, Tove Jansson found her artistic work strangled by the outbreak of war and, in her introduction to her first book, *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, wrote that “one’s work stood still; it felt completely pointless to try to create pictures” (Jansson 2024: 13; cf. Westin and Ratajczak 2012). Instead, she began to draw and write stories, primarily for her own benefit, featuring the small trolls she had grown up hearing about from her uncle. *The Moomins and the Great Flood* is unusual in its storytelling for two reasons, as elucidated by the UK’s Children’s Laureate, Frank Cottrell-Boyce in his introduction to the new edition published in 2024. Firstly, rather than being a story about venturing out into the world from a “secure base” (Hindle and Ingram 2022: 22), it is about finding one’s way to a home, a place of safety: “The Moomins have not left home in search of fame and fortune. It’s the other way around. The end of their quest is to find a home.” (Cottrell-Boyce 2024a: 6)

Secondly, the most active agent, the driver of the story and, in effect, the “hero”, is Moominmamma and not young Moomintroll, who serves as the central protagonist of most of the later Moomin canon (Cottrell-Boyce 2024a: 5; Dymel-Trzebiatowska 2017). While the majority of children’s, and indeed young adult stories, “get rid of the parents... Mother is not only coming on the adventure, she’s going to be the hero. It’s Mother who will guide Moomin through the darkness and into the light” (Cottrell-Boyce 2024a: 5). One could devote a great deal of time to Moominmamma’s role in this story, as it is one of the few where she is central, and she is usually the most active agent in each scene. Although the first sentence leads with “Moomintroll and his mother”, it is Moominmamma who takes on the role of leader, demonstrating her knowledge of the environment (“Glow-worms,” said Moominmamma (Jansson 2024: 17)). She is first to moderate her emotional responses and analyse this environment, as in when they encounter The Little Creature (an unnamed Sniff):

From the shadows behind a tree-trunk two eyes were staring at them. At first Moominmamma was frightened too, but then she said soothingly: “It’s really a very little creature. Wait, and I’ll shine a light on it. Everything looks worse in the dark, you know.” And so she picked up one of the big glowing flowers and lit the shadow up with it. (Jansson 2024: 18)

In a later scene, Moominmamma rescues a cat and her kittens when the flood waters rise:

In the chair sat a wet cat with five equally wet kittens around her. “Poor mother!” cried Moominmamma, and she jumped into the water all the way up to her waist. “Hold on to me, and I’ll try to catch them with my tail!” (Jansson 2024: 38)

Moominmamma leads both Moomintroll and the Little Creature throughout the story, both driving the action forward and providing solace whenever things go wrong, the handbag acting as a participant in all these activities. Key to this agency is an unexpected item. Like many displaced persons, the Moomins carry few of their personal possessions, and are pictured throughout *The Moomins and the Great Flood* with only one item consistently: Moominmamma's handbag.

This article focuses on the primary tool Moominmamma uses to facilitate her journey with Moomintroll, the "little creature" (an early version of Sniff): her handbag. I argue here that Moominmamma's handbag serves as a quintessential example of Ursula K. Le Guin's *Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, as it is central to the Moomins' survival throughout *The Moomins and the Great Flood*. In addition, it demonstrates how an object can become central to a character or group of characters, an active agent in the quest to survive against great harm. Moominmamma's handbag and its changing contents constitute a bundle committed to surviving and thriving when faced with adversity that is not only practical but emotional in nature.

Theoretical Approaches

There is extensive literature on Tove Jansson and the Moomins, approaching them from a range of different angles (Meereboer 2022). In 2022, *Infant Observation* devoted a special edition to psychoanalytic perspectives on Tove Jansson's most famous creations (Raneberg 2022). Increasingly, however, the physical environments and the materiality of the Moomins have begun to draw more attention (Raneberg 2022: 18). This is perhaps unsurprising, as the Moomins' world is deeply embedded with ecological and community narratives that highlight the importance of engagement with the physical world. In recent years, Sara Heinämaa has investigated the emotional undercurrents embedded in Tove Jansson's illustrations of Moominvalley, while Zoe Jaques has considered the evocations of pastoral imagery and nostalgia in the Valley and the Moomins' world (Heinämaa 2018; Jaques 2014). Hanna Dymel-Trzebiatowska has analysed the character of Moominmamma herself, describing her as "multi-faceted", her inspiration being Tove Jansson's own mother (Dymel-Trzebiatowska 2017: 20). Agneta Rehal Johansson includes an analysis of Moominmamma's own artwork in *Moominpappa at Sea*, remarking that: "le sac peint symbolise donc évidemment son rôle de mère de famille" ["the painted bag therefore obviously symbolises her role as mother of the family"] (Rehal Johansson 2018: 25; tr. I.B.).

In particular, Arwen Dagmar Meereboer has investigated Moominpappa's exploits and adventures as a helpful addition to Jane Bennett's seminal work on the interactions between the physical matter of the world and humans, *Vibrant Matter* (Meereboer 2022). Meereboer draws on Jane Bennett's argument that literature can act as an intervention in the typical understanding of the relationship

between humans and objects (Bennett 2009). Bennett challenged the assertion by Bill Brown that objects only attain individuality when broken (Meereboer 2022). Meereboer draws out Bennett's challenge that children's fiction can deploy an almost animist understanding of human-object relationships, whereby the object is individualised without being broken (Meereboer 2022: 19). However, when considering Moominmamma and her handbag, it is necessary to conceptualise not only the handbag but its contents as significant participants in *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, which is where the possibility of treating the handbag as a bundle becomes relevant. There is power in considering the Moomins and their interactions with a handbag's bundle function as a demonstration of Ursula K. Le Guin's *Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* and Jane Bennett's argument about children's fiction and their interactions with the world around them. It serves to deepen our understanding of the complex interactions and supportive tools we rely on in desperate times and our emotional ties to objects we consider essential to ourselves beyond their obvious functionality.

Bags and Bundles

Ursula K. Le Guin is one of the pre-eminent philosophers and writers of science fiction and fantasy (Haraway 2019). She wrote for children, young adults, and adults, and her stories were fearless in their exploration of complex philosophical and political points (Shin and Vickers 2019). In *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* (Le Guin 2016), for example, she famously skewered the concept of utopia by examining the choices faced when one's security is based on the suffering of others.

The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction built on her fictional explorations of feminist and leftist thinking by challenging the idea that the most important object in the hero's story was a weapon. She drew on research on the earliest human societies about the relative balance between food acquired by hunting and food collected and brought back to camp to argue that, whilst hunters in a group may have had a heroic story to tell, it was the gatherers and the bags they used to collect, who provided the majority of the support to the group (Le Guin 1988 [2019]: 25). Le Guin debates the merits of stories founded on the weapon versus collection:

It is hard to tell a really gripping tale of how I wrested a wild oat seed from its husk, and then another, and then another, and then another... No, it does not compare, it cannot compete with how I thrust my spear deep into the titanic hairy flank while Oob, impaled on one huge sweeping tusk, writhed screaming, and blood spouted everywhere in crimson torrents. (Le Guin 1988 [2019]: 27)

She counters all this by remarking,

We've heard it, we've all heard all about all the sticks and spears and swords, the things to bash and poke and hit with, the long, hard things, but we have not heard about the thing to put things in, the container for the thing contained. That is a new story. That is news. (Le Guin 1988 [2019]: 29)

This presents an opportunity for writers to consider what objects are central to human survival that are not about committing violence against dangerous others in a hostile environment, but as supportive items that can provide comfort in times of distress.

Within the field of archaeology, the bag has long been viewed as a critical technology for human development (Fisher 1975; Le Guin 1988). Bags allow people to carry items they would otherwise have to hold, which is especially important when travelling great distances or gathering food for a group to eat later (Le Guin 1988: 28). They also hold a ritual function, and several indigenous societies have independently developed the idea of a small bag, pouch, or bundle, as a means of healing or protection (Brown Vega 2015). Early examples in the ancient Near East include carrying small obsidian rocks in bags to prevent epileptic seizures (Healey forthcoming), and a tradition amongst the Blackfoot to carry objects associated with a loved one for a year after their death (Zedeño 2008). It is perhaps not surprising, then, that when traversing such a difficult landscape, the most essential tool for the little trolls and their friends is the bag.

Moominmamma and Her Handbag

Moominmamma is, throughout Tove Jansson's books, represented using traditional semiotics of motherhood:

W każdym widzi dobro i nikogo nie wini – jej tolerancja i wyrozumiałość sięgają ideału. Doskonale opanowała sokratejską majeutykę, którą realizuje w sprawnie przeprowadzanych dialogach, chętnie przybierając maskę naiwności. [She sees the good in everyone and blames no one – her tolerance and understanding are ideal. She has mastered Socratic maieutics perfectly, which she realizes in well-conducted dialogues, willingly adopting the mask of naivety]. (Dymel-Trzebiatowska 2017: 14; tr. I.B.; cf. Matthiessen 2022)

She was initially drawn with only the handbag as an identifier, the apron being added later at the suggestion of Charles Sutton, the English publisher at Associated Newspapers (Moomin Characters 2016). These two objects function to underscore her key role as provider and supporter of the Moomin family's needs, as well as the needs of the many inhabitants of Moominvalley who come to stay (Dymel-Trzebiatowska 2017: 15). Conforming to stereotypes of the expectations

of a mother's role in the family, Jansson herself described Moominmamma as "never let[ting] them see when she is worrying about them, or notice when she is waiting for them" (Jansson 2024: 77).

Despite this, aspects of Moominmamma's individuality emerge from both Jansson's notes and her writing. In the former, Jansson describes Moominmamma as enjoying "collecting shells and making boats out of bark" (Jansson 2024: 77), highlighting her interest in collecting items and crafting. This creativity is reproduced in one comic, where Moominmamma takes up painting and produces a mural on the Moomin House walls (Dymel-Trzebiatowska 2017: 18). Agneta Rehal-Johansson includes an analysis of Moominmamma's artwork, remarking that: "le sac peint symbolise donc évidemment son rôle de mère de famille" ["the painted bag therefore obviously symbolises her role as mother of the family"] (Rehal-Johansson 2018: 25; tr. I.B.). The handbag makes it possible for Moominmamma to carry with her a range of emotionally and physically supportive items, very similar to a bundle, a collection of objects considered to have personal or protective value to her. Zedeño describes a bundle as "a complex object with a singular life history that begins in an individual's dream or vision", which becomes a powerful object regarded as a person in its own right by its owner, "each with its own life history, personality, and position in society" (2008: 364). It is possible to think of Moominmamma's handbag as both a personal and a medicinal bundle because although it lacks a defined ceremonial purpose, it does have incredible personal significance to Moominmamma and contains both personal and biographical items linked to Moominmamma's interests and creativity, as well as objects that come into use when they are required for healing or comfort by herself or others.

The handbag itself was drawn consistently, even from the earliest drawings of Moominmamma: it is large and black, top-opening with a metal fastening and catch on the outside, a single black strap, and four pockets on the inner (Ardagh 2024: 40). It resembles Art Deco, top-opening designs with chrome clasps and expandable bases, like the Ivo Collection's No. 284, or even No. 287 (Ivo Collection 2024). However, its design is most strikingly reminiscent of classic Cordé designs of the 1940s (Dager 2022). The physical bag as drawn initially appears to be primarily a fashion item, intended to be seen in urban contexts: Germany in the 1920s, Paris or even London in the 1940s. Its presence in the timeless world of the Moomins is unusual, especially its journey through the dark and watery landscape of *The Moomins and the Great Flood*. Its appearance points to a material-semiotic link back to the human world of the 1930s and 1940s. The handbag is and was a ubiquitous tool associated with a woman who needed something to carry necessities in (Haraway 2019: 6). Its very survival in a hostile landscape lends support to the narrative of dislocation the Moomins experience during *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, but also the tenacity of the Moomins; its survival and usefulness illustrates the similar tenacity of Moominmamma's

essential personality. Even in times of distress, she can rise to the occasion, with the assistance of her trusty bag.

Her emotional relationship with it indicates that it has talismanic significance to her. The handbag, which is almost ubiquitous in representations of Moominmamma, is an essential part of who she is as a person, providing care and support to others, and collecting items in the environment for both others' material needs and her creative flourishing. In her notes, Jansson remarks that Moominmamma "keeps things she may suddenly need in a large bag: for example, stomach powder and wire wool, sweets, dry socks and the like" (Jansson 2024: 78). It has such a strong relationship with Moominmamma that in *The World of Moominvalley*, it has its own double-page spread (Ardagh 2024: 40–41). Here, it is described as having "four pockets" and "full of very useful things" (Ardagh 2024: 40).

Moominmamma's connection to the handbag is intense: "Moominmamma never goes anywhere without her trust large, black handbag" (Ardagh 2024: 40), such that when the handbag is imperilled or goes missing, she becomes distraught. In *Finn Family Moomintroll*, the handbag is taken by Thingummy and Bob, who want to use it to sleep in. The handbag's loss makes headline news in the valley and a party is promised as a reward to the finder (Jansson 2009). In *The Exploits of Moominpappa, described by himself*, Moominmamma is depicted as concerned at even its potential absence, or at least is perceived this way by Moominpappa, the first-person narrator of the episode (Jansson 2002). Moominmamma is washed up on the beach in the final moments of Moominpappa's memoirs, and her primary concern, immediately, is for the location and safety of the handbag:

This was a Moomin, like myself, but still more beautiful, a little Moomin woman that I had saved!

Suddenly, she sat up and cried: "Save my handbag! Oh, save my handbag!"

"But you're holding it," I answered. (Jansson 2002: 124)

Moominmamma's ability to hold onto the handbag, even when submerged in the sea without any other mechanism for support, is a testament to how critical she finds it to herself and her survival. Recovering it provides her with a surge of relief and foundation powder to restore her general appearance:

"Oh glory be!" she said. She opened her large black handbag and started rummaging in its depths. At last she found her powder compact.

"I'm afraid my powder's sea-damaged," she said sadly.

"You're every bit as beautiful without it," I replied gallantly.

She gave me an unfathomable look and blushed deeply. (Jansson 2002: 124)

When a storm rages through Moominvalley, she even sleeps with the bag under her pillow, as if it might provide protection and reassurance from there (Jansson

2002: 66). This is also a *prima facie* example of Zedeño's (2008: 362–363) argument for a bundle (the handbag) being treated as a person, its safety and security as vital as any human – or Moomin – and as able to protect its owner from harm.

In the Flood

The compelling relationship between Moominmamma and her handbag is no better expressed in detail than in *The Moomins and the Great Flood*. The handbag and Moominmamma are tied together in the illustrations: a total of forty-six pictures are included in the new edition, reproducing the originals from the first publication. Of these, Moominmamma is visible and identifiable in twenty-five. The handbag appears with Moominmamma in fifteen. These drawings show the handbag either held by Moominmamma in action, such as climbing the rope ladder into the gentleman's sweet world (Jansson 2024: 28), held up when she approaches the Hattifatteners (Jansson 2024: 30), or set beside her while she interacts with others. These instances include her sleeping (Jansson 2024: 24) and evading the ant-lion (Jansson 2024: 35). The handbag even appears in a drawing of Moominmamma and Moomintroll hugging each other after hearing news of Moominpappa from a boy (Jansson 2024: 47). Here, the handbag hovers suspended in midair. She might have discarded it in her rush to the hug, but it remains present, even when Moominmamma's focus is elsewhere. This is similar to the way the handbag sits on the edge of the ant-lion's hole when Moominmamma falls in (Jansson 2024: 36).

It is not only the bag's presence that is important, however; its most critical role is as a carrier of useful items in the context of adversity. Its contents carry two functions, either to provide comfort and support to Moominmamma and those around her or as indicators of her creative nature, her propensity for collecting items for art or personal joy. As such, and especially regarding the former set of items, the handbag functions as a medicine bundle during *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, a protective set of objects that can be brought into use as and when required because they are carried with the characters as they move through the landscape (Le Guin 1988 [2019]).

Moominmamma uses the handbag to introduce vital items she always keeps with her, such as the dry socks she provides to Moomintroll (Jansson 2024: 21), and the corkscrew she uses to open the bottle containing Moominpappa's message (Jansson 2024: 56). She produces chocolate from the handbag when all three of them are hungry and cannot find enough food, or food that nourishes them for the journey (Jansson 2024: 51). This returns to the model of Moominmamma as a caring mother, especially through the constant presence and use of the handbag. In an early scene, the three travellers must cross a long stretch of muddy water. Moomintroll slips and nearly falls in, and Moominmamma not only catches him, but demonstrates the value of the handbag as a hold-all for necessities against harm:

Moomintroll slipped and nearly fell in, but his mother caught hold of him at the last moment. "We shall have to go on by boat," she said. "Now your feet are soaked. You're sure to catch cold." Then she got out a pair of dry socks for him from her handbag. (Jansson 2024: 21)

Here we see the Moominmamma–handbag assemblage providing comfort and security, even though Moomins do not actually wear socks. Here, the socks cement the social bond between Moomintroll and his mother, even if he does not wear them. They provide a connection and demonstrate Moominmamma's capacity and desire to comfort her son, exemplifying how the handbag–contents assemblage can function as an aid to this activity.

While Meereboer primarily deals with assemblages as causative agents of harm (2022: 21–22), the handbag functions as an assemblage protecting against harm. Bundles often appear to have had medicinal purposes, as Zedeño describes them as "objects that play contemporary roles toward specific targets, such as curing illnesses, making rain, or finding lost objects" (2008: 365). While Meereboer analysed harmful assemblages in the *Exploits of Moominpappa*, it is possible to view Moominmamma as part of a protective assemblage with her handbag bundle, i.e., Moominmamma–handbag–contents against the potential harmful assemblages of the environment. Perhaps the most emblematic moment for the handbag as an exemplar of protective assemblage is during a short scene where emotions for all three characters dip. As the rain falls and the waters begin to rise in the valley, the three main characters wake up to a dismal scene of rain: "Everything was grey and melancholy" (Jansson 2024: 51). Moominmamma shows foresight, care, and comfort to Moomintroll and the Little Creature, during this moment of gloom, providing both emotional and nutritional succour kept in the handbag for the right moment:

"It's no good, we must go on," said Moominmamma. "But here is something for you which I've been saving until it was really needed." And then she produced a large bar of chocolate from her handbag. She had taken it with her from the old gentleman's wonderful garden. She split it in two and gave them each a piece. (Jansson 2024: 51)

This latter instance stands out as a demonstration of the functionality of the bag in the context of adversity, as items can be added to the assemblage and carried along, to be taken out when required. It also points to that critical aspect of Moominmamma as a collector, and the handbag as a vital tool in this activity. Collecting the chocolate occurs off-page and is never described during the sequence in the old gentleman's garden but provides an example of how Moominmamma operates in her environment, constantly identifying items that might become useful later and storing them away in the bag just in case.

In a later scene, the trio discover a bottle with a message in it. It is Moominmamma who not only notices the value of the bottle and the message it contains but has the solution to the problem of accessing it:

“But don’t you see?” said [Moominmamma], seriously. “It’s something very interesting, it’s a message in a bottle. There’s a letter inside.” And then she took a corkscrew out of her handbag and uncorked the bottle. (Jansson 2024: 56)

Here, the handbag unexpectedly provides the perfect tool to open the bottle, presenting another of its functions within the Moominmamma–handbag assemblage: the capacity to hold items for which a use has not yet been found but which may later prove essential.

The handbag’s presence is felt, and its importance can be noted even when the handbag itself is not drawn. The ten images where the handbag is absent are mostly those where Moominmamma is on the boat, during the flood itself, or providing care and support to other characters. These include the small picture of Moominmamma holding up socks for a wet Moomintroll (Jansson 2024: 21) and the illustration of her comforting the Little Creature on page 40. The handbag is still present on the boat, but as only Moominmamma’s upper half is seen over the gunwale, the handbag is obscured. Otherwise, even when the Moomins are shown from a great distance and are very small, such as in the first and last illustrations, the handbag is still stubbornly there.

Conclusions

Children’s fiction presents many opportunities to encounter the material world in new and imaginative ways. This includes as a mediator of, and refuge from, traumatic experiences, such as being lost refugees in a terrible, uncertain land. In October 2024, the artistic network Counterpoints and the International Federation of the Red Cross announced their intention to work with Moomin Characters Oy, which owns and manages licenses to use the Moomin characters created by Tove Jansson, on an exhibit to be held in Refugee Week in June 2025 (Counterpoints 2024; Moomin Characters 2024). This included four artworks to go on display in four UK cities in the following year, a competition for children to design their own perfect “Moomin House”, and the republication of *The Moomins and the Great Flood*, Tove Jansson’s first Moomin story, by Sort of Books.

The intention behind the collaboration is to highlight the need to provide support and refuge to those in need at a time when climate change, a proliferation of conflict globally, and resource insecurity have led to a rapid increase in those seeking shelter and a home elsewhere. It also highlights the difficulty for those seeking shelter to find creative expression in an increasingly uncertain world. In *The Moomins*

and the Great Flood, Tove Jansson demonstrates the possibilities of the carrier bag theory of fiction by representing that something as simple and quotidian as a handbag could be the tool key to the Moomins' survival without ever being used for violence.

While the Moomin House remains the objective, the image of shelter and refuge in uncertain times, when on the move, bags can provide security for itinerant travellers that is of unspoken criticality. As such, examining the role of the handbag and its importance to Moominmamma is essential in understanding the migrant experience and human entanglements with the objects that matter to them. It serves as an opportunity to consider the story as a bag, carrying all the hopes and fears of those on uncertain journeys through difficult worlds, as Ursula K. Le Guin and Tove Jansson hoped to achieve.

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Transmission – transformation – memory: Reflections on modern recreating pre-modern Nordic myths

This article treats various general aspects of transformations in Viking Age and medieval Scandinavian mythology as they appear in written narratives and visual pictures. In the first paragraph, some basic questions of the phenomenon of variation in the pre-modern manuscript transmission are discussed. The second paragraph analyses different versions of the Old Norse-Icelandic myths about the precious mead in modern literature. In the final paragraph, transmission and myth are integrated into a combined look at transformations with regard to cultural memory.

Keywords: transmission, transformation, manuscript variance, cultural memory, Scandinavian mythology

1. Introductory remarks

Working with Viking Age and medieval Old Norse-Icelandic textual culture is essentially working with transformations in pre-modern texts and images. These changes are in a fundamental way different from what one encounters in modern and contemporary author- or artist-fixed works. Changes of whatever kind are by no means restricted to transformations caused by social, political, cultural developments in global cultures since 1945. Quite the contrary, phenomena of changes, be they verbal, visual, acoustic (oral/aural) or related to other media, have been ubiquitous through the ages, and media revolutions of different kinds have taken place long before the World Wide Web was invented. Even societies that from our perspective were supposedly stable, static and developed slowly, such as for example the European Middle Ages, were characterized by continuous changes and constant transformations of the ways in which they expressed their cultural forms.

The following short reflections on some features of re-creating mythical narratives in pre-modern Nordic literature were first presented at the international conference “Cultural and social transformations in Post-War Scandinavia and their reflection

in contemporary literature, film and arts”, Tischner European University, Center for Nordic Culture “Nordicus”, Kraków, 25th–27th October 2023. The oral form of the presentation has only been moderately adopted. This article continues some recent works in the fields of pre-modern Nordic memory studies and media studies.¹

2. Transformation I: Transmission

Archaic, medieval, pre-modern and to a certain degree early modern literary culture was characterized by handwritten transmission, by a continuous activity of copying texts and thereby changing them slightly or substantially, voluntarily or incidentally. In the field of literature, the result of such tendencies to change and transform contents, genres, styles and so on was what we today in narratology call unstable, fluid, or unfixed texts. This was such a widespread feature of medieval literature, that the French philologist Bernard Cerquiglini (1947–), in a famous essay from 1989, *Éloge de la variante* (English translation *In Praise of the Variant*, 1999), made the statement that the Middle Ages were not only characterized by variants in handwritten manuscripts, but rather that the Middle Ages and medieval textuality were variant: “Tout, dans l’inscription littéraire médiévale, paraît échapper à la conception moderne du texte, à la pensée textuaire.” (Cerquiglini 1989: 43) / “Everything about medieval literary inscription seems to elude the modern conception of the text, of textual thought.” (Cerquiglini 1999: 21) And Cerquiglini continued: “L’œuvre littéraire, au Moyen Age, est une variable.” (Cerquiglini 1989: 57) / “In the Middle Ages the literary work was a variable.” (Cerquiglini 1999: 33) This fact had fundamental effects on the pre-modern idea of texts and their stability respectively fluidity. Transformation and change were the “essence” of medieval and early modern literature. In recent medieval studies observations about this basic and fundamental nature of pre-modern literary culture led to a performative turn, the so-called “New Philology”, or “Material Philology”, and this new conception of medieval textuality had in its way far-reaching consequences for scholarly approaches applied to and aesthetic evaluations made of old texts in the past thirty years or so. As one of the results of these reconsiderations, each extant manuscript of a medieval narrative was given a voice and is now assessed in its own right and valued and analysed accordingly. That movement was a significant change from earlier scholarship that as a rule had focused on the oldest manuscripts as these were considered “best” because of their age and supposed closeness to a now lost original.²

¹ See for example Bergsveinn Birgisson 2007; Bergsveinn Birgisson 2010; Driscoll 2010; Bergsveinn Birgisson 2018; Glauser 2018a; Glauser 2018b; Glauser, Hermann, Mitchell 2018; Heslop, Glauser 2018; Horn, Johansson 2021; Hermann 2022; Heslop 2022; Glauser 2019; Glauser 2023; Valpola-Walker 2025.

² For one of the most profound discussions of these methodological changes and new approaches following from them in saga studies see Driscoll 2010.

3. Transformation II: Myth

When it comes to medieval Scandinavian literature and its transmission and variance, it is first and foremost mythological narratives that offer some splendid examples of this literature of transformation, as one could call it. In a seminal article with the title “Wirklichkeitsbegriff und Wirkungspotential des Mythos” [Reality concept and impact potential of myth], published in 1971, the German philosopher Hans Blumenberg (1920–96) argued that myths must be understood as phenomena that have always already been transformed to a state of “reception”:

Eine Betrachtungsweise wie die hier vorzuschlagende sucht nicht historisch oder philologisch zu klären, was “der Mythos” ursprünglich oder in einer bestimmten Phase unserer Geschichte bzw. Vorgeschichte gewesen sein mag; vielmehr wird er als immer schon in Rezeption übergegangen verstanden. [An approach such as the present one does not intend to look for a historical or philological explanation of what “the myth” originally or in a specific period of our history or pre-history might have been; rather, myth is understood as something that has always already transgressed to reception.] (Blumenberg 1971: 28; tr. J.G.)

According to H. Blumenberg, there are no “original” myths accessible to us. So, in the specific case of pre-Christian Scandinavian mythology, what *is* transmitted for instance on pre-Christian Viking Age picture stones or in Christian medieval as well as in post-Reformation manuscripts on vellum or paper are mythological narratives, or fragments of such narratives, that had been and were constantly re-used and re-written. And consequently, as long as they are (re)used and are still part of an actively performed transmission, myths stay alive.

It is not at all merely in recent times that (mythic) narratives from the Scandinavian Viking Age and medieval times have been transformed and adapted to new media and as such enjoyed tremendous popularity, although there is to be sure a wealth of recent modern adaptations of old stories in both written, visual, and other forms. Among the many works of global literature and world films based heavily on Nordic mythology, but representing only tips of the iceberg, are of course J.R.R. Tolkien’s (1892–1973) fantasy novels *The Lord of the Rings* (1–3, 1937–49), filmed by Peter Jackson (1961–) in the motion picture trilogy with the same title (2001–03); George R.R. Martin’s (1948–) books *A Song of Ice and Fire* (1–5, 1996–2011), the basis of the fantasy TV-series *Game of Thrones* (2011–19) by David Benioff (1970–) and D.B. Weiss (1971–); or Michael Hirst’s (1952–) historical drama TV-series *Vikings* (2013–20). Viewed in the long perspective of transmission and transformation of mythic story telling it must be critically noticed that many of these modern adaptations are disappointing. The main reason is that they tend to make the wonderfully ambivalent, ambiguous, errant, and unconcise old tales unambivalent and unambiguous, straightforward and simplified. The new aesthetics, owed to the exigencies of the current media, is for the most part one of predictability in both content and form and thus the adaptations usually offer little that is unexpected.

Today's global popularity of Scandinavian mythology in contemporary media is however only the latest link in the very long chain of retold myths.³ Early modern, modern, and contemporary writers in the Nordic countries have been attracted by the pre-Christian myths for centuries. Among these, many excellent works were the result of the culture of re-writing mythological narratives. The stories about the pagan gods were for instance popular themes in the magic realism Scandinavian literature of the 1980s and 1990s, and it is especially in modern and contemporary Icelandic literature that highly innovative examples of this movement appeared. *Blóðhofnir* (2010, English translation *Bloodhoof*, 2012), e.g., is a fascinating recent re-interpretation of the Eddic poem *Skírnismál* [The Lay of Skírnir] from the point of view of the giantess Gerðr, written by the contemporary Icelandic writer, Gerður Kristný (1970–).

Another prominent example was Svava Jakobsdóttir's (1930–2004) somewhat older novel *Gunnlaðar saga* (1987, English translation *Gunnlöth's Tale*, 2011). It takes up the ubiquitous myth of the mead of poetry which tells of how Odin rescued or rather stole the precious mead from the giants. This story is one of the central and most influential and long-lived narratives in Old Norse-Icelandic literary and visual culture. The myth of the mead is a typically multiform narrative that has been preserved in Viking Age, medieval, modern and contemporary Scandinavian literature and other medial forms whose continuous development and changes have not come to an end yet (see Figures 2–5). It was alluded to and transmitted in countless metaphoric tropes in the poems of early Norwegian and Icelandic skalds of the Viking period, in texts such as the prosaic and poetic eddas and other medieval writings, as well as perhaps on at least one Viking Age Gotlandic picture stone (see Figure 1). In her significant novel, Svava Jakobsdóttir succeeds in presenting the old myth in a fresh and attractive way. Also, Svava's approach was one of magic realism. She re-wrote the old myth by building on textual allusions in the *Poetic Edda* that are assumed to be older than the medieval narrative in the thirteenth century's *Prose Edda* and tells the story from the perspective of the female figure Gunnlöð who in her novel is not a victim as in the *Prose Edda* but a strong figure of sovereignty.

Almost in the same year as *Gunnlaðar saga* appeared, the Norwegian author Tor Åge Bringsværd (1939–) published a book on the same myth: *Den enøyde kongen* [The one-eyed king], illustrated by the well-known Norwegian designer Finn Graff (1938–) (Bringsværd 1986). While the quite drastic illustrations are an adequate transformation of a medieval narrative to a contemporary imagery, the Norwegian text reduces some of the myth's subtleties.⁴

³ For some recent works on the reception of Old Norse-Icelandic myths in modern and contemporary literary culture see for example Clunies Ross 1994; Lönnroth 1996; Sverrir Tómasson 1996; Larrington, Quinn, Schorn 2016; Zernack, Schulz 2019 (this work is volume 6 of a series on *Edda-Rezeption*).

⁴ *Den enøyde kongen* is volume 3 in the series *Vår gamle gudelære* [Our old mythology] (1–12, 1985–95); it is based on a series Bringsværd had written for the Norwegian TV in 1982.

There are plenty of other re-appropriations of old myths in modern Scandinavian discourses. Another interesting case that shows a dynamic re-use of Scandinavian mythology were the Danish artist Asger Jorn's avant-garde contributions in which he used Eddic and other "old" narrative and primarily visual materials in his attempts to revitalize art after World War II.⁵ A member of the COBRA-group (1948–51), Asger Jorn (1914–73), together with other international artists, in 1962 founded a so-called "Skandinavisk Institut for Sammenlignende Vandalisme" [Scandinavian Institute for Comparative Vandalism]. He postulated the existence of a Nordic, 10.000 years old unbroken, pictorial tradition ("billedtradition"), which he for example found in the so-called *helleristninger* (rock carvings, rock engravings, or petroglyphs). In his book *Ting og Polis* (1964), Jorn polemized *inter alia* against N.F.S. Grundtvig's (1783–1872) myth-reception in *Brage-Snak* (1844/1876): "Odin med det ene øje. Thor med de ødelagte tæer. Tyr uden hånd osv. Nordens gudeverden er en mærkelig flok invalider og krøblinge." [Odin with only one eye. Thor with maimed toes. Tyr without one hand etc. The Nordic pantheon is a strange bunch of invalids and cripples.] (Jorn 1964: 78; tr. J.G.) But by polemizing against Grundtvig's views, informed by national romanticist ideas of the early nineteenth century, Jorn in fact recycled some of the myths. One of the most fascinating features in Jorn's multifarious works is to see how he thinks the Nordic myths from their visual side and not merely as verbal narratives. In his opinion which is an artist's and not primarily a philologist's, the pictorial tradition had more weight than the written texts. Here, Jorn is fully congruent with art historians such as Aby Warburg or scholars of cognitive literary studies such as Bergsveinn Birgisson (see below). Neo-'myths' as the ones created by Jorn contribute to shape new understandings and forms of memory about the Nordic past. One of the reasons of the Norse myths' success through the ages and not least in the past couple of decades is their continuously being part of an active process of reception, re-creation, and transformation. If not transformed and adapted to new cultural and medial circumstances, they would have died out a long time ago, fallen into oblivion, and not become integrated in the archive of narratives and images that formed the cultural memory. So, it is not despite, but precisely because of the many ongoing transformations that Old Norse-Icelandic myths are still alive.⁶

4. Transformation III: Memory

If Blumenberg is right in stating that there was no "original" myth nor had there ever been any such primordial mythic narrative, it means that myths never existed in clean, unspoiled, unmediated forms. What was and may still be accessible to us

⁵ For the following see Klaus Müller-Wille's excellent article on Asger Jorn (Müller-Wille 2011).

⁶ See also Kozák 2019.

are thus “merely” reworkings of earlier narratives, and these, as their earlier versions in previous times, had always already been mediated during the myth’s transmission, “Rezeption”. “Reception”, as it was defined by the representatives of the 1960s and 1970s reception or reader-response theory, among them Blumenberg, is essentially nothing else but intertextual memory in literature, continuous re-shapings, actualizations, and manifestations of older stages of narrations.⁷ As a consequence of this, memory must be seen as the result of a common activity of various narrators and audiences. Just as myths, memories are the outcome of such collective, discursive authorship and reception produced as a part of their long-term transmission.

In the massive body of Old Norse narratives, such stories are among others assembled in the *Prose Edda* from the thirteenth century, and they represent narratively cast memorized memories. Exactly like the diverse media of transmission memory does not exist as an isolated and stable fact. It is entirely dependent on communication, interactive dialogue, and social cultural collaboration. The modern Greek term for “fairy tale” – paramyth (παράμυθία) – includes many of these discursive, playful, non-static, fluid, variant features of storytelling in oral and written transmission and could serve as an apt concept for describing the mnemonics of myths. Myths as well as memories cannot exist without narrative discourse of this kind.⁸

As pointed out by the Icelandic author and scholar Bergsveinn Birgisson (1971–), the activity of remembering is often set in motion by some forceful and often awesome and bizarre pictoriality, especially found in the wide-spread tropes of the kennings in Old Norse-Icelandic skaldic and Eddic poetry from the early Middle Ages (see also Glauser 2019). As an example of a kenning for “sword” the compound *ímun-laukr* “battle-leek” from Eyvindr skáldaspillir’s (Norwegian poetry of the tenth century) *Lausavísa* 8 could be mentioned. In the Eddic *Hymiskviða* [Hymir’s Poem], stanza 27, the enigmatic word *brim-svín*, literally meaning “surf-pig(s)”, is interpreted either as “ship” or “whales”.⁹ In the same vein, the term pathos formula (“Pathosformel”), conceived and shaped by the German art historian Aby Warburg (1866–1929) to describe widely known and commonly accepted images of excitation (“Erregungsbilder”), can be applied to scrutinize the mnemonic tropes created by the skalds in their kennings. A pathos formula is “an emotionally charged visual trope” (Becker 2013: 1) that evokes magically efficacious images of excitation (“magisch wirksame Erregungsbilder”, Echle).¹⁰

⁷ See e.g. Renate Lachmann’s seminal article on mnemonics and intertextuality as fundamental aspects of literature in general (Lachmann 2008).

⁸ I thank Alexia Panagiotidis, MA, University of Zurich, for drawing my attention to the concept of paramyth at the international conference “Paramyth. The mythological dimensions of Hans Christian Andersen’s Fairy Tales,” organized by Klaus Müller-Wille at the University of Zurich, November 10th–12th 2022 (see also Glauser 2023: 187).

⁹ See also the chapter “Det bizarre bildets skjebne” in Bergsveinn Birgisson 2007: 143–147.

¹⁰ See especially Becker 2013: 4–6: “Warburg and memory studies”.

And just as an exciting image arouses emotions through the media of a strongly loaded visual work of art, the verbal media of the kenning brings back or produces senses and feelings that make the narrative “stick in the memory” (*festi í minni*) (see Bergsveinn Birgisson 2007, 2010, 2018; Glauser 2018a, 2018b). The Old Norse-Icelandic mythic narratives are full of such images of excitation. It is precisely such a process that led to the unbroken, but never unchanged chain of transformations in Old Norse myths and this process is one of the main reasons for their longevity and lasting popularity and the fact that they became part of the cultural memory.

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Figures

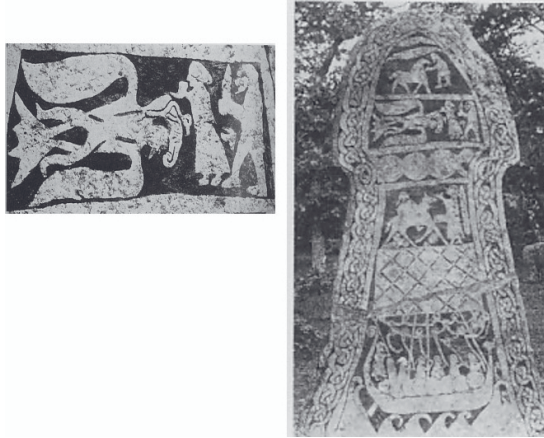


Figure 1. Picture stone, eighth century CE (?), Lärbro Stora Hammars III, Gotland: Three figures representing Odin, Gunnlöð, Suttung (?).

Second field from above, from left to right: Man in the shape of a bird, woman with (drinking?) horn, head of a snake (?), man with a sword.

Source: Nylén, Lamm 1981, p. 51.

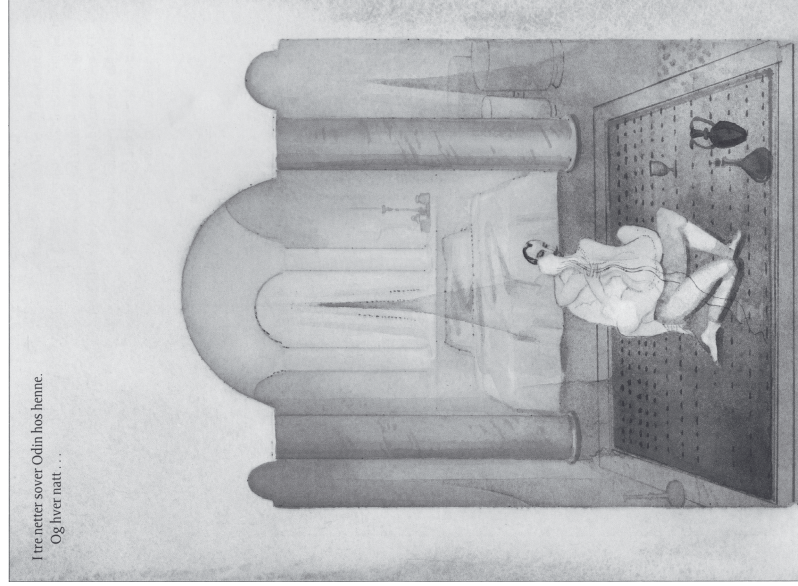


Figure 2. Icelandic manuscript, AM 738 4to, 1680, so-called *Edda oblongata*: Gunnlöð with the vat.

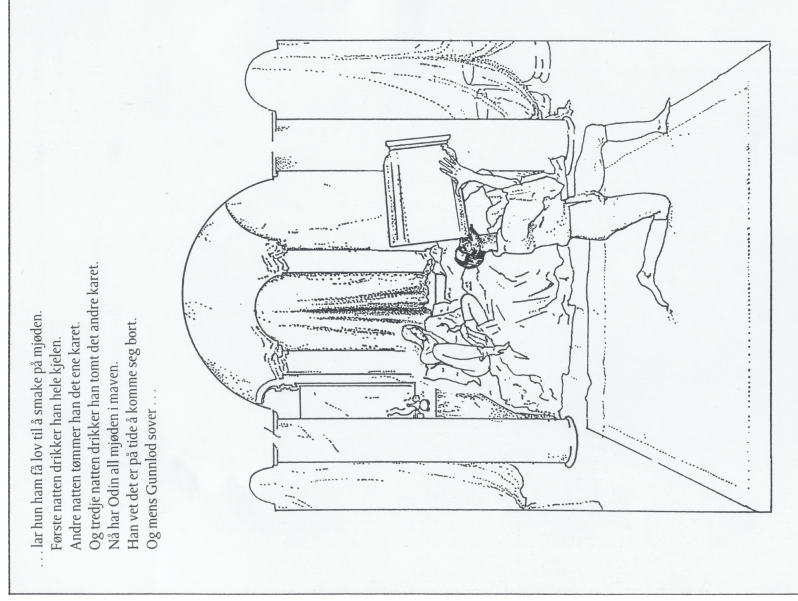
Text to the left: Gunnlöð gives mead to Odin. He kissed her and was three nights with her. Sleep over and you shall become a poet.

Text to the right: The daughter of Suttungr. Embrace me and you shall compose well.

Source: Sverrir Tómasson 1996, cover.



I tre netter sover Odin hos henne.
Og hver natt. . .



. . . lar hun ham få lov til å smake på mjøden.
Første natten drikker han hele kjelen.
Andre natten tømmer han det ene karet.
Og tredje natten drikker han tomt det andre karet.
Nå har Odin all mjøden i magen.
Han vet det er på tide å komme seg bort.
Og mens Gunnlod sover . . .

Figure 3. Tor Åge Bringsværd, *Den enøyde kongen* (1986): Odin spends three nights with Gunnlöð and empties the pot with the mead.

Text left: For three nights Odin sleeps with her. And each night. . .

Text right: . . . she lets him taste of the mead. The first night he drinks the whole vat. The second night he empties one of the vats. And the third night he drinks out the other vat. Now, Odin has all the mead in his stomach. He knows that it is time to get away. And while Gunnlöð is asleep. . .

Source: Bringsværd 1986, pp. 27–28.



Figure 4. Icelandic manuscript, SÁM 66, 1765–66, so-called *Melsteðs Edda*, p. 76r: Odin, in the shape of an eagle, returns to Asgard with the mead.

Text: Here flies Odin in eagle-shape with the filling of the mead of Hvitbjörg across Ásgrindir, and Suttungr the giant after him in eagle-shape. As is shown in fabula 61. of Edda and about that the one who wishes may read.

Source: <https://handrit.is/manuscript/view/is/SAM-0066/155?iabr=on#page/75v/mode/2up> [accessed: 9.10.25].

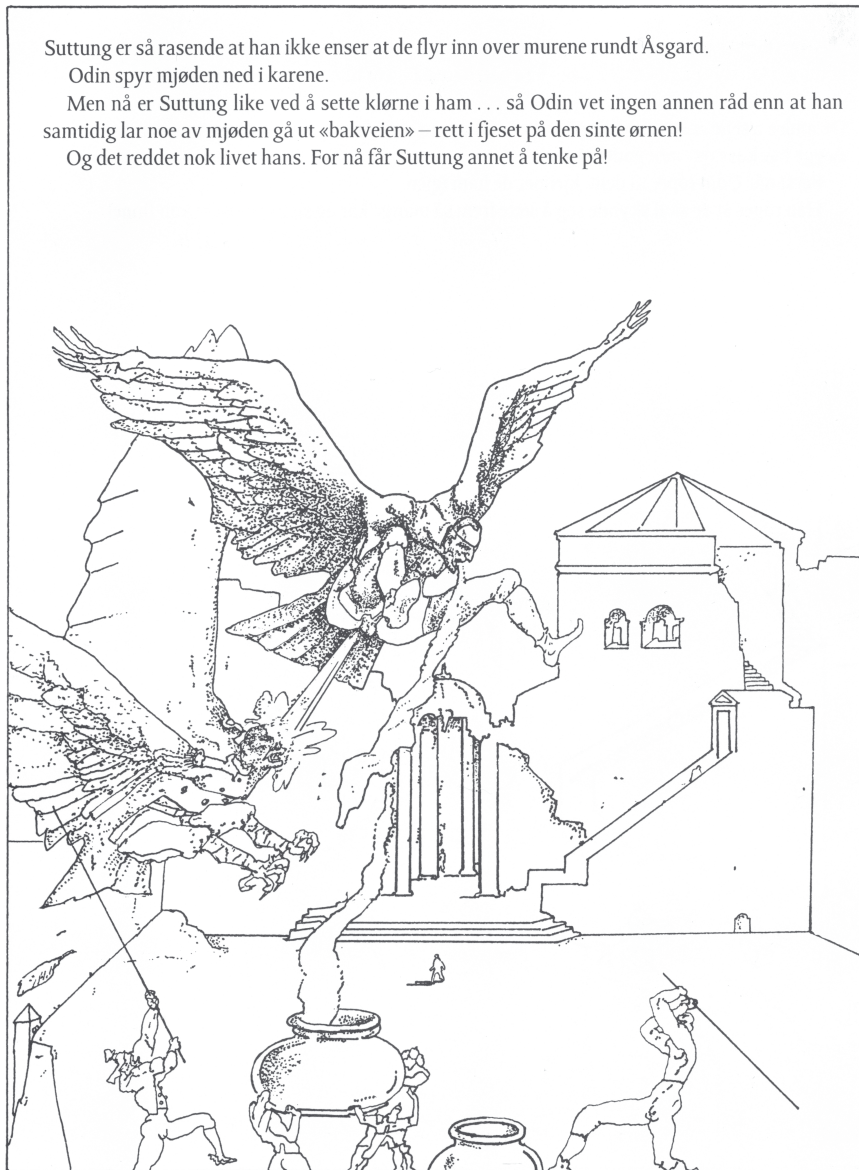


Figure 5. Tor Åge Bringsværd, *Den enøyde kongen* (1986): Odin, in the shape of an eagle, returns to Asgard with the mead.

Text: Suttung is so furious that he doesn't realize that they fly over the walls around Åsgard. Odin spews the mead down into the vats. But now Suttung is just about to put his claws into him... so Odin didn't know any other advice than to let some of the mead go out "the back way" – right into the face of the angry eagle! And that probably saved his life. Because now Suttung has other things to think about!

Source: Bringsværd 1986, p. 32.

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Ibsen's and Mrożek's *Peer Gynt*

This essay compares Ibsen's drama from 1867, *Peer Gynt*, with Sławomir Mrożek's short story of the same title (published in Polish in 1958 and in English in 1962) through an examination of the absurdist tone present in both works. Mrożek is a preeminent literary figure in absurdist literature in Poland. He employs a direct allusion to Ibsen's work in his title, but also reflects on Ibsen's play and the character Peer in the themes, motifs, and techniques used throughout the short story. Ibsen's Peer was a peasant in nineteenth-century Norway, while Mrożek's Peer is congenially portrayed as a Polish para-communist with a peasant background. The intertextual reading is inspired by numerous allusions to other cultural texts and absurdist tone present in both works.

Keywords: Ibsen, Mrożek, *Peer Gynt*, absurd, Polish literature, Norwegian literature, Ibsen in Poland

Henrik Ibsen's dramas have been integral to Polish culture, both in theatrical performances and literary publications, for approximately 150 years. However, their reception remains complex and has not found broad resonance among Ibsen enthusiasts. This is evidenced, among other factors, by the absence of contemporary works directly inspired by Ibsen's oeuvre, particularly among the most esteemed Polish writers of the postwar period. This essay presents an exception by comparing Ibsen's drama, *Peer Gynt* with Sławomir Mrożek's short story of the same title (first published in Polish in 1958 and in English in 1962), through an examination of the absurdist tone present in both works.

The intertextual nature of this comparison is visible not only in the direct allusion to Ibsen's work that Mrożek employs in his title but also in the themes, motifs, and techniques that are used throughout the story. In addition, Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* is a fundamentally intertextual work, full of allusions, incorporating numerous quotations (especially from the Bible) alongside original material. Intertextuality can be understood as a technique to consciously combine various texts. Intertextuality can also be defined as a dense network of relations between separate texts, as Graham Allen puts it: "Works of literature, after all, are built from systems, codes

and traditions established by previous works of literature. [...] To interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts.” (Allen 2006: 1) Both understandings of the wide term are applicable to the comparative case of the two distinguished modernists discussed here.

The Polish playwright is recognized as one of the preeminent literary figures of Poland in the 20th century and is undoubtedly among the most popular. Mroźek’s *oeuvre* primarily belongs to the absurdist genre, a form of expression that resonated profoundly with the Polish reality following the Second World War and significantly influenced Polish culture. As noted by Barbara Kejna-Sharratt (1974), “the late 1950s and the 1960s in Poland were a period of an unprecedented flourishing of the Theatre of the Absurd,” which contributed to the emergence of Polish writers such as Tadeusz Różewicz, Stanisław Grochowiak, and Sławomir Mroźek himself, alongside their predecessors like Witkacy and Gombrowicz, a line of artists who offered an alternative to the Polish romantic traditions.

Long before that, during the *fin de siècle* period of the Young Poland movement, when Henrik Ibsen was still alive, numerous writers engaged in the motifs and themes of Ibsen’s works. However, this engagement did not produce many notable literary works. Neither before the Second World War nor after the descent of the Iron Curtain did Ibsen serve as a major source of inspiration for Polish writers. Only a few primarily established authors, such as Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, were directly influenced by the Norwegian playwright, while younger generations did not frequently engage with Ibsen’s works. Recent studies by Polish scholars such as Marian Lewko (1996) have explored the reasons for this lack of inspiration. Among the primary factors were poor-quality translations and the immediate transfer of Western stereotypes, which portrayed Ibsen as a solemn feminist or pessimistic apostle of truth (Maćkała 2023). This perspective obscured the comedic elements in Ibsen’s plays and reinforced the stereotype described by Robin Young (1994: 58): “The forbidding seriousness of Ibsen’s later works has become a legend, especially to those who know them mainly by repute”.

The tumultuous history of the 20th century did not create a conducive environment for the reception of Ibsen’s plays in Poland. The sequence of catastrophic events, even within a relatively brief period following Ibsen’s first premiere in 1879, included a protracted struggle for independence lasting over a century, World War II, a near-civil war thereafter, the communist regime, and a subsequent challenging democratic transition. Ibsen’s works did not resonate with Polish traumas and were not used in this context. In contrast, Mroźek is among the Polish authors whose success is attributed to his capacity to critique the absurdity of Polish post-war reality. Through the use of satire, parody, and pastiche, he addresses complex and problematic issues associated with life in a communist country by employing a bold absurdist style in his dramas and prose. Like Ibsen, Mroźek drew inspiration from journalism (they both read newspapers and used stories from them in their

literature) and adeptly manipulated the *newspeak* (Žračka 2017) of the communist press, which became emblematic of the use of clichés in meaningless dialogues devoid of genuine intent. This technique enabled him to effectively depict the lack of communication between his characters, particularly in works such as *Peer Gynt*.

The concept of communicative impossibility is fundamental to modernist thought and central to absurdist literature, and is illustrated through various techniques. Barbara Kejna-Sharratt (1974) identifies the 'materialization of a metaphor' as one of Mrožek's preferred methods. For instance, in *The Elephant*, Mrožek interprets metaphors literally, exemplified by the idiomatic expression 'to balloon someone' (meaning to deceive someone). In this narrative, a real zoo animal is replaced with a rubber one to economize and to 'balloon' the schoolchildren. Ibsen employed a precursor to this technique by juxtaposing metaphoric and literal representations of wild ducks and dollhouses. The question of absurdism in Ibsen's plays has been raised by Fatemeh Karim Pour and Modgan Abshavi (2021) who analyze *A Doll's House*, and conclude that themes of absurdity are evident in the play. The elements of miscommunication, such as clichés, prolonged silences between characters, meaningless dialogues, and most notably, deceit, are evident. Additionally, the dynamics of the master-slave relationship, characterized by materialism, a money-centric approach to life and relationships, vanity, and narcissism, are present. The themes of hopelessness and confusion, manifesting as feelings of isolation or alienation, static plots, and stagnation, are also discernible. The authors assert that these absurdist features are identifiable in *A Doll's House*. These are certainly present in other works by Ibsen. Even so-called keywords, such as Nora's *wonder*, serve as further evidence of misunderstandings between characters. Furthermore, as early as *Peer Gynt*, the absurdist perspective of the world is apparent, although the modernist technique may not yet be as prominent as in Ibsen's later plays.

The narrative commences with the lamentations of Peer's mother, who is profoundly distressed by her son's conduct: "Lies, all lies Peer!" (Ibsen 2007). Peer engages in deceit not only with his mother but also with nearly every individual he encounters throughout the five extensive acts of the play. Concurrently, he frequently fails to comprehend the words and needs of others. Much of the discourse surrounding Peer's familial background is linked to his father squandering the entirety of his inherited wealth. Peer's mother clings to the hope of reclaiming financial stability and social status, while Peer constructs his aspiration of becoming a king upon this hope: to possess and wield power. Overall, his cynical outlook on life undergoes minimal, if any, transformation throughout the play, rendering him a character ill-suited for metamorphosis and perpetually immature. He walks in circles like in his mother's comment on the old stories he repeats only a little reedited: "Yes, and lies get changed, you dunce, get dolled up and magnified, fitted with a new-found hide so the carcass won't show through." (Ibsen 2007) At the end of the play, he seems to understand some of his mistakes, but still talks about

an empire: "It's real! – This isn't a game to be played! Good grief! – My empire was here if I'd stayed!" (Ibsen 2007).

Even the love of Solveig, who sacrifices her entire life to be with him, fails to effect any change in Peer. Moreover, Solveig is metaphorically subjugated by Peer, for whom she waits indefinitely, and when she defends him, he himself says to her: "That lad was conceived in your mind" (Ibsen 2007). Her behavior is absurd, as she takes no action to liberate herself; indeed, her entire existence is reduced to futile waiting, and her feelings can no longer be described as love. In the fourth act of the play, Peer symbolically represents the master-slave dynamic by engaging in the slave trade. In the final act, he epitomizes the absurd and despairing human condition: a man who has lost everything, including wealth and family, because of actions driven by vanity and greed. He is isolated and pitiable, yet when confronted by the Button-molder, he remains oblivious to the accusations against him. He fails to recognize that he has been neither virtuous nor malevolent, as the molder comments: "It takes more than mere mud that you've wallowed in; you need dedication and strength for a sin" (Ibsen 2007). Peer's entire existence is rendered meaningless absurdity, and he is on the verge of being repurposed as material. In the concluding scene, Ibsen employed wordplay to create a puzzle, leaving the audience with an open-ended conclusion.

Peer Gynt preferred illusion over reality. He chose to be an illusory emperor rather than a genuinely industrious man and husband. He chose fleeting pleasures over authentic relationships and was never prepared to engage in anything substantial. Instead, he relished exerting power over others. Like many subsequent characters in Ibsen's works, he is willing to embrace and perpetuate falsehoods if they provide him with comfort and satisfaction. His only opportunity to become an emperor arises in a madhouse, as he lacks the genuine qualifications to master any discipline. Indeed, all his seemingly absurd adventures may occur solely within his imagination, underscoring his existential void as he exists only for himself.

The concept of a madhouse epitomizes deception, duplicity, and pretense. This metaphor was prevalent in communist Poland, where the oppressed nation was frequently likened to a mental institution in various literary works. A madhouse represents a setting where norms are inverted, unpredictability reigns, and the unexpected becomes foreseeable. It is also a realm where one can construct reality akin to divine creation; for example, Peer as a friend of the Sphinx. The motif of appearance, akin to a theatrical performance enacted in reality, is a prominent theme in Ibsen's body of work. This is evident in plays such as *A Doll's House* and his final play, *When We Dead Awaken*, in which the substitution of the real world presents a significant impediment to the discovery of genuine love. Henrik Ibsen's renowned seriousness in his plays often serves as a façade, as exemplified in *The Wild Duck*. The protagonist, Hjalmar, bears a striking resemblance to Mrozek's Peer, as his daily life resembles performance rather than reality, with Ibsen imbuing him with numerous comedic characteristics.

In her seminal analysis of Ibsen's modernism, Toril Moi (2012) examined the modernistic elements in Ibsen's later works, highlighting the tension between modernism and idealism as opposed to juxtaposing idealism with realism. Although *Peer Gynt* is not included in the plays analyzed by Moi, elements of modernism can be discerned in this play, along with Ibsen's perspective on idealism. In his later plays, Ibsen "demonstrates that idealist notions of love, beauty, and sexuality will destroy human relationships, imprison us in skeptical isolation, and, in the end, make us fit only for death" (Moi 2012: 14). This critique extends to ideas purported to save the world, which Ibsen addressed extensively in, for example, *The Wild Duck*.

In *Peer Gynt*, he critiques the political ideologies of colonial and military states as well as the notion of pseudo-neutrality, which he characterizes as the passive observation of others' suffering. Ideologies purporting to save the world, such as fascism and communism, evolved into the tyrannies of the 20th century and served as fundamental inspirations for absurdist literature in the post-war period. Albert Camus (1951: 184) wrote in *The Rebel*: "Authoritarian socialism has confiscated this living freedom for the benefit of an ideal freedom, which is yet to come. In so doing, whether it wished to or not, it reinforced the attempt at enslavement begun by industrial capitalism". *Peer Gynt*'s characters are subjugated to intangible concepts, such as the capitalist notion of ownership, the concept of eternal and unconditional love, the ideologies manifested by nation-states, and the aspiration to achieve personal distinction. In *Peer Gynt*, Ibsen critiques not only the idealized perception of femininity through the creation of the unremarkable character Solveig, but also the archetype of the idealistic adventurer who, akin to many explorers of his era, disregarded the lives of others in pursuit of personal objectives. The narrative also explores the history of an individual who predominantly believes in the concept of himself. Ibsen illustrates how individuals with Gyntian conformist tendencies seamlessly integrate into societies structured by ideologies, where morally upright individuals find themselves ensnared in a relentless cycle of subjugation. Peer's vanity and self-admiration, or his conviction of his own potential for greatness, render him an ideal candidate for a communist. This theme is adeptly utilized by Sławomir Mrożek in his short story *Peer Gynt*, where he skillfully engages in the ambiguous context of Ibsen's play.

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz (1971) writes: "The situation is idyllic: a man and a woman in their home, surrounded by arcadian nature". The author posits the simplicity of their existence; however, when considering the social context of post-serfdom peasants in communist Poland, a more intricate depiction emerges, characterized by post-war poverty intertwined with an illusion of prosperity. Adjacent to the modest dwelling of the young Peer stands a birch tree, emblematic of Polish identity and the nation's enduring tradition of rebellious resistance. This symbolism is satirized by Mrożek through a straightforward dialogue that reveals the Gyntian nature of the young Peer, who aspires to greatness yet remains inactive:

"The wife said: 'The roof needs mending; there's a hole in it and the rain comes through.'

'It will be mended,' he replied, following her with loving eyes." (Mrożek 2010: 90)

Mrożek's Peer transports a local schoolmaster to a meeting in a nearby town. The contrived nature of festivities is evident: the hall is adorned with paper flowers. Peer's wife expresses her sorrow as they part way, reluctant for Peer to embark on his journey into the wider world. However, he becomes oblivious to her distress upon hearing the orchestra's performance: "We are building a new house!" (Mrożek 2010: 90), a typical propagandistic appeal aimed at motivating post-war reconstruction and consolidating communist authority. Mrożek initiates the theme of perpetual pretense. The construction of a New House is evidently an act of ostentation. Subsequently, a typical scenario unfolds: District officials solicit critical feedback, a task fraught with complexity, as it is uncertain how much criticism is permissible.

Mrożek's character Peer, a young peasant, chooses to contribute due to what Mrożek describes as his 'simple and honest nature,' (Mrożek 2010: 90) which, in this context, suggests a rather primitive disposition and a desire for recognition. Upon being asked to state his name and social background, he identifies himself as a peasant – a declaration that is met with applause. A journalist from the town subsequently characterizes him as 'a people's tribune.' This scenario highlights the absurdity inherent in the paradoxes of the Soviet era, which, through revolution and the promotion of 'great ideas,' sought to overturn the social structures of the 19th century. However, this upheaval ultimately resulted in further injustice, merely transferring power from a tsar or kaiser to the party. Mrożek reflects on the deceptive narrative of redistributing wealth from the affluent to the impoverished, as exemplified during the communist era when university applicants received additional points for having a farming background. Such absurdities rendered the tragic struggle for class justice into a mere farce. This is illustrated in the subsequent dialogue involving a communist official who expresses skepticism – "I've no idea what's possessed him" – and another who is electrified by the idea: "My dear fellow [...] he's a real peasant." (Mrożek 2010: 91) A statement that could be expressed in a zoo setting, yet it serves as a critique of the hypocritical nature of the communist regime. In reality, this regime showed little concern for the welfare of peasants, prioritizing the superficial appearance of advocating for the populace and their freedom.

Peer endeavors to engage the audience by employing straightforward language, as if he perceives his message as divinely inspired or intended for authoritative ears. Introduced as an activist, he articulates the need for tiles and nails in his village, receiving enthusiastic applause from the audience. Mrożek introduces another layer of absurdity: despite widespread shortages of food and clothing, and arbitrary imprisonments, the paramount concern was the construction of the communist façade as the outward appearance of progress under communism, exemplified by the proliferation of new housing. While many intellectuals faced censorship

and publication bans, an arbitrary, scatterbrained individual could be swiftly recognized and lauded as a 'sturdy fighter' (Mrozek 2010: 91) as noted by the journalist. All participants in the meeting assume a farcical role, engaging in acts of crying, cheering, and singing *The Internationale*.

Peer is now being referred to as a comrade by ideological proponents who have invited him to deliver a speech the following day at a meeting of a grocers' cooperative in a provincial town. He is informed that the event is political in nature and serves to promote the authorities. Although he personally supports the cause (pertaining to tails and nails), the forthcoming meeting is merely another spectacle where the audience applauds the guest indiscriminately, regardless of the content of his speech. The following morning, he is requested to deliver a speech to intellectuals at a meeting for comrades artists. The proceedings unfold in a manner consistent with previous experiences. Additionally, he is sculpted and invited to a dinner with a typical hypocritical figure, an artist who profits significantly by exploiting the work of impoverished students. In the interim, Peer gradually neglects his initial focus on the nails case, deriving satisfaction from receiving accolades, and is unable to resist persisting in his role as a 'professional speech giver.' This is not a legitimate profession, and Peer lacks formal rhetorical qualification. He represents the absurdity of the communist era, wherein a peasant or working-class background was sufficient to establish a profession centered on embodying an ideology. In the backdrop of this absurdity, Mrozek employs the stage decorations from Leoncavallo's opera *Pagliacci*, a tragedy centered on comedians. This setting serves as the literal background for Peer's subsequent 'performance' – a ceremony honoring Mickiewicz,¹ the eminent Polish Romantic poet. This event unfolds in a theater, where Peer, a peasant, is directed by a wealthy artist to portray the ideal peasant, 'happy and proud' (Mrozek 2010: 94). The artist assures him that there is no need for homecoming – no rain is expected, and the roof can wait. Peer is directed to execute his role as an archetypal peasant in a highly theatrical manner, characterized by emphatic foot-stomping and initiating speeches with phrases such as "We smallholders" while vociferously proclaiming "Three cheers for China!" (Mrozek 2010: 94). When the meeting ended, there were buckets of rain.

He attains fluency, delivers speeches at various assemblies, participates in conferences at the central level, and derives satisfaction from his performances. He adeptly masters the art of performance, becomes a member of committees, and receives commendation from authorities who utilize him according to their objectives. Subsequently, he begins to purchase cologne and adopts the demeanor of a patrician of the era.

In Mrozek's narrative, the protagonist's final encounter is emblematic of a conventional conclusion to a stereotypical career. Peer finds himself among fellow scientists, encountering individuals who will not indulge his customary expectation

¹ The author's name is omitted in the Penguin translation.

of applause for his trivialities. Upon introducing himself as a peasant, he is requested to display his hands, which bear no evidence of labor. Consequently, he is neither a farmer nor a scientist, nor a dedicated communist theoretician. He has become a man devoid of distinct qualities. The house adjacent to the birch is now in ruin, and the caretaker is an elderly woman. When she greets her husband, she perceives him as an unfamiliar presence, incapable of expressing affection or engaging in conversation, unable to revert to his former self, and only capable of reciting the rehearsed speech he delivered over the years. Notably, he arrives without nails.

In this brief narrative, Mrozek effectively explores Polish trauma associated with the communist era while simultaneously engaging with Ibsen's universal themes, which are central to both versions of *Peer Gynt*. One such theme is the intrinsic human desire for existence, recognition, and appreciation, a desire frequently manipulated by ideological forces. Paradoxically, this yearning can result in the anti-thetical outcome of losing one's freedom and authentic self. Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* seeks to discover his true identity, yet in the process, he forfeits the very foundations upon which he could cultivate it. Consequently, he becomes indistinct, embodying neither virtue nor vice but rather a nebulous, mediocre entity. Mrozek's *Peer* similarly abandons both his farm and his wife to become a mere instrument in the communist party's spectacle, pursuing lucrative ideals yet ultimately becoming insignificant. He seeks recognition but will never join the ranks of party leaders directing the spectacle. He can no longer return to his role as a farmer. Much like Ibsen's *Peer*, he fails to comprehend his lack of distinctiveness, even during his pitiable conclusion; he is only capable of delivering the speech. Freedom also encompasses the freedom from manipulation. *Peer* not only consents to participate in the spectacle, which is not a genuine life, but merely a collection of ideas, but he also remains oblivious to his own inadequacy within this performance. By bringing the *Pagliacci* opera to the picture Mrozek builds a multiple literary allusion: to the Shakespearian and post-modern metaphors of life as a stage and people merely as puppets, to the opera itself and the Ibsenian play where this metaphor appears in the asylum.

In both Ibsen's play and Mrozek's story, the character *Peer* ultimately returns home, remaining oblivious to the insignificance of his own identity. His return is not motivated by a conscious desire to reconstruct or reclaim his life but rather as an escape from a challenging situation, seeking refuge when no other options are available. Moreover, both Solveig characters serve as archetypes for the 'every-woman,' just as the *Peers* represent the 'everyman.' Neither woman attempts to forge a new life for herself; instead, they both wait and lament. Solveig even loses her sight from crying, but she says on welcoming *Peer* home: "You've not sinned ever, my own dearest boy!" (Ibsen 2007). Mrozek's *Peer* similarly finds his wife in the same location, with the house in disrepair due to neglect, as she too failed to renovate it. Both women are incapable of taking action or recognizing the futility of their waiting. Their idealistic, unconditional, maternal-like love lacks inspiration and,

as in Ibsen's conclusion, merely induces a state of dormancy. Ibsen's Solveig utters the last words of the play and they are an encouragement for Peer to dream on: "Sleep and dream, my darling boy!" (Ibsen 2007). Mrożek's Peer lacks genuine authority and fails to become a legitimate politician or a member of the party's leadership. However, his vanity leads him to revel the applause, blinding him to the fact that it is merely theatrical, a scripted scenario. He is not truly their leader and their applause is empty, lacking genuine admiration. In pursuit of an illusory ideal, he forfeits any innocence that he might have possessed. Both characters are also entangled in a play of national ideas but the nationalistic concept is ridiculed by both Ibsen and Mrożek. The latter criticizes both the traditional romantic vision and absurd communist nationalism, which was a way of manipulating people and cultivating hatred towards other nations. Mrożek uses theatrical motifs and literary allusion to describe pompous shows where "little girls in national costume recited a poem" (Mrożek 2010: 92). Ibsen laughed at the concepts that modern Norwegian nationality is built on, such as the equality that Norwegians solemnly believe in until today.² Ibsen (2007) ironically wrote about restoring the Norwegian 'peasant language':

Ah, but aliens then invaded, –
the forest's ur-tongue was degraded.
Four long centuries of starkness
brooded o'er the ape in darkness;
and nights, we know, of such duration,
mark a country's population. –

The recently republished Mrożek's *Peer Gynt* (Mrożek 2024) has not been recognized as a means of adapting *Peer Gynt* for theatrical performance, although certain productions such as the 1970 *Peer Gynt* directed by Maciej Prus may share some similarities. Nevertheless, this short story exemplifies a possibility of Ibsen's integration into Polish culture, characterized by its unique attributes and detectable as early as 1958. Humor has emerged as a significant medium for addressing traumatic issues, particularly during the communist era when such themes were subject to prohibition and censorship. Forms of humor, such as irony, parody, absurdity, cabaret, and happenings, often enabled individuals to circumvent censors and convey democratic ideas. Humor has also consistently been regarded as integral to the Slavic spirit, with the bittersweet image of Stańczyk exemplifying this myth by embodying laughter through tears. Humor was an important element of the work of Ibsen, now perceived as a precursor of the modernist concepts.

Besides both *Peer Gynts* treat about the destructive influence of idealism, ideology and stereotypes on people's lives that in the end become ridiculously pointless.

² See: Fersk NRK-undersøkelse: Dette elsker nordmenn mest med Norge. NRK. www.nrk.no/norge/fersk-nrk-undersokelse-dette-elsker-nordmenn-mest-med-norge-1.17410451 [accessed: 09.05.2025].

It is no wonder that the publisher of the new edition of the Mrozek stories referenced a classic Polish cultural text, the film *Man of Marble*, by the Oscar-winning director Andrzej Wajda, who filmed it years later.³ This assertion is entirely valid, as Wajda explored the narrative of an individual manipulated by communism, albeit in a more tragic context.

Mrozek's absurdist interpretation of *Peer Gynt* presents an opportunity to make Ibsen's work more relatable to Polish audiences. By employing his esteemed writings, Mrozek addresses issues pertinent to Polish discourse, offering a novel perspective on Ibsen's play. The potential of this approach warrants further exploration through comparative studies.

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³ Oficyna Literacka Noir sur Blanc. <https://www.noir.pl/produkt/418/krotkie-ale-cale-historie-opowiadania-wybrane> [accessed: 9.03.2025].

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Johan Turi's *Min bok om samene* som eit autoetnografisk verk

An autoethnographic reading of Johan Turi's *Min bok om samene*

The article is a reading of Johan Turi's 1911 book *Muitalus sámiid birra*, in Norwegian *Min bok om samene*, through Mary Louise Pratt's concept of autoethnography as an ethnography from an insider perspective which expresses Sámi identity and enters a dialogue with the colonialist depiction of the Sámi people. Turi's book is also a literary work depicting "zones of contact", which is Pratt's term for areas where cultures meet and interact, as opposed to the "frontier" term, which treats the meeting of cultures solely from the perspective of the colonizers expanding their domain. Turi seeks to inform readers about the conflicts between the Sámi and the colonizers. The book can also be read as a political statement that asserts the Sámi have a right to exist in their traditional lands and that their knowledge and culture have value.

Keywords: autoethnography, zone of contact, indigenous people, *Muitalus sámiid birra*, Sámi culture

Nøkkelord: autoetnografi, kontaktssone, urfolk, *Muitalus sámiid birra*, samisk kultur

Innleiing

Eg kjem frå Romania og har jobba som lærar ved Samisk vidaregåande skule i Kautokeino sidan 2013. Eg visste lite om samane før eg kom til Noreg. Ei av dei første bøkene eg las om dette folket, var Johan Turi si *Min bok om samene* i norsk omsetjing. Han skreiv levande om reindrift, samisk historie, joik og andre sider ved den samiske kulturen som eg fann fasinerande.

Johan Turi var ein samisk forfattar som dreiv med reindrift og ulvejakt. Turi skreiv tre bøker, *Muitalus sámiid birra* frå 1910, som reknast som den første boka på samisk som vart skriven av ein same, *Lappish texts* frå 1920 og *Från fjället* frå 1931. Han fekk inspirasjon til den første boka under ei togreise i Sverige i 1904, då traff han ein ung dansk kunstnar og etnograf, Emilie Demant, som oppmuntra Turi

til å skrive (Demant Hatt 1940: 104–105). Turi sitt verk vart utgjeven samtidig på samisk og dansk under tittelen *En bog om lapperne's liv. Muitalus sámiiid birra* (1910). Denne boka vart utgjeven på norsk i 2011 under tittelen: *Min bok om samene*.

Med boka *Muitalus sámiiid birra* ville Turi endre synet på samar fordi han håpa at styresmaktane ville endre den dåverande samepolitikken. Johan Turi skreiv i ei tid då fornorsking, forsvensking og kolonialisering frå sør påverka den samiske kulturen. Samtidig med han skreiv andre samiske forfattarar som Anders Larsen og Pedar Jalvi. Dei skreiv og om det samiske og verdien av den muntlege samiske tradisjonen.

Eg gjev ei tolking av Johan Turis *Min bok om samene* der eg ser på korleis Turis forteljingar om samanenes liv i boka stiller seg til ikkje-samiske folk sine skildringar av samefolket og korleis dei delvis går i rette med og gjer motstand mot desse, og viser fram samane sitt eige perspektiv.

For å gjennomføre tolkinga nyttar eg Mary Louise Pratts (1995) sine omgrep autoetnografi og kontaktsone som teoretisk referanseramme. Ein må skilje mellom Pratt sitt omgrep om autoetnografi og autoetnografi som metode i kvalitativ forskning, der forskaren analyserer eige liv og inntrykk for å skjønna kulturen han eller ho lever i (Ellis 2004). Samstundes har også Pratt sitt omgrep om autoetnografi vorte nytta i moderne samfunnsforskning, sjå Butz og Besio (2004).

Min bok om samene vekslar mellom appellative, etnografiske, og historiske kapittel. Den norske omsetjinga har 17 kapittel, er pryda med teikningar laga av Johan Turi sjølv og har eit forord skrive av Harald Gaski. Teikningane skildrar samane sin levemåte og tradisjonar, samt naturen i Sápmi, som er navnet samane har gjeve områda der dei tradisjonelt har levd (Berg-Nordlie og Gaski 2025).

Om autoetnografi og zone-of-contact

Eg ser på «De eldste fortellinger om samene» med utgangspunkt i Mary Louise Pratt (1995) sitt omgrep om *autoetnografi*, som inneber at «colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that *engage with* the colonizer's own terms». Slike autoetnografiske tekstar uttrykkjer derfor dei koloniserte folkeslaga si sjølvskildring og sjølvframstilling samstundes som dei tek opp dei europeiske kolonistane etnografiske skildringar av dei. Etnografiane er som regel skrivne for kolonistane sitt heimepublikum og frå eit perspektiv der deira dominans ligg innebygd, noko dei autoetnografiske tekstane responderer på: «If ethnographic texts are a means by which Europeans represent to themselves (usually subjugated) others, autoethnographic texts are those the others construct in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations» (Pratt 1995: 7). I autoetnografi nyttar europearane den etnografiske sjangeren for å presentere eit bilete av seg sjølve gjennom framstillinga av dei «andre». Publikumet for autoetnografiske

tekstar er både forfattarens lokalmiljø, altså dei andre frå europearane sin ståstad, og europearane i sentra.

For å få ei betre forståing av det sosiale og kulturelle bakteppet for produksjon av autoetnografiske tekstar er Pratt sitt omgrep om *zones of contact* eller kontaktsoner (Pratt 1995) nyttig. *Zones-of-contact*-omgrepet vert framheva av Pratt som ein motsats til omgrepet grenseland eller «frontier», som og vert nytta om område der dei koloniserte og kolonistane møtast. Gjennom *frontier*-omgrepet ser me verda frå kolonistane sine augo. Då vert dei koloniserte sine område oppfatta som eit grenseland mellom det som er erobra og det som ennå ikkje er det. Det er eit perspektiv som spring ut frå europeisk ekspansjonisme (Pratt 1995: 6).

Kontaktsoner-omgrepet inneber derimot sosiale rom der dei ulike kulturane kjem i kontakt med kvarandre og samhandlar gjennom samarbeid, eller meir vanleg, ulike former for konflikt. Pratt (1995: 4) definerar omgrepet *zone-of-contact* slik: «Social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today».

Kontaktsonene er prega av samkvem mellom folk som ikkje tidlegare har hatt med kvarandre å gjera, samstundes som samhandlinga mellom gruppene i dei koloniale møtene som regel er konfliktfylt og prega av ulikskap og maktbruk: «the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict» (Pratt 1995: 4).

Vidare seier Pratt (1995: 7) om kontaktsoner at omgrepet skal framheve det kontekstuelle og situasjonelle ved kulturmøta og tilhøvet mellom europearane og dei andre. Interaksjonen mellom folka let seg ikkje skildra som ei uavvendelig, statisk utvikling der stadig nye enkeltgrupper vert underlagde europeisk dominans. Det er dei konkrete aktørane si spontane samhandling i ein gjeven kontekst som vert definerande for kontakten mellom dei. Innhaldet i statusane som kolonist og kolonisert vert og skapt gjennom den konkrete relasjonen mellom partane: «By using the term ‘contact’, I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A ‘contact’ perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other» (Pratt 1995: 7).

Autoetnografiske tekstar er ofte eit resultat av samarbeid mellom ein lokal forfattar og ein intellektuell frå ei koloniserande folkegruppe. Sjangeren gjev dei koloniserte moglegheit til å skrive innanfor dei koloniserande sin tradisjon. Autoetnografi er eit døme på transkulturasjon – ein prosess der underordna veljar ut og nyttar kulturelt materiale frå dei dominerande gruppene (Pratt 1991: 36).

Ved å ha Pratt sitt omgrep som teoretisk bakteppe ved lesinga av Turi sine autoetnografiske tekstar unngår ein å nytte kolonistane synspunkt og tankemåtar på tekstane og kulturmøta som vert skildra i dei. Turi sine tekstar kan då verte leste

som eit resultat av samhandling mellom ulike grupper i ei konkret kontaktsone og ikkje som ei forteljing frå eit folk i rekka av folk som er i ferd med å underleggjast kolonistane si makt. Dersom Turi sine tekstar skal lesast som autoetnografi – altså som dei koloniserte sitt motsvar til kolonistanes skildringar av dei sjølve – er det ein føremon at ein kolonialistisk forståing av kulturmøta ikkje ligg til grunn for tolkinga.

Omgrepet kontaktsone gjer det mogleg å forstå Turis autoetnografi som ein tekstpraksis som spring ut av konkrete og lokale situasjonar, relasjonar og kontekstar. Slik legg kontaktsone-omgrepet og til rette for ei meir dynamisk tilnærming til tekstane til Turi. Det gjer ei tolkningsramme som opnar opp for handlingsrommet til forfattersubjektet og til samefolket generelt, til tross for undertrykkinga frå kolonistane. Da unngår ein å sjå den koloniserte som eit offer og kolonialismen som lagnad, og ein får eit betre bilete av aktørane sin faktiske posisjon, moglegheitar og utfordringar. Samtidig kan og Prattts omgrep gje ei forståing av korleis det kolonialiserte subjektet i likskap med kolonisten er konstituert i kraft av relasjonen mellom partane. Det inneberer at det ikkje primært er tradisjonar eller kulturar som møtast, men enkeltaktørar, og at meininga oppstår der og då og i kontekst. Slik kan Turi sitt verk oppfattast ikkje først og fremst som eit uttrykk for samisk tradisjon i møte med dei framande, men som definert ved konkrete relasjonar mellom spesifikke aktørar.

Turi skriv om tilhøvet mellom samar frå ulike delar av Sápmi. I *Da samene kom fra nord* skriv han om korleis nordsamane (det vil seie frå Kautokeino-traktane) lærte Jukkasjärvi-samane å gjete reinen betre, men at samane frå Jukkasjärvi såg på nordsamane som tjuvar. Turi gjev døme på tjuvar som var fødde i Jukkasjärvi og påpeikar at «ikke all tjuvaktighet kom med folk fra Kautokeino» (Turi 2011: 33). Turi skriv og om austsamar og om Kautokeino-konflikten for å syne skilnader og motsetnader blant samar og for å få fram at samane ikkje er ein einsarta masse.

Dei nye perspektiva på urfolksporsking frå urfolksperspektiv er rekna for å vere anti-kolonialistiske, eller de-koloniserande. Dei går ut på at ein opprettar parallelle system for å forstå og analysere kunnskap og forking om urfolk basert på urfolka sine eigne kunnskapssystem og tradisjonar, på mange måtar i konkurranse med dei eksisterande vestlege (Gaski 2013: 118). Nils Oskal skriv at urfolksfilosofi utgjør eit forsøk på å forklare meininga og innhaldet i urfolk sine måtar å forstå verda på for menneske frå den dominerande majoritetskulturen (Oskal 2011: 126). Forteljingar frå alminnelege menneske om deira tankar om livet gjev lesaren nye måtar å tolka sin eigen røyndom på: «slike erfaringer og bearbeidelser av erfaringer gjort innenfor rammene av en intersubjektiv forståelseshorisont som kan vekke gjenkjennelse og gi nye perspektiver til leserens eget liv» (Oskal 2011: 126).

Turi skriv grundig om samiske tradisjonar, om reinhold, fangst, fødsel og stell av nyfødde, legekunst, om stell av dei døde. Han skriv om utfordringane ved å bu langt i nord, å klare seg i karrige tilhøve, kulde og lange avstandar. Samanes kunnskap har verdi i eit landskap som Sápmi.

Mange av Turi sine tekstar i *Min bok om samene* kan lesast som ei erklæring av samane som urfolk. Verket *De eldste fortellinger om samene. Slik den ene samnen har fortalt til den andre samnen* kan til dømes tolkast frå samisk historisk perspektiv. I byrjinga av teksten viser forfattaren atterhald: «det er ikke sikkert at de er helt rett fortalt, siden de ikke har vært nedskrevet» (Turi 2011: 13). I teksten framset Johan Turi vidare påstanden om at samane var det første folket i området: «Det har ikke hørtet noe om samenes opprinnelse, at de skulle ha kommet noe steds fra. Samen har vært en innfødt her overalt i Sapmi. Og før i tida, da samen bodde her ved kysten, da var det ingen beboere ved kysten – ikke en eneste» (Turi 2011: 13). Den gong var det ikkje anna folkesetnad, og konfliktane oppstod når andre kom og tok seg til rette. Brita Pollan skriv at Turi er «opptatt av fremtiden som en slags gjenopprettelse av et paradys på jord» (Pollan 2017: 209) når han fortel om korleis samanes kår var, då dei ikkje visste «at det fantes andre mennesker enn de selv» (Turi 2011: 13).

Turi skriv at «dengang var ikkje bufolk noen plass» (Turi 2011: 13), så konflikten oppstod då dei andre folka kom. Johan Turi innser samstundes at det gode samiske livet kan levast med hjelp frå dei som har makt (Pollan 2017: 209) og at berre dei som har makt kan gje samane områdene deira attende.

Pratt nyttar omgrepet «transkulturasjon» om korleis kontakten mellom ein dominant og ein marginalisert kultur går føre seg (Pratt 1995: 6). Omgrepet skildrar korleis dei koloniserte tek noko av kontrollen attende frå påverknaden av den koloniserande makta ved at ein plukkar ut delar av kulturen til kolonistane og tilpassar det til sin eigen bruk. Pratt spør og om korleis transkulturasjon verkar den andre vegen, frå «periferien til sentrum». Om dei koloniserte også påverkar kulturen til kolonistane, vert det spørsmål om dei koloniserte sjølv kan ha innverknad over kva sider ved sin eigen kultur som skal takast opp i kulturen til kolonistane. I kontaktsona har begge kulturar kjennskap til kvarandre, og elementa frå dei kolonisertes kultur som har vorte teke i bruk av kolonistane, kan framleis kjennast igjen som ein del av den kulturen. Det er når desse elementa forlet kontaktsona at dei koloniserte kan miste tilhøyrsele til desse elementa. For dei koloniserte er det derfor ønskjeleg å utvide kontaktsona til heile kultursfæren til kolonistane for slik å bevare tilknytinga si til dei ulike elementa av sin eigen kultur og for å kunne markere skiljet mellom det originale og det tilpassa ved transkulturelle transaksjonar.

I dette arbeidet vert dei koloniserte hjelpt av det Pratt kallar «anti-conquest», der kolonistane ynskjer å framstilla seg som uskuldige sjølv om dei framleis fremjar det kulturelle hegemoniet til kolonistane (Pratt 1995: 7). Denne mentaliteten søkjer heller å løfte fram dei koloniserte si tilknyting til kolonistane, framfor å viske ut kulturen deira og erstatte han med sin eigen.

Ei autoetnografisk lesing av *Min bok om samene*

Boka tek utgangspunkt i samisk muntleg forteljartradisjon og framstår som sjanger-overskridande. Den kan lesast som ei framstilling av samenes historie, men og som eit skjønnlitterært verk. Boka har ein eg-fortellar, og Áillohaš (Nils-Aslak Valkeapää) har kalt Turis skrivemåte for ein tankestrøm (Gaski 2011: 7). Gaski skriv at «boka er sjanger-overskridende, den er på same tid både et historisk essay og et eksempel på samisk *life writing*, som tar utgangspunkt i et levd menneskeliv, der individets plass er viktig som en del av et fellesskap» (Gaski 2011). Den norske oversettelsen har også tatt med illustrasjonar av Turi som ikkje var med i den opprinnelige utgjevinga, for «å vise bredden i Turis kunstneriske uttrykk» (Gaski 2011). Turis illustrasjonar «taler til vår forestillingsevne» (Gaski 2011: 8)

Når Turi skriv, forhold han seg ofte til kolonistane sine omgrep og røyndomsforståingar. Desse nyttar og tolkar han for å gje sin versjon av historia til folket sitt. I denne samanhengen er det viktig å ha i minnet at Turi sin autoetnografi er skrive med kolonistane som målgruppe. Han tek utgangspunkt i kolonistanes gudsomgrep for å skildra samane sine religiøse framsyningar og for å forsvare dei som gudfryktige menneske på sin måte, samstundes som potensielle oppfatningar av samane sine forgjengarar som heidningar utan gudsbilete vert korrigert: «Den gang visste ikke samene at Gud finnes, men de hadde likevel en slik tro at noe skal man tilbe» (Turi 2011: 15). Dette er eit døme på at autoetnografiske tekstar oppstår som eit motsvar til kolonistane sine etnografiar, samstundes som skildringa av samefolket spring ut av tilhøvet mellom kolonist og kolonisert. Meininga i kulturmøta er dermed skapt relasjonelt.

Turi sin tekst understrekar at samane har budd i Sápmi sidan uminnelege tider: «Det har ikke hørtet noe om samenes opprinnelse, at de skulle ha kommet noe steds fra» (Turi 2011:13). For å underbygge dette peker Turi blant anna på nærværet av eldgamle groper i naturen der dyr og menneske gjerne legg si ferd. Dette er bustadene til samefolket. Det er og naturleg å lese denne bevisføringa i lys av kontaktsone-omgrepet og forhandlingane rundt makt som skjer i denne sona (Pratt 1995: 4). Det er igjen eksistensen av dei framande som gjer det makt-påliggjande for samane å definera seg sjølv gjennom narrativ, å forfatte sin egen autoetnografi for slik å gje legitimitet til sitt eige nærvær i Sápmi og tilgangen til naturressursane. Turi skjildrar og korleis samefolket gjekk frå å fange reinen til å temje han, på eit tidspunkt då kolonistane frå sør ennå ikkje hadde komme til Sápmi, ei tid før kontaktsona oppstod: «Og de fikk så mange at de begynte med reindrift, og de prøvde å finne ut hvor det var best å oppholde seg med reinflokken på de forskjellige tider på året. Den gang var det godt å leve eller å berge seg. Da var det ingen bufolk – ikke nordmenn og ikke svensker heller» (Turi 2011: 14). Denne kampen for dominans i kontaktsona skjer og i dag, ofte i form av kamp med storsamfunnet om naturressursar og hevding av legitimitet. Kontaktsona er, slik Turi skjildrar tida med åtak frå russetjudane, ei «ufredstid», med vold, strid og

overgrep. Samtidig stimulerer desse tilhøva og kontakten med dei dominerande framande paradoksalt nok til ei auka forståing av eige folk og kultur. Kolonisering og undertrykking har difor i seg kimen til auka nasjonal sjølvkjensle.

Autoetnografien opplyser kolonistane om samefolket sitt liv og forklarar samefolket sin handlemåte som djupast sett rasjonell og fornuftig ut frå deira føresetjingar. Samanes manglande gudstru kjem rett og slett av mangel på kunnskap. No som dei har fått høyra om Gud, vet dei at Gud finst. Turi forklarar og korleis samanes kunnskap er knytta til tilhøva samane lev under og at deira handlinger er knytta til deira overleving.

Turi fortel samstundes sakleg og likeframt om overnaturlige fenomen, som gjenferd med reinlav i staden for ansikt som jagar vekk menneske som har søkt ly i urgamle graver i den tru at det er fangstgroper. Samefolket unngår difor desse plassane høyrer vi, og dette framstår som naturleg og rasjonelt på bakgrunn av skildringa. Til og med dagens menneske har sett dette, heiter det hos Turi. Det kan synast som Turi sjølv tek eksistensen av slike fenomen for gjeve. I alle høve er Turi sin forteljing om samefolket sitt liv ei framstilling av deira kosmos som grunnleggjande forståeleg og meningsfylt, og av samane sine handlinger som rasjonelle og forståeleg gitt dei vilkåra dei lever under. Ein slik framstilling vert mogeleg gjennom Turi sitt insidertperspektiv, men det er dominansrelasjonen mellom koloniserar og kolonisert som aktualiserer den og gjer det nødvendig for Turi å forfatte eit slik motsvar til kolonistanes etnografar. På denne måten produserast det samiske først og framst i kraft av relasjonen mellom kolonist og kolonisert. Når Turi sin tekst vert analysert som eit verk oppstått i ei kontaktsone, vert ikkje det samiske sett på som ein homogen storleik, men som eit relasjonelt og kontekstuel fenomen.

Edward Said (1994) er oppteken av å undersøkje representasjonar av Orienten i vestlege tekstar. Turis bok er skriva av ein same frå et samisk perspektiv, og er eit døme på sjølv-representasjon av eit ikkje-vestleg, eller i alle høve kolonialisert folk. Said sitt perspektiv går ut på at førestillinga til vesten om Orienten involverte ei inndeling av verda i «én vestlig sivilisert del og én orientalsk og ukultivert del» (Claudi 2013: 195). Ifølgje Said sine teoriar kan ein seie at førestillinga om det samiske vert skapt for å byggje opp under førestillinga om det norske. Samane vart sedde på som eksotiske i vestlege tekstar, og det eksotiske vart ein måte å framheve det norske som normalitet på. Dei vart framstilt som underordna menneske utan autoritet, noko som mogleggjorde ei framheving av nordmenn si autoritet og av dei som eit folk på høgare nivå av sivilisasjon. For samane vart det då nødvendig å få kontroll på sitt eige narrativ innanfor den norske kulturen. Då kunne dei freiste å behalde kontrollen over det samiske i heile det samiske området, som kan seiast å vera ei kontaktsone. Framstillingar frå ein kultur vil smitte over på den andre kulturen og vice versa.

I dette perspektivet er det slik at kolonimakta og dei koloniserte har innbyrdes påverknad på kvarandre. Det er og slik at forfattarpersonen reflekterer over dette når han skriv. Han skriv til dømes om skolen som øydelegg borna som lærer mykje

unyttig når dei er borte frå samane i beste læretida. Det er bra at dei lærer å lese, rekne og skrive, men barna mistar samanens natur, og vert påverke av bondenaturen (Turi, 2011: 29).

Turi si autoetnografi har fokus på urfolksperspektivet. *Min bok om samene* startar med «Jeg er en same» på side 11. Tittelen får ei særleg vekt, den gjev truverd til at forteljaren eig sin eigen historie. Sjølvpresentasjonen peiker på at han er ein same og har tenkt på kva han skriv. Han høyrer til i eit samisk fellesskap og nyttar eksemplar frå reelle hendingar for å syne fram samane sitt livssyn.

Lesaren vert frå starten gjort kjend med at samane er i konflikt med bufolk (fastbuande bønder), og at «det er nødvendig å skrive ned alle tildragelser og forklaringer» slik at folk skal forstå meir om samefolket og at andre skal «høre om samenens kår» (Turi 2011: 11). Turi syner også frem samanens kunnskap som gjer at dei kan overleve og trivast i landskapet der dei høyrer heime, og skildrar samanens skikkar og levemåte. I kapittelet «Om samiske sanger» skriv Turi om korleis samane går på friarferd, og om kjenslelivet og kjærleiksintrigane til dei unge samane som søker make. Slik syner Turi fram korleis samane opplev dei same stadiar av livet som alle folk går gjennom, og vekkjer attkjenning hos lesaren.

Turi si bok er og eit døme på transkulturasjon (Pratt 1995: 6), der Turi ynskjer å introdusera delar av samisk kultur for den svenske, og andre ikkje-samiske kulturar, og sjølv veljar kva delar han vil presentere og eksplisitt knytte til det samiske folket. Om Turi sin motivasjon seier Emilie Demant Hatt: «Turis Bog er et *Bønsskrift!* En brændende Bøn fra Laplands Hjerte, et Raab om Retfærdighed for Nomaderne i Skandinavien – ikke en Bøn om Fattigunderstøttelse, men en Bøn om at blive forstaaet, en Bøn om Ret til at leve!» (Demant Hatt 1940: 108). For Turi er det viktig at ikkje-samane kjenner til samane og kulturen og historia deira.

Kontaktsoner i *Min bok om samene*

Forteljinga «Samenes første flukt» gjev eit historisk perspektiv i skildringa. Det handlar om kolonisering, om konflikt om jorda. Teksten har fire avsnitt og fokuserer på to situasjonar: flukta gjennom den øyde skogen (Turi 2011: 16), og då samane vart jaga bort frå «der hvor samene har bodd i mange slektledd» (Turi 2011: 16). Det er fortalt om korleis det gjekk med samane då menneska vart fleire, og byrja å leite etter jord. Lesaren får vite at samane flytta frå kystområda til skogen. Det er fortald om kva dei åt, og at «fortidas samer var store og friske» (Turi 2011: 16).

I forteljinga «Det som hendte da en nordmann kom» får me vite at ein same vart drepen av ein nordmann, og at det er mange døme på slike hendinger. Turi ynskjer egentleg ikkje å fortelje denne forteljinga, men tek den med fordi han vil presentera heile historia, slik samane kjenner ho: «... så må man skal skrive om alt – både fælt og fint» (Turi 2011: 17). Forteljinga presenterer møtet mellom nordmenn og samar, slik samane såg det.

I forteljinga kjem nordmannen Jubonaš til der samane har rein. Han smakar på jord i starten av forteljinga, og samane trur at han skal dyrke jorda. Han kjem attende med fleire nordmenn året etter, og jaga samane vekk derifrå. Samane måtte flytte gammale sine lenger vekk. Reinsdyra beita der dei før hadde vore etter gammal vane, og Jobanaš vart sint, og slo til ein same. Samen døydde, og Jobanaš gjekk. Samane bar den daude i graset, og då nordmannen kom attende, trudde han at samene framleis var i live. Han ville ha erstatning fordi reinen hadde beita på jorda hans. Samane diskuterte seg imellom om å starte ein krig, men dei våga ikkje. Den drepne sin son ville hemne seg, og skyte alle nordmennene. Guten si mor gøynde kruthorna, og guten kom seg ikkje av garde med det same. Seinare kom det ikkje meir slikt hat over han, så Jobanaš slapp frå det med livet i behald.

Forteljaren skriv at det er mange slike hendingar kor samar døydde, og ein skal fortelje slik, for man lyt skrive om alt. Slik tematiserast sjølve skrivesituasjonen.

Forteljaren identifiserer seg med samane. Skildringa og person-framstillinga vert understreka gjennom forteljarens kommentar: «som vi har hørt, og ikke har hørt om». Eit motiv i teksten er vold i møtet mellom to kulturer: den norske og den samiske, samt koloniseringa, fordrivinga av samar frå tradisjonelle beiteområde.

Teksten *Det som hendte da en nordmann kom* er plassert i ein kontekst. Sida før handlar om den første flukta til samane, medan neste tekst er om dei samiske buplassane.

Teksten har klare novellistiske trekk. Den sett søkelys på hendinga, på drapet. Me har og det historiske perspektivet, med enkelthendingar som døme.

Forteljinga har ein klassisk plottkomposisjon, der historia når klimaks når nordmannen ynsker erstatning etter drapet. Nordmannen har eit samisk namn i forteljinga, kanskje samane gav han et kallenamn. Protagonistane i forteljinga er samane, antagonistane er nordmennene. Konflikten startar på grunn av jorda, og forteljinga kan vera tenkt som dokumentasjon for styresmaktene.

I *Det som hendte da en nordmann kom* er det fokus på konflikt mellom folk som man skal leve saman med, men og på utveksling mellom kulturar. Dette er og i tråd med omgrepet om kontaktsoner (Pratt 1995). Frå perspektivet til nordmannen ville hendinga vorte sett inn i eit «frontier»-narrativ, der den fastbuande bonden vert rekna som eit høgare nivå av sivilisasjon enn dei nomadiske reingjetarane. Det autoetnografiske perspektivet til Turi prøver derimot å fortelje nordmennene om den samiske opplevinga av konflikta og vekke sansen deira for urettvise.

Vidare vert det fortalt om korleis det var med samenes boplasser. Turi appellerer igjen til rettferdssansen til lesarane når han fortel om korleis nordmennene krev erstatning for reinen som beitar på engene deira, samtidig som «at nordmannen ikke gir tillatelser til å sette opp gjerder for slike veier hvor reinen kommer inn på slåttemarka» (Turi 2011: 18).

I teksten presenterer Johan Turi ein påstand som dannar grunnlaget for at samar må få attende områder for å jobbe med reindrift. Turi argumenterer med at samane levde av fangst i starten: «Hvorfor jeg mener det, er fordi det finnes samiske navn

på notvarp i vann der dagens samer ikke fisker lenger» (Turi 2011: 13). Andre bevis er fangstgropene. I gropene kan ein finne graver og man skal ikkje leggja seg der for å sova. Samane er redde for slike groper, men der vert det og funne skattar. Andre groper tenkjer Turi var brukt for å gøyme seg frå russetjudane frå tida når dei herja, før nordmennene kom (Turi 2011: 14).

I teksten *Samenes første flukt* skriv Turi om korleis samane vart jaga bort frå beitemarkene sine. For kolonistane var denne jorda mest verdifull, fordi ho hadde gjennom mange generasjonar vorte gjødsla av reinen. Turi vil med dette fortelje at nordmennene ikkje kom til urøyrd villmark, ein «frontier», men til eit samisk landskap, forma av samane og reinflokkane deira.

På slutten av «Det som hendte da en nordmann kom» vert skrivesituasjonen tematisert: «Og nordmennene har nok drept enda en same, en fra Karesuando. Og slik plyndring har skjedd flere ganger. Det er mange slike hendelser som og vi har hørt om, og det er slike som vi ikke har hørt om. Men jeg orker ikke å fortelle mer, for det er virkelig fælt å fortelle slik. – Men når man skal skrive om alt, så må man skrive om alt – både fælt og fint» (Turi 2011: 17).

Vi ser at forteljaren identifiserer seg med samane: «Jeg orker ikke å fortelle mer», men ein skal skrive om alt. Hendinga er fortald frå samisk perspektiv, og målet er at boka skal nyttast som dokumentasjon for styresmaktene.

Det vert fortald om den samiske naturen, og om reinen, at det ikkje er meir jord, og at reinen må beite. Forteljinga når klimaks når det vert fortald at Jobanaš vil krevje erstatning etter at han drap samene. Lesaren får eit bilete på korleis samane tenkjer.

Det vert understreka at samane er fredelege folk, som berre vil leve i fred med flokken og naboane. I «Den hendinga som ble kalt Kautokeinoforvillelsen» fordømmer Turi gruppa med tilhengarar av Læstadius, som «begynte å tilegne seg bøddelembedet [...] fordi loven var gått dem til hodet» (Turi 2011: 186). Turi gjer det klårt at det var andre samar som stogga dei «forvillede» frå å drepe fleire. Turi gjer det tydeleg at dei samane som tydde til vold, ikkje hadde sitt fulle vit, de var «i ei slik tåke». Etter harde straffar, levde dei fredelig – nokon vart til og med «store lærde folk» (Turi 2011: 188).

Teksten er godt strukturert. Lesaren høyrer «om samenes flukt» og «samenes boplasser». Så fortsetter teksten med historia om drap, og vidare om samane sine buplasser. Det vert skildra korleis samane lever og at dei betaler mykje skatt. Dette for å vekkje styresmaktene si åtgaum. I «Det som hendte da en nordmann kom» vert det skildra hendingar som drap der kor samane levde, eit døme på konflikten mellom samar og nordmenn i ein kontaktsone med to kulturar som lever saman. Boka fortel om utvekslinga mellom dei to kulturane, samt konflikta mellom samar som har rein, og nordmenn som er opptatte av å dyrke jorda. Utvekslinga mellom dei to kulturane vert og presentert som positiv, som, for eksempel, at samane lærar å skrive, eller at nordmenn nyttar lasso.

Min bok om samene som politisk appell

Det var ein ujamn kontroll over ressursar mellom samar og nordmenn på Turi si tid. Ei lov om nytt reinbeite vart utarbeida, og Turi ville at boka skulle nå lovgivar. *Min bok om samene* kan difor lesast som ein politisk appell. Side 11 startar med «Jeg er en same». På side 92–93 heiter det vidare: «Nedenfor her fortelles det mer om samene, og det er nesten hovedsaken». På slutten står det om «Fortelling om Samelands ukjente dyr». Turi skriv at det finst «dyr som folk ikke riktig vet hvordan klarer seg» (Turi 2011: 191). Desse «dyrene» vert trengde bort frå den gode jorda; det er ikkje så farleg om dei pinast, fordi «de er nok vant med det livet» (Turi 2011: 191). Nokon ynskjer å utrydde dei, men dei får ikkje lov av styresmaktane, «ikke ennå iallfall» (Turi 2011: 191), men dei let områdene deira verte mindre og mindre. At Turi nyttar desse ukjende dyra som metafor for samane, skyldast kanskje at det ville ha vore for voldsomt for ikkje-samar å lese at mange i deira samfunn ynskjer å utrydde samane, sjølv om rasehygieniske teoriar var på framvekst i perioden boka vart skrive (Kyllingstad 2025). Med denne appellen seier Turi at det ikkje er nok at styresmaktane held samane i live, men at dei også må få tilgjenge til sine tradisjonelle område og ikkje verte fortrent til den dårlegaste jorda.

Karakteren Jobanaš er eit døme på mentaliteten som herska før det som Pratt kallar «anti-conquest»-mentaliteten oppstod i Europa (Pratt 1995: 6). Jobanaš drep samar, han vil ha dei bort, ta deira verdiar og land. I Johan Turis eige liv kan me finna døme på «anti-conquest»-personar frå dei koloniserande kulturane, som Emilie Demant, som jobba heile livet med å synleggjere den samiske kulturen og levemåte for sin eigen, europeiske kultursfære. Sjølv om ho er uvurderleg i arbeidet sitt for den samiske kulturen, er ho også eit døme på transkulturasjon når ho nyttar element frå samane sitt liv og kultur i sine eigne måleri og bøker. Sjølv om Pratt ser litt ned på «anti-conquest»-haldninga og dei personane ho kallar for «seeing-man», «whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess» (Pratt 1995: 7), så er denne haldninga viktig for urfolk, då desse personane gjerne er dei som legg til rette for at urfolk får innpass i kulturen til kolonistane.

Ifølge Harald Gaski (2013) har den urfolksforskinga som har vore dreve av andre enn urfolka sjøl, vert rekna for å vera grunna i kolonialistiske haldningar. Urfolka har kjend at deira språk, kunnskap og verdssyn ikkje har vorte tekne seriøst. Spor etter urfolk i fortida vert ikkje teke på alvor fordi dei er ulike frå spora til kolonistane: «Ved samenes flytteveger finnes det groper som ikke noe nåtids menneske sikkert vet hva for slags groper er. [...] Bare noen få er undersøkt, og hvis mange ble undersøkt, så kunne nok mange skatter bli funnet» (Turi 2011: 14).

Gaski skriv også at samisk urfolksforskning lenge har ligge bak anna urfolksforskning, i til dømes Nord-Amerika, i å verte gjort frå urfolksperspektiv; lenge var det ei oppfatning om at forskinga på samar var nøytral, og at det var nok at man fekk samiske forskarar med for å få endring (Gaski 2013: 116). Dei bidrag som samiske forskarar har gjeve til urfolksforskinga, har bygd på den eksisterande

vestlege forskinga, frå eit vestleg perspektiv, og har søkt å sette samiske synspunkt inn i denne, i staden for å bygge opp forskinga med samanens eige kunnskap som grunnlag (Gaski 2013: 116). Urfolka si eige forskning drøfter no liknande perspektiv som Pratt gjer med sin autoetnografi, men frå urfolka sitt eige synspunkt (Gaski 2017).

Konklusjon

Min bok om samene – ei bok som opprinneleg vart skriven på samisk under tittelen *Muittalus sámiiid birra*, og samstundes utgjeve på dansk – er eit klårt døme på autoetnografi. Forfattaren ynskjer å skildra sitt eige folk for det europeiske folket, å få fram dei samiske perspektiva, levemåte, og historie. Særskilt viktig er det for Turi å skildra møtet mellom samar og nordmenn sett frå samisk side.

Mary Louise Pratt ser på autoetnografi som «often [...] bilingual and dialogic» (Pratt 1995: 7). Urfolk si framstilling er ofte farga av majoriteten sitt språk og kultur. *Min bok om samene* vender seg til svenske og norske styresmakter. Turi si bok vart lest autoetnografisk i den grad at dei kunstneriske og politiske aspekta vart gløymde.

Turi og skildra levemåten og reindrifta til samane, og vise at ho er basert på generasjonar med samla kunnskap om reinen, om landskapet og om årstidene. Kapitla i boka følgjer reinen gjennom sesongane, og lesaren vert kjend med reindriftsarbeid frå «Om sensommeren» til «Alt som høyrer til samenens arbeid om våren». Ein vert og kjend med fangstlære, samiske forteljingar og med samiske songar. Forfattaren viser og god kjennskap om samiske legekunstnarar, og om samiske «noaidekunstkyndige» folks gjerningar. Turi er ei autentisk samisk stemme, og boka hans er eit særskilt viktig døme på tidleg samisk autoetnografi. I kraft av denne sjangeren formidlar boka eit dobbeltkommunikativt budskap til både samiske og ikkje-samiske lesarar. Dette opnar for lesing frå perspektiv både innanfrå og utanfrå det samiske. Boka er også eit politisk dokument og eit tidlig døme på urfolksfilosofi, der forfattaren ynskjer å få fram samane sin situasjon og livsstil, og å argumentere for samane si framtid og livsgrunnlag. Etter 115 år er boka framleis aktuell for det samiske folket sin situasjon.

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“I’m Nobody! Who are you?”. Repetition as a Project in Kierkegaard and Dickinson¹

The article presents a comparative analysis of Kierkegaard’s *Repetition* and the Dickinson poem “I’m Nobody! Who are you?”, in relation to their poetic and philosophical projects. Through the figure and presence of the ‘nobody,’ it analyzes the manifold patterns of relations between the self and the Thou, the reader and the creator, the writer/poet and the process, as well as between the various existences of the ‘I.’ Thanks to this, both works turn out to be dynamic explorations of identity, which the key question is who am ‘I’ in relation to myself. The article strongly emphasizes the performative aspect of Kierkegaard’s and Dickinson’s works, making it possible to read them as existential exercises in which being a ‘nobody’ is not negative, but is a constant opening to a new, uncertain and interesting existential possibility.

Keywords: identity, existential exercise, existential project, possibility, relationships

1. Between Copenhagen and Amherst. Introduction

The comparison of two exceptional representatives of 19th-century intellectual life, Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) and Emily Dickinson (1830–1886), is as surprising as it appears natural.² When Dickinson was born in Amherst, Kierkegaard had just

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² Paul Crumbley describes diverse Dickinson scholarship analyzing her “dialogic voice”: “The reception that Dickinson uses multiple speakers, each one of which is capable of possessing more than one voice, helps explain why the process of establishing her position in literary history has been so contentious” (Crumbley 1998: 99). But the Dickinson poem also refers to silence as powerful as it is mysterious. Roger Lundin, commenting the poems “I know that He exists./ Somewhere – in silence –” claims that Dickinson “refuses to sentimentalize silence by putting words into the mouths of the mute realities she questioned” (Lundin 2004: 23), like God and bees, who are considered to be equally important.

begun his theological studies at the University of Copenhagen. At the time of Kierkegaard's premature death, 25-year-old Dickinson was just entering a creative poetic life, having recently left Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. Raised as Protestants, both were interested in the human condition in the face of the judgments of God. They wanted to reconcile the principles of faith as much as with the nurturing of the independence of their psychical condition.³ I anchor this comparison in a close reading of two texts that describe a dialogic identity that, through repetition, deepens its knowledge of itself, explores and names its relationship with others, with the world and with God: Kierkegaard's *Repetition* and Dickinson's poem "I'm Nobody! Who are you?". Both of these texts are polyphonic projects and an existential exercise. Both Kierkegaard and Dickinson variously refer to the presence of the "nobody" as a way of performing the readiness to think about oneself anew.

2. "Nameless friend", You and I. Nobody as an Identity

Published in 1843 *Repetition. A Venture in Experimental Psychology*, along with one of the most substantial of Kierkegaard's work *Fear and Trembling* (orig. *Frygt og Bæven*),⁴ might be perceived as unrelated (or even unfamiliar) to Dickinson's poetic idiom. Constantin Constantius, one of the pseudonyms of the Danish philosopher and the *Repetition*, having recalled the Greek philosophical disputes on motion,⁵ poses the problem of repetition: "whether or not it is possible, what importance it has, whether something gains or loses in being repeated" (Kierkegaard 1983: 131). Composed with philosophical reflexion as well as psychological observations on human relationships (and brief passages about theatre), *Repetition's* structure comes complete with a plot, not less stimulating than the ones from realistic novels. As Joakim Garff accurately states:

[...] *Repetition* has a plot. Indeed, it has more than that: The plot of *Repetition* in fact is about plot, or about things that happen, *either* entirely accidentally, because things just happen, *or* because someone else, God, wants it that way. (Garff 2005: 232)

³ Comparing those examples to the verses of her contemporary, Walt Whitman with his *Song of Myself*: "I celebrate myself, and sing myself" (Whitman 2004: 63) or *One's-Self I Sing*: "One's-Self I Sing, a simple separate person" (Whitman 2004: 37) Agnieszka Salska defines Dickinson's separate poetic idiom. Salska discusses Whitman's and Dickinson's usages "the self as persona", as both poets were absorbed by the problem of "self-consciousness" (Salska 1985: 36).

⁴ Joakim Garff claims that "*Repetition* is [...] a noisy laboratory in which each individual concept is made the object of more or less every possible sort of investigation" (Garff 2005: 232).

⁵ I have kept the theme of the relationship of the self to the natural environment to a minimum in the interpretation, but for both Dickinson and Kierkegaard it is certainly a fertile field for new readings. The Danish philosopher in his *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air* (dan. *Lilien paa Marken og Fuglen Under Himlen*, 1849) takes up the theme of the relationship between "creature" and "Creator" (cf. Pattison 2012).

The story, whose *spiritus movens* is Constantius and the “young man” he directs (“I become very much aware of a young man”), concerns the preparation and “repetition” of a “investigative journey”⁶ to Berlin to relieve what happened in the past: “You can, after all, take a trip to Berlin; you have been there once before, and now you can prove to yourself whether a repetition is possible and what importance it has” (Kierkegaard 1983: 131). But Constantius does not stop there, for he becomes a confidant of the “young man” and his tales of lost/impossible love. *Repetition*, with its polyphonic structure (about which I will write in detail later) does not so much obtain its twin reproduction in Dickinson’s poem, but rather engages into unexpected dialogue:

I’m Nobody! Who are you?
 Are you – Nobody – too?
 Then there’s a pair of us!
 Don’t tell! They’d advertise – you know!

 How dreary – to be – Somebody!
 How public – like a Frog –
 To tell one’s name – the livelong June –
 To an admiring Bog!⁷
 (Dickinson 2022: 133; Dickinson 2005: 116–117)

For both Dickinson in her poem “I’m Nobody! Who are you?” and Kierkegaard in his *Repetition* the attempt to disintegrate identity (and then redefine it) takes the form of dialogic splitting of the self, dissecting the textual self into voices (I, myself, Nobody, you/ Kierkegaard, Constantius, “nameless friend”). Jim von der Heydt states that “Dickinson belongs, with Søren Kierkegaard, to a small school of dead-end epistemological thinkers with a proclivity for intense skepticism. Their epistemological challenge to learning arises from questions that are initially healthy ones” (von der Heydt 2013: 108). By the “healthy” questions he means Immanuel Kant’s structures of perception, the problem of how much is perceived from outside and to what extent it has its origin in one’s mind (von der Heydt 2013: 108).

Having read the poem with its scrutiny of being “Nobody”, one realizes that Dickinson commences the game of defining the human condition with “continual reference” to irony, which is – as Kierkegaard wrote about it (regarding

⁶ Different aspects of their works have been analyzed by Carole Ann Taylor (Taylor 1978), Elisa New (New 1993), Jim von der Heydt (Von der Heydt 2013), James McIntosh (McIntosh 2013). For Kierkegaard one of the philosophical tasks was to confront Hegel’s systemic thought. Daniel Fineman, on the other hand, certifies that Dickinson’s poetry “appears to realize in miniature the Hegelian trajectory of history: they gain a new object and enlarged vision out of the progressive cancellation of their own initial foci” (Fineman 2013: 85).

⁷ Constantius suggests: “For he is determined to do the best he can, and yet this deception, if she is self-loving, will push her the most severely. He treats her with all possible erotic solicitude, and yet this method will be most painful to her if she herself is self-loving” (Kierkegaard 1983: 144).

Socrates) – “an existence form”⁸ (Howland 2015: 25). I argue that the initial verse and formula (“I’m Nobody”) is a poetic gesture signifying a practice of self-reduction, an impersonation of the role of existence without properties. This role, impossible to perform in everyday life (and Dickinson asserts she does not prefer the dreary visibility of “Somebody”) is reminiscent of Socratic questions, distracting what is certain and constant. Being Nobody, as much as being Somebody, is not unequivocally negative or positive. Again, the mentioned dynamic has been brought by Constantin Constantius (*Report by Constantin Constantius*) in a theatrical costume: “Move on, you drama of life – let no one call it a comedy, no one a tragedy, for no one saw the end! Move on, you drama of existence, where life is not given again any more than money is!” (Kierkegaard 1983: 176).

In Kierkegaard’s *Repetition*, which is a philosophical work and a novel in the form of confessions made by the author, fictional Constantin Constantius, who, as one of many of Kierkegaard’s pseudonyms⁹ emphasizes the dynamic and processualism of life. The second part of this work has been divided between Constantinus (*Incidental Observations, Concluding Letter*) and letters of “the Young Man”, who calls himself ‘a nameless friend’, addressing his correspondence to a “a silent confidant” (“My Silent Confidant”). In a letter dated October 11th he states:

What could be gained if I did say something – there is no one who understands me. My pain and my suffering are nameless, even as I myself am nameless, one who, although he has no name, nevertheless may always be something to you and in any case remains. *Your devoted.* (Kierkegaard 1983: 203)

Both figures, Constantin and the “nameless friend”, are equally identical and non-identical, so that Kierkegaard – like Dickinson – achieves the vivid relationality of being a “Nobody”, a type of textual (and existential) presence which is convenient for building the distance from the “self” together with the study of the variety of relations shaping the identity: “myself and Nobody”, “myself and others”, “Nobody and others”, “Nobody and Somebody”. In his *Concluding Letters* Constantius names “You” and “I” created by the plurality of presences. When addressing the “Dear Reader” the pseudonymous and quasi-real author plainly confess: “Although you are indeed fictional, you are by no means a plurality to me but only one, and therefore we are just you and I” (Kierkegaard 1983: 225). Nevertheless, the dialogical nature of Dickinson’s world becomes clear when the presence of “I”

⁸ By “psychical condition” I mean religious-spiritual, not mystical. “Spirit” is, as James McIntosh points out, part of Dickinson’s mature thinking, which takes the form of an “idiosyncratic synthesis” (McIntosh 2013: 153), along with her focus on death and suffering, the celebration of the world created by God, the exploration of the Trinity and immortality.

⁹ Constantius writes about the journey as an existential experiment: “I shall not dwell any longer on such examples but shall to proceed a little of the investigative journey I made to test the possibility and meaning of repetition. Without anyone’s knowing about it (lest any gossip render me incapable of the experiment and in another way weary of repetition) [...]” (Kierkegaard 1983: 150).

and “you” marks the beginning and end of the first verse, evocative and intense at the same time: “**I**m Nobody! Who are **you**?”. They become a supposed pair in the third verse (“there’s a pair of us”), even if Dickinson’s lyrical interlocutor does not respond. Waiting for an answer is coupled with an equally intense desire to ask a question, as in the celebrated poem “This is my letter to the world”:

This is my letter to the World
That never wrote to Me –
The simple News that Nature told –
With tender Majesty [...] ¹⁰
(Dickinson 2022: 211; Dickinson 2005: 235)

The gesture of writing a letter (with the embodiment of addressee and recipient) to the world is no less theatrical than the structure of dialogue and monologue (simultaneously) of the poem “I’m Nobody! Who are you?”. Adeline Chevrier-Bosseau, examining the influence of Shakespeare’s works on the “self” of Dickinson’s lyric, points to the poet’s constant play with Victorian convention to entertain her potential audience:

If Dickinson – both in the creation of her public persona and of a “multifaceted” poetic self – seems to be playing a game of hide and seek with her audience, by exhibiting a recluse persona, and by showcasing an evasive voice in her poems, the lyrical game is also playing with the idea of the legitimacy of its audience. (Chevrier-Bosseau 2010: 9)

Theatrical convention problematizes the presence of “I”, and makes it even more complicated. Kierkegaard, using Constantius’ *Report*, proposes the image of the visit to the theater as a form of impossible repetition and wearing the mask of Nobody: “You have gone to the theatre not as a tourist, not as an esthete and critic but, if possible, as a nobody, and you are satisfied to sit as comfortably and well, almost as well, as in your own living room” (Kierkegaard 1983: 165). Variable in its materiality, the vibrancy of the theater, where each performance and each evening are different, even though the directed structure remains the same, describes the inner dynamics of “repetition”. Martijn Boven, examining *Repetition* in its performative potential, certifies that Kierkegaard cultivates “a theatre of ideas in which philosophical and existential problems are performed rather than represented” (Boven 2018: 117). It is apparent that Constantius’ trip to Berlin portrays repetition

¹⁰ John D. Caputo claims that Kierkegaard himself is “nobody”: “As the author, he argued, he himself is nobody, as good as dead, infinitely light relative to the gravity of the reader’s existential fate. [...] He used pseudonyms not because he was sceptic but because he regarded the author as a matter of ‘indifference’, for what is said in these books has nothing to do with whether the author wears a hat (or has uneven trouser legs)” (Caputo 2008: 6). Mark C. Taylor recreates the meaning of Kierkegaard’s pseudonyms for his legacy (cf. Taylor 1975).

in a social and psychological dimension (sketches on theatre), problematizing what has been established by (and within) its philosophical structure.

Both complication and dynamism in communicational instances are equally multipronged in Dickinson's poem, especially in the instances when it is based on negative statements ("Nobody", "don't tell"). "Don't tell," however, may not be so much about the relationship with "them" as it is a conscious entry into the order of "Nothing." Dickinson asks: "Who are you", and later: "Are You – Nobody – Too", trying to bridge the distance between "I" and "you" by creating a bridge of shared experience. At the same time, it attempts to tame the complicated presence of "you". The separately written particle of "Too" seems to indicate a slow, tentative pursuit of a punchline, after the word to which "you" could respond. Then it would turn out to be radically different. Or – radically similar! Since "Nobody's" identity remains uncertain, it might be the speaker (itself), the reader (both current and prospective), God or any form of divine, or non-human nature (materialized by "a frog").

"Nobody", when one's identity personifies it, might be a figuration of "recollection" and "repetition", a division which Kierkegaard explores in particular. Joakim Garff states that "the two different directions are represented by two figures" (Garff 2005: 233). Constantin Constantinus represents "the wrong repetitions", as a book narrator and also "a character in his own tale, embarking among many other things, on an expedition to Berlin in a rash attempt to ascertain the actual extent of repetition" (Garff 2005: 233). Even if his pieces of advice offered to the young man, a depressed person "sufficiently occupied with himself" (Kierkegaard 1983: 135), are problematic, the narrator and the observer, perform a part of "nobody", someone "unnoticed".¹¹

3. Nobody as a Project

Although Kierkegaard's and Dickinson's writings actively destabilize the "self", their comparison can be questioned, especially since Dickinson's poem does not refer to the past. "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" is firmly rooted in the here and now, reinforced by poetic minimalism along with the use of the present tense. When one thinks of "repetition" as a fertile formula hidden in the Dickinson's verse, it is indispensable to interpret those features as "actuality, which has been":

The dialectic of repetition is easy, for that which is repeated has been – otherwise it could not be repeated – but the very fact that it has been makes the repetition into something new. [...] when one says that life is repetition, one says: actuality, which has been, now comes into existence. (Kierkegaard 1983: 149)

¹¹ I will refer to the both editions of Dickinson's poems in the main text. In footnotes, I indicate the line number of the Ralph William Franklin (F) and Thomas H. Jonston (J) editions. J, 657; F, 466.

Dickinson's assertion of being as Nobody, or indeed being as the state and process of "nobodiness" enacts the selfsame paradox as Kierkegaard's "coming into existence". This linguistic game not only emphasizes a corporeal aspect of one's identity, but also its processual core, which performs and activates rather than offers explanations. Again, even if Dickinson does not define who or what "Nobody" is (or even what it means to be "Nobody"), she creates a counterpoint, which is not the negative reverse of previous process: "how dreary – to be – Somebody." "Being Somebody" gives voice to practice inattentiveness and emphasizes not to format "nobodiness" in the shape of "somebodiness", which by both Kierkegaard and Dickinson might be defined as "public appearance" ("How public"). When Constantius suggests to the "young man" a plan on how to "get back" the lost girl and at the same time take revenge on her,¹² by provoking jealousy, he writes explicitly about public performance: "He was supposed to appear with her [a new companion – M.K.] in public places" (Kierkegaard 1983: 144). The introspective process of (impossible) "repetition" along with intellectual penetration is by its very nature intimate. The "public" theatricality of presenting oneself as "somebody", might be a counterpoint for confronting the individuality of the "self". Writing about the social dynamics of "I'm Nobody! Who are you?", Betsy Erkkilä describes the poem as a sign of the public and "noisy" culture of democracy, "of stump speech and camp meeting" (Erkkilä 2004: 151). Such "meaningless noise" is one of the evils Kierkegaard seeks to counter in *Repetition*: "If one does not have the category of recollection or of repetition, all life dissolves into an empty, meaningless noise" (Kierkegaard 1983: 149).

When the "self" begins a dialogue ("Who are you?"), it affirms being in the world, while remaining attentive to the various forms of relationships making themselves present in her life.¹³ In this poem Dickinson is not only observing herself in a world marked by the presence of the frog, the swamp and "them" ("they'd advertise"), but it also suspended in the face of another ("you") presence to which the lyrical "I" directs its question. Dickinson's poem stands out for its dialogical (and self-dialogical) minimum. The lyrical "I" strips itself of its properties, confessing: "I'm Nobody". It is a kind of experiment to assume, if only for a moment, such a model of existence, in which it is possible to be "beyond properties". "Nobody" having, after all, a strong linguistic correlation with materiality and corporeality, is here an attempt to think of oneself beyond gender and femininity, body, appearance,

¹² J, 441; F, 519.

¹³ The opening passage certifies: "When the Eleatics denied motion, Diogenes, as everyone knows, came forward as an opponent. He literally did come forward, because he did not say a word but merely paced back and forth a few times, thereby assuming that he had sufficiently refuted them" (Kierkegaard 1983: 131). Greek philosophy is a substantial example of "recollection", the term opposed to the titular "repetition". For the Greeks – as Constantius marks – "all knowing is a recollection" (Kierkegaard 1983: 131), whereas "modern philosophy will teach us all life is a repetition" (Kierkegaard 1983: 131). Rick Anthony Furtak presented Kierkegaard's studies of ancient Greek thought and their influence on his philosophy (Furtak 2013).

identifying oneself as belonging to people, when the presence of "a frog" is no less prominent. Dickinson's identity tends to initiate situations joining the "self" with environment, even if seemingly she presents her "I" as the one who wants to hide:

I hide myself within my flower,
That fading from your Vase,
You, unsuspecting, feel for me –
Almost a loneliness.¹⁴
(Dickinson 2022: 427; Dickinson 2005: 47)

Here, as in "I'm Nobody! Who are you?", the central dialogical part has been transcribed in the voices of "me" ("I hide myself within my flower") and "you" ("You, unsuspecting, feel for me"). When analyzing "myself" in a different verse, Dickinson even confesses that "me" assaults "myself":

Me from Myself – to banish –
Had I Art –
Impregnable my Fortress
Unto All Heart –

But since Myself – assault Me –
How have I peace
Except by subjugating
Consciousness?

And since We're mutual Monarch
How this be
Except by Abdication –
Me – of Me?¹⁵
(Dickinson 2022: 318–319; Dickinson 2005: 317)

Those poetical experiments with the "self" are reminiscent of laboratory practices, to which one submits one's subjectivity to analyze ("Me from Myself – to banish –").¹⁶ Nobody as a project can be described as a form of ethical exercise involving the removal of the "self" in order to be able to weaken one's own construction and bring out 'for oneself' the unknown. That which has the potential to transform a certain (and therefore less susceptible to criticism) way of being.

¹⁴ In his *Report* Constantius writes: "In dealing with a depressed person, one often learns most from his subordinates, because a depressed person often opens up more to a servant, a maid, an old unnoticed dependent in a family than to someone of similar culture and station" (Kierkegaard 1983: 139).

¹⁵ J, 288; F, 260.

¹⁶ *Fear and Trembling. Dialectical Lyric*, "written by" Johannes de Silentio, one of Kierkegaard's pseudonymous works, is a philosophical work describing the life of Abraham and his attempt to kill his son, Isaac, as a result of a God's command. Dickinson raised this subject directly in her poem "Abraham to kill him" (Kierkegaard 2022: 571) (J, 1317).

To find the relationship with the world, one needs to allow oneself to lose it: "I lost a World – the other day!/ Has Anybody found?" (Dickinson 2022: 86). The earthly element thus conceived reveals itself just as clearly in Kierkegaard's work, when thought penetrates the self in relation to the rich relationality defined as the world. When performing repetition Constantius confesses: "My body had lost its terrestrial gravity; it was as if I had no body [...]" (Kierkegaard 1983: 173). And then, he uses a paradoxical parallel to demonstrate that "repetition", even if impossible, has been fulfilled: "My being was transparent, like the depths of the sea, like the self-satisfied silence of the night, like the soliloquizing stillness of midday" (Kierkegaard 1983: 173).¹⁷

In "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" Dickinson problematizes the act of speaking, which becomes an image of adjudication of oneself, a kind of construction that determines one's identity, and also allows others to form an opinion about someone else. In this sense, the formula "how public" is an act of setting in motion what rights a group of people, a society, has to make judgments about an individual. This opposition in the poem is evident. In stanza one, "we" (that is, "I-Nobody" and "you" – Nobody) confront "they" ("they'd advertise"), while in the second stanza the poem considers the relationship between "we" ("there's a pair of us") and what is public ("how public"). "Public" seems to mean known, belonging to the majority, subject to the dictates of the majority, commonplace, but also noisy, overplayed.

"Nobody", this disturbing presence of the poem,¹⁸ can be a recognized form of divinity. "Who are you" asks the question of the "I," while at the same time wondering if God will also take on the characteristics of "Nobody". Here, too, Dickinson seems to challenge the order, asking about the amorphous, incorporeal and extra-sexual essence of what belongs to the divine. Interestingly, the question is left unanswered, and thus the "I," being unsure of who and what it sees, merely assumes that perhaps reality and its deus bears the characteristics of a "Nobody". This relation, as she points out in another poem, is based on a hunch ("you know"), not on observation.

In the final stanza, the lyrical "I" once again invokes "telling" ("To tell one's name") to periodize its "public" dimension, which is to be illustrated by the "frog" ("like a Frog"). Confessing one's name is not equivalent to the action of a frog, but it turns out to be apparent. The frog is precisely not public, although the general perception seems to be that knowledge of it is locked into a rigid, certain framework. Meanwhile, the frog does not speak its name. The person reading only becomes familiar with the fact that it is a frog. Just as the term "Nobody" can evoke an unspecified woman, person, God. If it is "public" to say frog, it seems to be

¹⁷ J, 903; F, 80.

¹⁸ J, 642; F, 709.

about a form of feeling that the world as a whole, as a certain system of meanings and existences appropriates knowledge of us. However, this is about the world of other-than-human nature.¹⁹

4. Existential Exercise and Possibility. Conclusion

When the matrix of "ready answers and completed philosophical projects" is superimposed on the works of Kierkegaard and Dickinson, reading both works will end in unqualified disappointment. For the work of Kierkegaard is a project, a psychological and ethical one, thanks to which "impossible repetition" becomes not so much a meaningless act of masochistic pleasure of milling around, but an exercise in confronting "oneself" with various moments of existence, with the world. Dickinson's poem functions similarly. Open to interpretation and anchored in the you and now, it constantly performs an action that, through the figure of Nobody, is itself a repetition, a profound search for a relationship with oneself, with the world, with the environment, with the divine.

Both works are open-ended existential projects that point to human activity as a constant search, which should be a creative expansion of one's ethical imagination, an individual effort more than a recipe for life. Having called Kierkegaard's project a lyrical Christianity, Elisa New stated that poetry is a particularly hospitable matter for theological speculation (New 1993: 159–162), through which not only God is debated, but also who the "self" is in relation to itself, the world and others (and therefore to the divine).

I dwell in Possibility –
A fairer House than Prose –
More numerous of Windows –
Superior – for Doors –²⁰
(Dickinson 2022: 657; Dickinson 2005: 215)

¹⁹ Dickinson also recalls this figure in another poem:

"I've non to tell me but Thee
So when Thou failest, nobody.
It was a little tie –
It just held Two, nor those it held
Since Somewhere thy sweet Face has spilled
Beyond my Boundary – [...]"
(Dickinson 2022: 418; Dickinson 2005: 397).

²⁰ I refer to Søren Kierkegaard's dissertation *The Concept of Irony with Continual Reference to Socrates* (org. *Om Begrebet Ironi med stadigt Hensyn til Socrates*) defended in 1841. As Jacob Howland summarizes: "Kierkegaard's dissertation reveals the truth of irony to be an existence form rather than, as its title would seem to announce, a theoretical structure. Its most important teaching consists not in an argument, but an enactment – a demonstration of erotic attunement to the soul of Socrates, and thus the ethical openness to other individuals that is essential to Socrates philosophizing" (Howland 2015: 25–26).

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KULTURA I EDUKACJA

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Nettsiden til *Polske filmdager* i Norge som multimodalt samspill

The Website of *Polish Film Days* in Norway: A Multimodal Interaction

The article examines the website of the festival *Polske filmdager i Norge* [Polish Film Days in Norway] as a multifaceted text. The multimodal analysis of the front page, its composition and forms of expression as meaning resources, is further interpreted in light of information posted about the festival. This leads to conclusions about whether the interaction of the website's various modalities contributes to expressing the festival's identity and promoting the concept of cross-cultural dialogue that is crucial for *Polske filmdager*.

Key words: Polish Film Days in Norway, multimodal analysis, website analysis, intercultural dialogue in Norway

Nøkkelord: Polske filmdager i Norge, multimodal analyse, nettstedsanalyse, tverrkulturell dialog i Norge

Innledning

Det å uttrykke seg selv ved bruk av medieteknologier har blitt et sterkt behov både for enkeltindivider og større og mindre menneskegrupper. Man kan likevel ikke si at den stadig voksende tilgjengeligheten av ulike medieuttrykk som kan tas i bruk i dag for å oppfylle dette målet, gjør det lettere å avspeile den identitets-skapende prosessen eller avsløre dybden i identitetens kompleksitet (Gripsrud 2015: 15–23; Lundby 2008). Internett byr på et helt spekter av modaliteter (Engbretsen 2010: 17–36) som kombineres på ulikt vis, og dette samspillet mellom skrift, bilde og lyd utgjør et fantastisk verktøy til å beskrive hvem vi egentlig er. Innen det sosialesemiotiske og retoriske perspektivet kan man tolke det slik at avsenderens identitetserklæring er det grunnleggende budskapet som gjør den legitim og troverdig og gjør det mulig å utvikle mer eller mindre effektiv kommunikasjon

med leserne¹. Dette er en av de mest universelle mekanismene som strukturerer meningsutveksling mellom både enkeltindivider og menneskegrupper.

Dagens forskning på multimodale uttrykk hører inn under ulike vitenskapslige disipliner som bl.a. sosiosemiotikk, retorikk, narratologi, medieestetikk og medieanalyse (Kress og van Leeuwen 2001; Kress 2010; Barthes 1977; Kjeldsen 2004; Liestøl, Morrison og Rasmussen 2003; Tufte 1997; Engholm og Klastrop 2004; Fagerjord 2008; Lundby 2008; Hausken 2009; Gillespie og Toynbee 2009). I denne artikkelen vil jeg utforske en multimodal prosess bak identitetsskapingen til et konkret kulturelt fenomen. Dette skal gjøres i det sosiosemiotiske perspektivet, basert på et konkret materiale og ved en bestemt metodologi.

Metodologi

Formålet for denne artikkelen er å vise hvilke konkrete modaliteter og virkemidler som kan brukes til å uttrykke identiteten til en polsk festival i Norge, altså Polske filmdager i Fredrikstad og Oslo, ved å gjennomføre en næranalyse av festivalens nettside «Polske filmdager»². Nettsiden skal hovedsakelig ses på som en sammensatt tekst (Engebretsen 2010: 17–36). Enkelte retoriske begrep som «avsender» og «leser» brukes for å vise at nettsiden ble skapt for å appellere til en viss avgrenset målgruppe for å nå frem med et bestemt budskap. Fokuset i analysen skal da ligge på det multimodale aspektet ved kommunikasjon mellom avsenderen, altså festivalen selv som en gruppe mennesker som driver virksomheten med et konkret budskap de ønsker å formidle, og mottakerne som bruker festivalens nettside, som samtidig utgjør festivalens potensielle publikum. Dette metodologiske valget tillater en å spore nøyaktig hva slags modaliteter (Engebretsen 2010) som gjør det mulig å skape en mer eller mindre sammenhengende multimodal representasjon av festivalens idé, innhold, organiseringsmodus, som uttrykk for dens identitet. Polske filmdager ses på som et kulturelt fenomen representert av en gruppe mennesker («avsender» – gruppen) som danner et bestemt identitetsbilde. Det kunne ellers være interessant å gjennomføre en retorisk analyse av festivalens nettside eller utdype brukernes perspektiv uttrykt via et spørreskjema eller en fokusgruppe for å vise flere aspekter ved dens innvirkning på leserne. Dette er likevel ikke målet ved denne næranalysen og er potensielt stoff for en annen artikkel.

Polske filmdager er en årlig polsk-norsk kulturproduksjon med tverrkulturell dialog i fokus. Festivalen har nå blitt arrangert ti år på rad og feiret sitt første runde jubileum høsten 2023. **Hvordan er det synliggjort på festivalens nettside? Hvilke modaliteter og virkemidler blir tatt i bruk for å skape et legitimt bilde av Polske**

¹ Begrepene «avsender», «leser» og «tekst» brukes i denne artikkelen i utvidet betydning, jamfør M. Engebretsen (2010: 17–36).

² Frontsiden: <https://www.polskefilmdager.org/norsk-2023-main>.

filmdager på nettet? Og hvordan samspiller de med hverandre for å tiltrekke potensielle festivaldeltakere og promotere begrepet «tverrkulturell dialog»³?

Disse spørsmålene besvares her i to trinn: ved å analysere innholdet på festivalens nettside og så tolke nettsiden i lys av Polske filmdagers filosofi slik den er omtalt av festivalarrangøren selv. Analyse materialet avgrenses til et utvalg av nettsidens viktigste og mest eksponerte lag, altså frontside fra året 2023 og enkelte undersider («Polske filmdager 10 år» og «Om oss»).

Næranalyse av Polske filmdagers frontside

Analyse materialet er hovedsakelig festivalens frontside «Polske filmdager», som vises på en bestemt type skjerm, dvs. en Chromebook-skjerm i standardstørrelsen 1410 × 940 piksler. Polske filmdager bruker en web-estetikk som er horisontalt orientert, skjermtilpasset og lagdelt. Allerede ved første øyekast på frontside ser man at den består av mer enn to visuelle felt. Øverst på siden ser man navnet til festivalen i blokkbokstaver og en meny der man kan navigere mellom tre seksjoner: «Utgaver 2014–2023», «Om oss» og «Medier» presentert i liten skrift. Den tredje linjen av teksten utgjør den samme menyen på polsk «Edycje 2014–2023», «O nas» i «Media». Fonten på hele menyteksten og selve navnet til festivalen er enkel, ren, uten ornamentering. Den har hvit farge som står i sterk kontrast til en svart bakgrunn som fyller hele siden til utkantene av skjermflaten.



Illustrasjon 1. Logoen til Polske filmdagers jubileum designet av Jagoda Ryba. Fordi det ikke var mulig å vise den i tre farger slik det er fremstilt på nettsiden, er det en annen versjon av logobildet som vises her, egnet for visning på hvit bakgrunn

Kilde: <https://www.polskefilmdager.org/norsk-2023-main> [tilgang: 25.02.2025].

³ Til tross for at begrepet «integrering» er svært utbredt i det norske offentlige rommet, er det konsekvent erstattet med begrepet «tverrkulturell dialog» på Polske filmdagers nettside.

1. Den første delen av frontsidene

Rett under menyen dukker det opp et ganske stort og svært tydelig logobilde i hvit og rød farge som består av to elementer: «10 år!» og «POLSKIE FILMDAGER». Blikket forankres i de røde elementene, det vil si tallet «10» og ordet «POLSKIE». Tallet ti har tredimensjonal utforming, som danner et inntrykk av en meget tykk skrifttype som nesten ser ut som en skulptur, mens ordet «POLSKIE» er understreket med en hvit skygge bak de røde bokstavene. Uttrykket «år!» er plassert rett over adjektivet «POLSKIE», slik at utropstegnet havner midt over adjektivet som refererer til den polske nasjonen og fester blikket enda mer. Det er ikke bare samspill mellom de to polske fargene, hvit og rød, som har en betydning, men også mellom de ulike retningene til enkelte deler av skriften. Uttrykket «10 år!» er nemlig plassert slik at skriften stiger fra venstre oppover mot høyre, mens uttrykket «POLSKIE FILMDAGER» går i nedadgående retning, fra venstre nedover til høyre. Dette gir en følelse av interaksjon mellom de ulike elementene. Den dynamiske vekslingen mellom de hvite og røde fargene i den øvre delen av logoen (det røde «10» – hvite «år!» – røde «POLSKIE») roer seg i en tydelig hvitfarget skrift i «FILMDAGER». Bokstavene folder seg rolig ut i en lengre linje som strekker seg fra den venstre kanten av tallet ti og parallelt med ordet «POLSKIE». På denne måten får man en følelse av at logobildet blir «stengt» som en helhet. Dette demper også dynamikken i samspillet mellom fargene og de motsatte retningene til skriften i logoens øvre del. Det er ellers ikke noen flere elementer som synes i dette feltet av frontsidene, noe som forsterker et inntrykk av grafisk ro og renhet.

Rett under logobildet følger en linje tekst: «2023 Moss 26–27.08 Fredrikstad 8–15.10 Oslo 20.10». Det brukes ikke komma, men ganske store avstander mellom navnene på stedene og datoene som skiller de tre festivalarenaene. Skriften er holdt i den samme enkle fonten og i samme størrelse som øverst på nettsidens meny. Nederst på Chromebook-skjermen i full modus ser man de øvre delene av tre bilder som introduserer tre ulike motiver⁴. Man merker lett at det er mulig å skrolle nedover på frontsidene for å se resten av bildene, og at dette bare var en antydning om hva som kommer.

2. Oppsummering av den første analysedelen

Den dominerende modaliteten brukt på den øvre delen av nettsiden som man ser først etter å ha åpnet den, er hovedsakelig skrift i ulike størrelser, samt et logobilde som representerer tiårsjubileet av festivalen som er en type grafisk bearbeidet skrift. Bildene tar mye mindre plass ved første øyekast og er eksponert bare delvis

⁴ Bildene synes i sin helhet først etter at man har skrollet nedover. Se Illustrasjon 2.

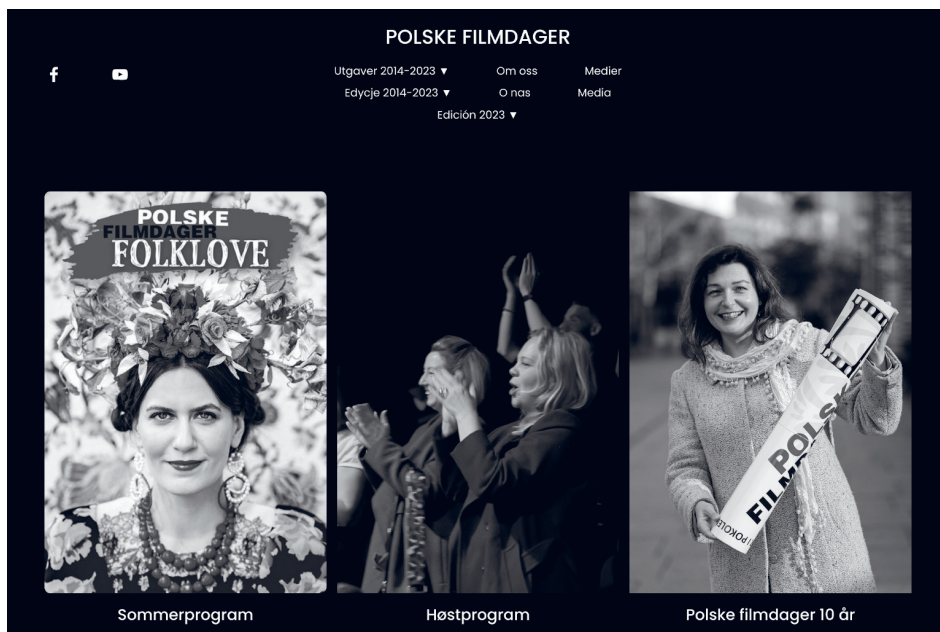
på Chromebook-skjermen. Dette fungerer som en invitasjon til å skrolle ned for å oppdage mer. Teksten er samtidig begrenset til et minimum av verbal kommunikasjon som nesten bare avslører festivalens navn, steder og datoer og annonserer dens jubileum. Det helhetlige inntrykket dannes i et samspill mellom de korte tekstene, den bestemte komposisjonen til sidens grafiske komponenter med logoen i sentrum og fargene og retningene i skrift av ulik størrelse. Alle de grafiske elementene lyser ut av en svart bakgrunn. Dette skaper det samme inntrykket som man får ved å se et bilde som lyser ut av en kinoskjerm mens man sitter inne i en kinosal. Dette er en måte å etablere en uforpliktende, men ganske intim kontakt med leserne på. Det er også en kontrast mellom sidens svarte bakgrunn, lyse bokstaver og de fargerike billedmotivene, som spiller en vesentlig rolle. Til sammen får dette frem det viktige budskapet om festivalens tiårsjubileum.

Det er altså jubileumslogoen som utgjør det sentrale elementet på frontsidens. Logoen spiller på de polske fargene (hvit og rød) ved å bruke kontrast og dynamiske endringer i skriftretning. Utopstegnet som er plassert midt i logobildet, kan leses som et uttrykk for glede, entusiasme eller positiv energi. Dette kan naturligvis knyttes til det annonserte tiårsjubileet, men også til festivalstemningen generelt. Innholdet i logobildet, altså uttrykkene «10 år!» og «POLSKE FILMDAGER», fungerer her som en enkel måte å markere festivalens posisjon på, mens samspillet mellom de ulike grafiske elementene i logobildet illustrerer en idé om sammenstilling av ulike verdier og perspektiver, grafisk representert av ulike farger og retninger. Ikke minst valget av språk i logoen har sin funksjon, ved å kombinere et norsk uttrykk med et polsk tema. En slik komposisjon av logoen danner mange spennende semiotiske kontrapunkt.

Teksten i menyen man ser over logobildet, er en symbolsk representasjon av festivalens portefølje som sprer seg over 10 utgaver. Men det understreker også den flerspråklige karakteren til festivalvirksomheten, siden hele menyen er presentert parallelt på norsk og polsk. Det spanske tillegget antyder at festivalmiljøet også er åpent for impulser fra andre kulturer. Skriftens tydelige og enkle form gjør den lett lesbar, og skaper i tillegg et inntrykk av at alle de språkene som er brukt her, er likeverdige. Teksten under logobildet tilbyr en annen viktig informasjon om stedene festivalen utspiller seg på, og avslører slik festivalens lokale og regionale posisjon. Alle stedsnavnene står på samme tekstlinje, noe som antyder at arrangementer holdt i hovedstaden og i mindre byer er like viktige for festivalen.

Det å plassere noen bilder rett under den enkle informasjonen har nok en annen funksjon. De fargerike motivene i de tre bildene man først kan se på skjermen, fester blikket og appellerer til følelser knyttet til den slaviske folkloren og den festlige stemningen. Den sistnevnte er representert ved bildet av en mann med hevede armer og et entusiastisk uttrykk. Motivet av den smilende damen i nærmere billedutsnitt skaper en følelse av tiltrekkende nærhet, mens bakgrunnen i bildet antyder at festivalen står i sterk tilknytning til byen eller bykulturen. Ut ifra dette,

og uten å lese mer om festivalen, kan man forstå at avsenderen ønsker å fremstå som en inkluderende, samfunnsengasjert og flerspråklig aktør som er aktiv på ulike plan og vil nå frem til ulike målgrupper⁵.



Illustrasjon 2. Utdrag fra frontsiden til Polske filmdager slik den så ut i 2023

Kilde: <https://www.polskefilmdager.org/norsk-2023-main> [tilgang: 25.02.2025].

3. Den andre delen av frontsiden

Etter å ha skrollet litt ned får man opp tre bilder med ulike motiver som nå er presentert i full modus med underskriftene «Sommerprogram», «Høstprogram» og «Polske filmdager 10 år». Først til venstre ser man et bilde av en ganske ung kvinne i et halvnært utsnitt. Hun er kledd i en folkedrakt som kan assosieres med polsk eller slavisk kultur, blant annet på grunn av de store, røde perlene hun har på seg. Hun er ellers pyntet med en stor blomsterkrans. Ved nærmere ettersyn ser man at blomstene er laget av kreppapir, men de er relativt naturtro. De røde elementene

⁵ Det er enda en faktor som påvirker betrakterens perspektiv ved bruk av internett, nemlig brukerinvolvering. Potensialet i nettsidens interaktivitet ligger skjult i navigeringsmulighetene man oppdager på frontsidene. Man kan utforske flere undersider enten gjennom å åpne en norsk eller polsk meny, eller ved å klikke på bildene midt på frontsidene. Selve komposisjonen av menyene avslører at Polske filmdager er en veletablert festivalarena som har virket i de ti siste årene, som har gjort seg mange erfaringer og skapt sin egen historie.

i drakten og pynten er godt avstemt med rødfargen på leppestiften til kvinnen. Dette skaper et dynamisk spill mellom sterke farger og en festlig atmosfære, særlig i samspill med bakgrunnen som også er fylt med rike blomstermotiver og farger. Dette bildet er et portrett, det vil si at det som virker viktigst, er kvinneskikkelsen i forgrunnen, mens andre elementer utgjør en bakgrunn. Inne i bildet ser man også en ny logo som strekker seg over kvinnens hode på en rød bakgrunn som korresponderer med de andre røde elementene i bildet. Logoen består av tre linjer tekst i blokkbokstaver: «POLSK» i hvit farge, «FILMDAGER» i svart farge (begge i samme font som i jubileumslogoen) og «FOLKLOVE» holdt i litt større font som ligner på penselmalt håndskrift og hvit farge. Man merker lett at det nye ordet «FOLKLOVE», som ikke hører direkte til festivalens navn, antyder at det enten er en ny del eller noe spesielt ved festivalprogrammet.

Det andre bildet som presenteres midt på frontsiden, står i stor kontrast til det første bildet med sine mørke farger. Det forestiller tre personer i halvfigur. Det er to middelaldrende kvinner som står og klapper med entusiastisk uttrykk i ansiktene (en av dem ser ut som om hun synger eller roper noe ut), og i den venstre utkanten av bildet ser vi overkroppen til en mann som står bak kvinnene og strekker armene høyt over hodet for å applaudere entusiastisk. Dette er en tydelig og visuelt overbevisende representasjon av festivalpublikummet. Alle personene som er fremstilt på dette bildet, synes på en svart, ren bakgrunn som minner om en kino- eller konsertsal. Påkledningen til damene er ganske ledig. De har på seg kåper i brunt og grått, og en av dem har et gyllent skjerf med et lett glitter. I den venstre utkanten synes en mannlig arm i en enkel hvit T-skjorte.

Det tredje bildet plassert til høyre i galleriet på frontsiden med billedteksten «Polske filmdager 10 år» forestiller en middelaldrende kvinne med et stort smil. Hun er fanget i en dynamisk positur, nesten som om hun går i retning mot leserne. Hun holder frem en stor plakate med skriften «POLSK» og «FILMDAG» i rød og svart farge på en hvit bakgrunn. Teksten leses naturligvis som «POLSK FILMDAGER» utifra hovedkonteksten, særlig når man aner et grafisk symbol av en billedrute på plakaten. Hovedpersonen har på seg en kåpe i lysegrå farge og et skjerf i en lyserosa farge. Bylandskapet er utydelig, men man kan kjenne igjen noen silhuetter av bygninger, trær i høstfarger og himmelen som fyller rommet mellom dem. Dette danner et inntrykk av et ganske åpent rom. Man fester blikket på det brede smilet til kvinnen og skriften som antyder festivalens navn. Den røde fargen på leppestiften korresponderer igjen direkte med logoens farge.

De tre billeduttrykkene er et eksempel på hvordan motivet med polske farger og rød farge i sentrum blir konsekvent utviklet. Rødfargen er nemlig satt sammen med ulike andre farger, både fra spekteret av sommerblomster, høstblader og den mørke fargetonen som minner om stemningen i en kinosal. Hovedtemaet i alle de tre bildene er mennesker. Det er ikke sikkert at det er et bevisst valg av avsenderen at det er damer som dominerer, men deres positur og smil kan bidra til å skape et inntrykk av spontanitet og skjønnhet. De to bildene til venstre og høyre i galleriet

forestiller to kvinne som ser rett mot leserne. Det midterste bildet viser en gruppe mennesker i en festivalaktivitet. Bildene har da to ulike funksjoner, de representerer et fellesskap av festivalpublikum og oppretter en direkte kontakt med nettsidens potensielle lesere. Hovedfølelsene de illustrerer, er glede, entusiasme og energi.

Det kreative fargespillet foregår også i påkledningen til personene som avbildes. De ulike draktene de har på seg, representerer både folketradisjon og moderne holdninger til klær, og de refererer til to ulike årstider, som er sommer og høst. Man kan da oppsummere at modaliteten som dominerer i dette feltet av frontsidens bilder med et fargespill som appellerer følelsesmessig til leserne. Billedtekstene under bildene spiller bare rollen som informativt tillegg som setter navn på de ulike programdelene og igjen markerer at festivalen feirer sitt tiårsjubileum. Ved å klikke seg inn på alle de tre bildene får man opp programmet for begge årstidene og mer informasjon om festivalens jubileum⁶.

4. Den tredje delen av frontsidens

Det tredje feltet på frontsidens, som man kan utforske ved å skrolle enda mer ned, består av fire vinduer med videoer i ulike formater og moduser. Alle fire stammer enten fra Polske filmdagers YouTube-kanal eller mediesponsorens kanal og kan avspilles som film ved å trykke på stillbildene. Først til venstre ser vi et stillbilde fra filmen «Polske filmdager 2023» med billedteksten «Alek Nowak/ Iconic Photography» (Polske filmdager b, u.å.). Det mest iøynefallende er to kvinnelige skikkelser i forgrunnen. De står foran kinopublikummere som fyller en kinosal. Publikummerne er ganske uskarpe slik at man ikke kan kjenne igjen ansikter. De to damene bøyer seg mot hverandre for å utveksle en mikrofon. Over radene med seter fylt av tilskuere ser vi et lys fra en projektor som kan være klar til å snurre en film. Dette kan tolkes som en filmatisk metafor om at det å være en del av festivalens fellesskap ikke krever at man samtidig avslører alt om seg selv overfor kameraet. Denne metaforen kan bidra til å skape mer tillit hos nettsidens lesere.

Til høyre for det stillbildet som omtales ovenfor, ser man to mindre vinduer med videoer fra YouTube-kanal Radio Wataha⁷ (YouTube-kanal til Radio Wataha a,b, u.å.). På ett av dem ser man to damer som sitter ved siden av hverandre på den første raden i en tom kinosal. Kvinnene og rommet rundt dem er fanget i et halvtotalt billedutsnitt, så det avsløres ikke mange flere detaljer. Siden dette vinduet er ganske lite, får man ikke lest hele filmtittelen, men bare det uferdige uttrykket *Festivaljenter med skaperk*. Stillbildet i det tredje lille vinduet viser filmen *Konsertdialog over grenser*, som forestiller to middelaldrende menn i et halvnært

⁶ Det kunne vært interessant å se innover i nettsiden og analysere samspillet mellom de ulike undersidene samt mulighetene for interaktiv navigering. Men dette er det ikke plass til i denne kortfattede analysen.

⁷ Festivalens mediesponsor.

billedutsnitt. En av dem har en T-skjorte med bilde av en mørkhudet saksofonist, mens den andre er kledd i en dressjakke i en ganske avslappet stil. Begge smiler lett og ser rett inn i filmkameraet som fanger lesernes blikk til tross for at vinduet ikke er stort. Det er et estetisk virkemiddel som er felles for alle disse stillbildene: det spilles på kontrasten mellom de mørke og lyse fargene. Lyseffektene og forskjellen mellom lys og skygge og mellom skarpe og uklare bildelementer er et hovedgrep i filmen *Polske filmdager 2023*.

Under de tre vinduene finner man enda et vindu med en video med en tekst i hvit farge som ruller på en svart bakgrunn (Polske filmdager a, u.å.). Videoen er aktiv så teksten avspilles foran lesernes øyne. Den inneholder en liste over alle arrangementer festivalen har gjennomført i løpet av ni utgaver, altså før det første runde jubileet. Når man trykker på volumknappen, får man høre lyd. Det er en norskspråklig jazzlåt, *Havet*⁸, som vekker assosiasjoner til norsk natur. Den har ganske lite tekst og flere instrumentale deler. Dette gjør det lett å fokusere på den rullende teksten som takket være sin enkle form og rene font nesten virker som rulleteksten på en film man ser på kino. Denne videoen begynner med logobildet «POLSKA FILMDAGER 10 ÅR!», som man kjenner igjen fra den øvre delen av frontsidens.

5. Den fjerde delen av frontsidens

Det nederste feltet på frontsidens er et galleri av logobilder som viser hvem som er festivalarrangør, samarbeidspartnere og mediesponsorer. Festivalens e-postadresse er oppgitt som kontaktinformasjon. Logostripen blir synlig nederst mens man eventuelt navigerer videre gjennom ulike undersider.

6. Oppsummering av den andre analysedelen

Det tredje feltet på frontsidens består av stillbilder og videoer og har billeduttrykk som dominerende modalitet. Disse skaper en mening og et følelsesmessig engasjement eller til og med innlevelse hos leserne. De valgte scenene representerer festivalens liv under arrangementene. Hovedkarakterene er personer som symbolsk representerer enten festivalpublikum eller festivalarrangøren. Stillbildene og filmene viser at det oppstår en interaksjon mellom dem. I motsetning til de statiske bildene presentert i det andre feltet på frontsidens, der man ser enkeltmennesker med tydelige ansiktsuttrykk, er det ofte større menneskegrupper som er avbildet i filmene. Hovedtemaet om den mellommenneskelige kontakten og publikums opplevelse gjenstår imidlertid uforandret både i frontsidens andre og tredje felt.

⁸ Komposisjon: Dawid Sulej Rudnicki. Tekst: Magdalena Tutka-Gwóźdź.

Alle personer fremstilt i filmene smiler lett, men mimikken har mindre intensitet enn på de statiske bildene i frontsidens andre felt, der billeduttrykkene sto for etableringen av en direkte kontakt med leserne.

Det er interessant at bortsett fra logobildet til jubileet, som står øverst på frontsiden, og som dukker opp inne i videoen med rullende tekst, er det ikke mange motiver med polske farger i det tredje feltet. Fargeskalaen både i bildene og påkledningen til hovedkarakterene er betydelig redusert. Det største visuelle inntrykket gjør et skarpt lys fra projektoren som naturlig oppstår i en kinosal, så vel som et enkelt spill mellom hvitfarget skrift på svart bakgrunn som utgjør en metafor for den veletablerte tradisjonen med undertekster i film. I logogalleriet eksponert nederst på frontsiden ser man heller ikke mange motiver med sterke farger eller symboler, bortsett fra bildet av det polske flagget i Polens ambassades logo, som i dette tilfellet virker helt naturlig.

7. Undersidene «Om oss» og «Polske filmdager 10 år»

Analysen av innholdet og komposisjonen til Polske filmdagers frontside viser at det er flere modaliteter som brukes til å skape en flersidig representasjon til festivalen. For å bedre forstå hvordan skrift, bilder, videosnutter og lyd er med på å gjøre dette, er det nødvendig å tolke analysefunnene i sammenheng med informasjonen som er lagt ut om temaet «Polske filmdager 10 år» på undersiden⁹. Denne åpnes ved å klikke inn på bildet til høyre på frontsiden, samt i seksjonen «Om oss»¹⁰, som man kan åpne midt i menyen plassert i frontsidens øverste del.

Undersiden «Polske filmdager 10 år» består av fire ulike felt: en tekst som beskriver ulike aspekter ved festivalvirksomheten, seks bilder som illustrerer dem med korte bildetekster, et horisontalt galleri som presenterer festivalplakatene fra alle de ti festivalutgavene og to vinduer med videoer om Polske filmdager 2023 og 2022. Bakgrunnen er svart, og teksten er holdt i hvit og gul farge og samme font som på frontsiden. Skriften er ganske stor og er disponert i tre avsnitt. Den første setningen er en enkel kunngjøring i gulfarget skrift: «Polske filmdager er blitt 10 år!». På den samme linjen leser man: «Se programmet 2023 HER» hvor ordet «HER» også er understreket med gul farge og inneholder en lenke som leder til programmet. Nedenfor følger en større mengde hvitfarget tekst:

Siden 2014 har festivalen vært en arena for tverrkulturell dialog og tverrfaglig samarbeid, frivillig engasjement, debatt og samfunnsbygging, kunstformidling og medieproduksjon, samt interaktiv opplæring.

⁹ Undersiden: <https://www.polskefilmdager.org/norsk-2023/project>.

¹⁰ Undersiden: <https://www.polskefilmdager.org/om-oss>.

Polske filmdager i tall: over 18 000 deltakere, 233 gratis arrangementer, over 60 gjestekunstnere og spesielle gjester, over 50 frivillige hvert år fra 12 ulike land, og flere engasjerte samarbeidspartnere fra Norge og Polen (Polske filmdager b, u.a.).

Nedenfor teksten ser man et galleri med 6 bilder som illustrerer «tverrkulturell dialog», «tverrfaglig samarbeid», «frivillig engasjement», «debatt og samfunnsbygging», «kunstformidling og medieproduksjon», samt «interaktiv opplæring» ved å avbilde små grupper folk av ulike opprinnelse og i ulike aldre. Kameraet har fanget dem mens de er engasjert i ulike aktiviteter: kunstnerisk installasjon i byen, montering av en utendørs utstilling med flotte filmbilder, dansing, diskusjon og filminnspilling. Halvnære billedutsnitt gjør det mulig både å se mimikken og gestene til de avbildede personene, samt hvilke typer aktiviteter de er engasjert i. Man ser for eksempel to voksne som filmer og et barn som også er opptatt med filmopptak. Alle retter blikket direkte inn i kameraet, slik at leserne får et sterkt inntrykk av øyekontakt. Dette er en type intertekstuell lek der personer fanget i bildene selv betjener et annet kamera, slik at leseren får en illusjon av å også være med i situasjonen. Bildene har et ganske stort fargespekter, med lyserød, oransje og rosa som dominerende farger. Disse varme fargene er imidlertid ganske jevnt distribuert i utkantene av galleriet. Et bilde med barn og voksne som danser sammen, inneholder festivalens logo eksponert på en monitor i bakgrunnen¹¹.

Undersiden «Om oss»¹² inneholder en lengre tekst, samt bilder av medlemmer av festivalteamet med billedtekster og et galleri med logoene til bidragsyterne. I den høyre utkanten ser man også et lite vindu med en video med rullende tekst, den samme som man møter på frontsiden.

Hovedteksten eksponert øverst på siden begynner med en kort introduksjon: «Vi har fokus på kulturforbindelser mellom Polen og Norge, samt Polen og andre land. Polske filmdager arrangeres for 10. gang i år!». Se programmet «HER» i den samme fonten som ble brukt på frontsiden i ganske stor størrelse. I likhet med frontsiden har denne undersiden også svart bakgrunn, så de lyse bokstavene er lette å lese. Det meste av teksten er hvit, men gul farge brukes to steder: På ordet «HER», som inneholder en lenke til programmet for 2023, samt på setningen som annonserer tiårsjubileet. Nedenfor finner vi et ganske stort felt fylt med mye mer informasjon oppgitt med relativt liten skrift:

Det var et sterkt ønske om å bidra til dypere dialog i det norske samfunnet som lå i grunn for opprettelsen av Polske filmdager. [...] Arrangementsrekken består av filmvisninger, konserter, audiovisuelle forestillinger, utstillinger, verksteder, møter og foredrag. [...] Alt dette for å vise frem kulturforbindelser mellom Polen og Norge og inspirere til tverrkulturell dialog, samt dypere refleksjon om egen kultur. Polske filmdager er skapt som et internasjonalt

¹¹ På grunn av begrenset plass i denne publikasjonen er det ikke mulig å analysere resten av innholdet på denne undersiden, men galleriet med seks bilder omtalt her er den sterkeste meningsressursen på siden.

¹² Undersiden: <https://www.polskefilmdager.org/om-oss>.

møtested, en polsk sone i den norske virkeligheten, der alle er velkomne. Det er den eneste polske festivalen i Norge med så stort tverrdisiplinært opplegg og fri entré for alle. [...] (Polske filmdager c, u.å.).

Tolking av analysefunn i lys av informasjon om Polske filmdager

Slik avsenderen formulerer det selv, er festivalens misjon å få frem «kulturforbindelser mellom Polen og Norge» eller «bidra til dypere dialog i det norske samfunnet» (Polske filmdager c, u.å.). Etter å ha sett nærmere på frontsidene og de utvalgte undersidene er det mulig å trekke konklusjoner om hvorvidt web-estetikken og det sammensatte, multimodale innholdet til de mest eksponerte lagene i festivalens nettside støtter og uttrykker dens filosofi.

En viktig kontekst er at hele nettsiden er tospråklig, dvs. at alle de norske undersidene har sin polske ekvivalent. Allerede i menyen øverst på frontsidene ser man at festivalen satser på et samspill der norsk og polsk er likeverdige språk, samtidig som den inkluderer flere språk, som spansk, som dukker opp i en seksjon. Modalitetene som brukes på de analyserte sidene, omfatter skrift, bilde, lyd og video som en sammensatt form som forener alle disse. Det er imidlertid ikke skrift, men billeduttrykk som oftest dominerer som en meningsressurs på frontsidene. Bildene viser universelle motiver konsentrert rundt mennesker som dukker opp i ulike festivalrelaterte roller (modell i fotokunst inspirert av folklore/ festivalpublikummere under arrangementet/ en smilende dame med en festivalplakat), fanget i nære og halvnære utsnitt og på bakgrunner som symboliserer både festivalarenaer (kunstnerisk dekorasjon i fotostudio/ mørk kinosal eller konsertsal/ byen) og tidspunktene festivalen utspiller seg på (sommer og høst). Alt dette samsvarer med Polske filmdagers beskrivelse med utdypet informasjon om den kunstneriske bredden festivalen favner, samt om den inkluderende karakteren til denne festivalarenaen der «alle er velkomne». Hovedtemaet i alle bildene på frontsidene er mellommenneskelig kontakt og en ekte opplevelse i møte med kunst som festivalen tilbyr. Dette er også en hovedtråd i videoen fra jubileumsutgaven, som er meget godt eksponert i et stort vindu både på frontsidene og undersiden «Om oss».

Fargebruk og spill med kontraster i hele billedmaterialet uttrykker både jubileumsglede som sprer positiv energi (lyse og sterke farger, som rødt), og skaper en stemning av intimitet, trygghet og hygge som assosieres med det å være i en kinosal (mørke farger satt sammen med meget lyse elementer). Fargene i påkledningen til personene som presenteres i billedmaterialet, går også i dialog med bakgrunnene og andre fargerike grafiske elementer. Stilen i klesdraktene representerer både tradisjon og modernitet og spenner mellom det hverdagslige og det festlige, noe som understreker festivalens inkluderende rolle, men også dens kunstneriske opprinnelse.

Videoene viser fram ulike rom festivalarrangementene utspiller seg i: byen Fredrikstad, kinoens foaje, kinosal. Slik det ser ut i videoen *Polske filmdager 2023*, er det fullt av mennesker i ulike aldre som ser på utstillingen, danser, diskuterer, ser film, deltar i flermedial forestilling og feirer sammen. Lydsporet kombinerer en rolig jazzlåt på norsk med en liten mengde tekst med lyd i form av både polsk og norsk tale registrert fra deltakerne direkte under arrangementene. Slik behandling av lyd i filmen bidrar kraftig til å øke autentisiteten til filmmaterialet og på denne måten også avsenderens troverdighet. Modaliteter som spiller en mindre rolle i seg selv, men går i konstruktivt samspill med bildene og videouttrykkene, er skrift (inkludert dens utforming, størrelse og disposisjon, fargebruken i tekstene og grafiske elementer i bakgrunnen), nettsidens komposisjon og interaktivitet.

På hele nettsiden er det valgt en bestemt font som er enkel og lettlest. Dette skaper et inntrykk av renhet og fasiliteter eventuell flerspråklig lesing. På frontsidens oppgis kun den mest grunnleggende informasjonen om festivalen, mens man kan lese mer ved å klikke seg inn på flere undersider. Den røde tråden som går gjennom alle sidene som er nevnt i denne artikkelen, er stikkordet «Polske filmdager 10 år!», som også er et hovedtema i jubileumslogoen presentert øverst på frontsidens. Dette uttrykket, som minner om en bursdagsfeiring, kan være en god måte å skape en innlevelse hos brukerne på, ved å samtidig formidle litt informasjon om festivalens historie. Brukerinvolvingen er, teknisk sett, samtidig ganske liten og begrenset til navigering mellom undersider på norsk og polsk, samt aktivisering av videoer. Et unntak er den mest omfattende teksten som imiterer undertekster på en kinofilm, ved å rulle selv i et av vinduene nederst på frontsidens.

Et annet viktig trekk man legger merke til både på frontsidens og de analyserte undersidene, er en nøktern og kreativ bruk av polske nasjonale farger og folkløremotiver. Det er mest synlig i komposisjonen av festivalens jubileumslogo, der rødt og hvitt blir presentert i en mer avansert kombinasjon enn man finner i det polske flagget. Logoen er basert på et fargespill som lager en følelse av dynamisk interaksjon eller kontrapunkt. På denne måten blir betrakteren involvert i en lek med de polske fargene, som åpner opp for ulike tolkninger av selve logoen og festivalmiljøet som den representerer. Lignende effekt blir skapt ved kontraster i bildet med en kvinne som er kledd i en tradisjonell folkedrakt, men pyntet med moderne sminke. Hennes modige blick og sterk dekorering i bakgrunnen gir et inntrykk av en fotokollasje laget i dagens teknologi og er da ganske fjern fra arkivstilen man kjenner fra museer. Frontsidens har ellers nesten ingen direkte visuelle eller tekstlige referanser til det spesifikt norske, men det er forståelig, siden festivalen først og fremst formidler polsk kultur. Den norske kulturkretsen er likevel sterkt representert gjennom språket som er først introdusert på frontsidens¹³.

¹³ Det er flere sterke referanser til norsk kultur, så vel som andre kulturer, f.eks. ukrainsk, som er skjult på undersidene «Sommer- og høstprogram», som denne gangen ikke inngår i analysematerialet.

Dempingen av nasjonale trekk og mangel på sterke symboler knyttet til Polen eller Norge åpner et rom for flerkulturell tolking av fargekomposisjon og kjente motiver. Dette er avsenderens strategi for å markere festivalens åpenhet mot andre kulturer. Satsing på samtidsuttrykk fra egen kultur kan muligens skape et nokså uklart inntrykk blant de utvalgte gruppene av polske mottakere, men dette virker nok å være avsenderens bevisste valg og samsvarer med den beskrivelsen av festivalen som man finner på nettsiden, altså bidrar det til økt legitimitet.

Det som betydelig bidrar til å danne et helhetlig inntrykk av avsenderen, dens virksomhet, tilbud og ikke minst kjerneverdiene den ønsker å formidle, er et samspill mellom frontsidene og undersidene som man finner enten gjennom menyen eller ved å klikke på bildene. Det virker som avsenderen har valgt å fremme den mest universelle informasjonen på frontsidene og slik lage mer plass til de «svake» modalitetene, som bilde og video som involverer kreativ bruk av farger, former og bevegelse som kan tolkes ulikt. Det ser også ut til å være en regel om et minimum av tekst på flere språk, noe som kan gjøre det lettere å navigere på den flerspråklige nettsiden. Disse to løsningene illustrerer festivalens ambisjon om å være en arena som er åpen for alle og ikke festet til kun en kulturkrets.

Det mest spesifikke innholdet om den mellomkulturelle interaksjonen er litt mer «skjult», bl.a. på undersiden «Polske filmdager 10 år» eller «Om oss». Man kan da tro at denne utfyllende informasjonen er ment for de mest nysgjerrige og medievanne brukerne. Om denne strategien gjør at avsenderen lykkes med å avsløre potensialet for tverrkulturell dialog, kan ikke fastslås uten å gjennomføre undersøkelser blant mottakere, men det er sikkert en måte å nå fram til ulike miljøer på, og skape et bilde av en avsender som lager broer mellom ulike språk, kulturer og miljøer. Det andre budskapet som kommer frem gjennom hele repertoaret av modaliteter brukt på nettsiden, er at festivalen tilbyr en ekte opplevelse. Det kan være i et møte med kunst av ulik art og i diverse formater, eller en opplevelse av et fellesskap, altså det å gjøre noe sammen og overskride stereotype forestillinger om sin egen og andres kultur.

Avslutning

Polske filmdager er en årlig polsk-norsk kulturproduksjon med tverrkulturell dialog i fokus. Målet ved denne artikkelen har vært å se nærmere på hvordan festivalen Polske filmdager fremstår som en tverrkulturell arena sett gjennom øynene til festivalens nettside-lesere. Næranalysen av de utvalgte lagene på festivalens nettside gjorde det mulig å tolke den som en sammensatt tekst. Analysefunn viser at festivalens hovedidé om å styrke polsk-norsk dialog gjennom kunst og kultur er representert gjennom ulike modaliteter. Bilde og video er dominerende ved første øyekast på frontsidene, som samtidig inviterer til å oppdage mer skriftlig informasjon om festivalen på undersidene man lett navigerer til.

Analysen avslører at nettsidens innhold og estetikk står i tett sammenheng med festivalens konsept sentrert rundt det universelle ved tverrkulturell dialog. Derfor kan dette vurderes som vellykket og effektiv kommunikasjon som gjør at avsenderen fremstår som legitim og troverdig nok til å formidle sitt hovedbudskap. På grunn av denne artikkelens begrensede omfang er det imidlertid ikke mulig å vurdere hvorvidt dette bidrar til festivalens faktiske suksess på det norske kulturmarkedet og eventuell publikumsvekst.

Et annet tema som denne analysen åpner for, og som ikke er undersøkt her, er hvordan nettsiden er med på å utforme forholdet mellom festivalarrangøren, samarbeidspartnere og publikum som danner det konkrete festivalmiljøet. Det kunne ellers være interessant å undersøke hvorvidt denne typen nettsideutvikling kan fasiliterer identitetsprosesser hos polsk diaspora eller påvirke kvaliteten på polsk-norsk dialog i Norge. Artikkelen viser likevel at Polske filmdagers nettside i stor grad lykkes med å fremme et tydelig bilde av festivalen som på en side går i dybden av kunst og kultur, men på den annen side berører og skaper et rom for nærhet mellom «vanlige» mennesker. Gjennom en rekke modaliteter, visse estetiske grep og strategiske valg er den også i stand til å uttrykke festivalens hovedformål tydelig nok, altså løfte viktigheten av den tverrkulturelle dialogen i Norge, eksemplifisert her som polsk-norsk dialog, samt generelt en dialog mellom festivaldeltakere av ulik opprinnelse. Næranalysen ved bruk av metoden utarbeidet av Martin Engebretsen har vist seg å være en effektiv tilnærming for å avdekke dette.

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Career Paths, Satisfaction with Academic Preparation and Motivation of BA Norwegian Graduates: An Alumni Perspective

Higher education institutions are often evaluated based on graduate outcomes and employability. As the only accredited undergraduate programme in Norwegian in Romania, the undergraduate programme in Norwegian Language and Literature at Babeş-Bolyai University (BBU) plays a unique role in shaping student competencies for an evolving labour market. This study explores, by using a survey as a research method, the professional development of alumni who graduated in 2019, by focusing on their career paths, level of motivation, and satisfaction with academic preparation. Based on responses from 123 alumni and additional insights from employers, the findings provide insight into the profile of an alumni student. The research highlights the importance of language competencies in Norwegian, undergraduate programme relevance, and employer perspectives in shaping alumni outcomes. Findings indicate high levels of employment (87%), significant interest in further academic pursuits, and a generally strong alignment between the programme and career satisfaction.

Keywords: career paths, alumni, satisfaction, Norwegian, Romania, motivation, labour market, tertiary level

1. Introduction

Tertiary institutions strive to develop graduates' discipline-specific knowledge and transversal competencies which are salient in the dynamics of today's labour market. Therefore, requesting feedback from graduates regarding their professional development after graduation represents an essential requirement for ensuring the quality of an academic programme that intends to respond to the demands of the stakeholders. In many fields of activity "a higher education qualification is an essential requirement" (OECD 2017: 9) as the academic instruction offered during a bachelor's degree, a master's degree or a doctoral degree can be "a good predictor of success in the labour market" (OECD 2017: 10). Graduates often associate success with a well-paid job, high earnings, and a safe and secure work environment. In addition, it is reported that people who have attained degrees "have generally been able to find employment comparatively quickly, [...], develop rewarding career paths and successfully adapt to changes in the labour market" (OECD 2014 as cited in OECD 2017: 10). These aspects are relevant for the alumni in this research as many of them embraced a variety of careers and were able to adapt to different fields of work. It also corresponds to our students' job expectations, namely they will be able to find a job grounded in their linguistic, intercultural, and academic competence in Norwegian.

The Norwegian language has been taught as an undergraduate degree (BA) at Babeș-Bolyai University (BBU) since 1991. The programme, the only one of its kind in Romania, was created after the Revolution in Romania, in 1991, first as a minor specialization and, since 2008, as a complementary major. The Norwegian Language and Literature programme became emblematic also at a national level as it "attracted already in its first four years of establishment a number of 80 students from all over Romania (although the programme was given only every second year)" (Tomescu Baciu et al. 2020b: 201).

With the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in the Romanian academic system in 2005 (three years BA + two years MA + three years PhD studies) and Romania's accession to the EU in 2007, both the academic and the labour market contexts underwent major transformations (diverse career paths such as outsourcing in international companies, translation services, etc.). These factors led to an increased addressability of the undergraduate programme in Norwegian.

The PhD programme in Norwegian literature started in 2010 resulted by 2019 in six PhD theses on emblematic Norwegian authors such as Knut Hamsun, Lars Saabye Christensen, Jon Fosse, Jan Erik Vold, and on other topics. To develop a full programme in Norwegian, we initiated a research project to investigate the degree of interest among undergraduate students and alumni in enrolling for an MA programme in Norwegian. The results confirmed the value of our intention to build a bridge between the undergraduate and the PhD programme

in Norwegian language and literature at BBU. The respondents showed interest primarily in a master's programme in Norwegian, and secondarily with a focus on translating fiction and non-fiction (Tomescu Baciu et al. 2020a: 28).

2. Theoretical background

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) sets the standards for quality assurance in higher education also known as *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG 2015). This study draws on the ESG 2015 standards for higher education quality assurance, emphasizing programme relevance, academic satisfaction, and graduate outcomes (ESG 2015: 14). The research also incorporates motivational theories (Dörnyei, 1998) and perspectives on labour market integration (OECD 2017). In the case of studying a foreign language, the learning process is influenced by several factors such as age, attitude, personality, mother tongue, motivation or learning preferences (Hagen and Tenfjord 2006; Harmer 2007; Lightbown and Spada 2001). Each variable is relevant in the context of foreign language learning, but according to Dörnyei (1998: 117) motivation is the primary “driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process”. These theoretical frameworks underscore the need to understand how intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence students' educational choices and their success in the job market.

Huxham et al. (2008: 676) argue that the feedback provided by alumni can provide valuable information for three main target groups: “a) teachers, who can use the information to improve their teaching; b) managers, who can use the information for accountability and in promotion and tenure decisions; c) students, who can use the information when choosing modules and courses”. In our research, the feedback received from alumni provides complementary evidence for the quality assurance process that needs to be implemented at the university level. Additionally, respondents' answers are relevant for understanding the level of student satisfaction and graduate outcomes. As Athiyaman (1997) concludes, how students perceive the quality of their educational experience relates to their academic satisfaction.

Career paths available to graduates should be correlated to the prevalent economic factors found locally in Cluj-Napoca and at the wider national level. Outsourcing intensified in Cluj-Napoca after Romania became a member of the European Union in 2007. It is also important to mention Cluj-Napoca's status as a salient economic, cultural, and educational centre, with Babeş-Bolyai University ranking first in the 2016–2019 national university meta-ranking.

Other arguments can be added to provide a wider perspective of the BA programme in Norwegian. Tomescu Baciu et al. (2020b: 204) conclude that “in Romania, there is a growing demand for professional and quality translations

associated with employment and career paths linked to Norwegian”. Private institutions and companies in Cluj-Napoca have organized together with BBU several student internships to develop students’ competence in Norwegian as well as their job-related skills (Tomescu Baciu et al. 2020b: 204) and to ensure alumni’s workforce readiness, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage different tasks in their respective occupations. These internships were undertaken considering the idea that partnerships between higher education institutions and employers can be beneficial for all stakeholders allowing “academic staff in higher education institutions to stay current with workforce practices and skills needs, and build relationships with business” (OECD 2017: 67).

3. Research methodology

3.1. Purpose of the study

This is the first study in Romania to examine the career paths, motivation levels, and satisfaction with academic preparation among alumni of the undergraduate programme in Norwegian Language and Literature. The findings are relevant for quality assurance processes related to programme satisfaction and provide valuable insights for stakeholders involved in labour market integration.

3.2. Research design

The research was conducted between April–July 2019 at the Faculty of Letters at Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide a broader perspective on the respondents’ views. The Google Forms questionnaire was sent via email to alumni students who graduated from the BA programme in Norwegian Language and Literature between 2000 and 2019.

3.3. Participants

A total of 123 respondents provided answers to the questionnaire based on convenience sampling. All responses were anonymous. The gender distribution was unequal (female 87.8%, male 12.2%) as women are more likely to pursue studies at the Faculty of Letters in Cluj-Napoca due to the job opportunities typically associated with this field. The respondents belonged to three different age groups: 20–29 years old, 30–39 years old, and 40–49 years old. The highest percentage of the respondents (61.8%) belonged to the age group ranging from 20 to 29 years old. This high percentage correlates with the fact that in recent years the number of newly enrolled students in the programme has gradually increased, reaching up

to 100–120 students in the first year of study (Tomescu Baciú et al. 2019). Another reason would be availability, as the 20–29 year-old group was easier to reach. Alumni from earlier years may have changed their names and email addresses, thus making it difficult to track them. The selection of respondents for the written structured interview was arbitrary and emails were sent to former students who have been working and living in Norway and with whom we have kept in contact since 2000. Ten respondents provided answers to the questionnaire.

3.4. Research instruments

A survey was used as the main research instrument. The Google Forms questionnaire consisted of 35 items with a mix of 30 close-ended (multiple choice and Likert scale) and 5 open-ended questions organized into four main sections: Section 1 – Demographic details; Section 2 – Alumni's academic trajectory; Section 3 – Alumni's motivation to study Norwegian; Section 4 – Alumni's career opportunities. The quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics using Google Forms' built-in tools, while the qualitative data were processed using content analysis provided by Voyant Tools (www.voyant.org). The questionnaire was formulated in English.

A second tool for data collection was a written structured interview with 4 open questions that was sent via email to employers that had hired alumni from the undergraduate Norwegian programme. Eight responses were provided.

A third tool for data collection was a written structured interview for alumni working in Norway which consisted of four open questions (Q1 – work-readiness at your first employment in Norway based on the competencies acquired in the BA programme of Norwegian language and literature; Q2 – Field of activity; Q3 – Time spent working in Norway; Q4 – Satisfaction with Academic Preparation). Ten respondents provided answers to the written structured interview.

3.5. Research questions

This study intended to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What types of career paths have alumni taken after graduation?
2. What is the level of alumni satisfaction with their academic preparation?
3. What is the level of alumni motivation to study Norwegian?

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative data

The findings are grouped into three main categories: education, motivation, employment, and career paths. To ascertain tendencies in the alumni's labour market insertion, it was salient to investigate their educational path after graduation.

Education

The undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Letters offer a compulsory double specialization (major and minor) in Romanian and other foreign languages. From the total of 123 respondents, 22% study Norwegian as their major specialization, with Chinese, Italian, German, French, Russian or Finnish as a minor specialization, while 82% study Norwegian as a minor language and their major specialization was either Korean, Russian, Romanian, Spanish, German, Finnish, Comparative Literature or French. As their academic development is concerned, 65.2% of the respondents chose to continue their studies by enrolling in different master's degrees. The fields they have chosen were humanities (40%) or computer sciences, business, and conflict management (25.2%). These MA programmes offered alumni knowledge in other fields and provided them with a wider perspective in terms of future careers. Regarding the internationalization of studies, 12.1% enrolled for MA studies (7.8% continued their MA studies at foreign universities¹ and 4.3% pursued an MA degree in Norway²). The interest in continuing their studies in Norway could also be related to the opportunities for academic exchange they had experienced during their undergraduate studies, as many students were offered scholarships to study in Norway. It is also relevant to mention that 42.2% of the respondents who continued their professional development chose various faculties within BBU. In addition, 11.3% of alumni took a PhD in Norwegian literature within the Doctoral School of Linguistic and Literary Studies at the Faculty of Letters.

Asked whether they would be interested in pursuing an MA degree in Norwegian at BBU, 71.5% of the alumni would have considered this option if this had been available. Therefore, Tomescu Baciú et al. (2020a: 26) consider that a master's programme in Norwegian language and literature would offer alumni continuity in their field of study and would be beneficial to their future careers.

¹ In the UK: University College London, London School of Economics and Political Science, the University of Edinburgh, University of Aberdeen; in France: De Montfort University, Sorbonne University in Paris, University of Franche-Comté, Besançon, University Lyon 2; in Sweden: University of Lund; in Denmark: Aarhus University; in Germany: Free University in Berlin, in Spain: Technical University of Valencia; in Italy: IULM University; in China: Tongji University and Shandong University.

² University of Oslo, Oslo Metropolitan University, the Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø, Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, and Nord University in Bodø.

Motivation

The demand for enrolling in undergraduate studies in Norwegian has gradually increased in the past two decades (Baciu et al. 2019). Therefore, it was pertinent to ask alumni about their motivation to study Norwegian. Ten close-ended items and one open-ended item covered intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. A total of 34.2% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they wanted to study Norwegian at the undergraduate level because they saw it as a niche language option. While one-third of the alumni perceived the programme as a novel specialization, the rest considered it as a well-established one. The data can be connected to the respondents' different age groups as the programme was established more than 30 years ago.

When asked whether they began studying Norwegian for personal reasons (e.g. family living in Norway), 91.9% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement suggesting that their motivation was primarily professional. Nearly two-thirds of them (56.9%) answered that they studied Norwegian because they wanted to get a job that would be better paid, so the opportunity of a higher income was an important motivator in their choice to study Norwegian. A total of 82% of the alumni reckon they would use their language competence in Norwegian at work. In recent years, various institutions and companies have relocated their back-office operations and processes to Cluj-Napoca and many of them seek well-trained Norwegian language speakers. As this is a rather new tendency in the dynamics of the labour market, it is possible that the students who graduated before 2008 did not have as many opportunities as current graduates, thus explaining why only a third of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that many businesses in Cluj-Napoca and Romania require employees who can speak Norwegian. This indicates a strong focus among alumni on the well-paid and in-demand positions in the national labour market that require proficiency in Scandinavian languages. More than half of the respondents believe that such job opportunities offer higher income levels.

As integrative motivation is concerned, 83% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the study of Norwegian offered good career prospects, while more than 45% agreed or strongly agreed that they studied Norwegian due to Norway's international role in a globalized world. According to the data gathered, one-third of the alumni were interested in living or studying abroad. By processing data with Voyant tools findings indicate that important extrinsic motivational factors for choosing Norwegian included: translation workshops in cooperation with NORLA (40 instances), Norwegian visiting lectureships funded by Hk-dir (Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills) (10 instances), scholarships for studying Norwegian abroad (EEA and Norway Grants, Erasmus+, mobility grants supported by Hk-dir) (25 instances), and scholarships for summer courses at the University of Oslo (8 instances), the University of Bergen (7 instances), and the University of Agder (6 instances).

Employment and career paths

The prospect of a future career that allows the graduates to use their skills in Norwegian is a powerful incentive and one of the reasons for the growing number of students enrolled in the undergraduate programme in Norwegian. The analysis of the motivation to study Norwegian has revealed that 56.9% of the alumni chose Norwegian because they were seeking better-paid jobs. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by Tomescu Baciu et al. (2019: 263) indicating that more than 80% of undergraduate students were certain that Norwegian gave them better perspectives on the labour market.

According to the data collected, 87% of the alumni were employed at the time of the survey. Out of the total number of respondents, 29.3% of them stated that they were very satisfied with the career path they chose, 49.6% were generally satisfied, while a small proportion were generally dissatisfied (6.5%) or very dissatisfied (7.3%).

Overall, how satisfied are you with the career path that you have chosen?

123 responses

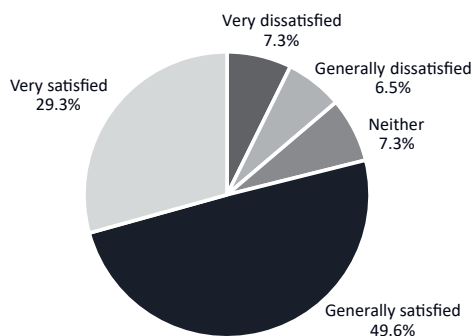


Figure 1. The alumni's satisfaction with their career path

Source: own work.

An important aspect when discussing the findings refers to the role of Norwegian in alumni's career paths. Hence, the data reveal that nearly half of the respondents (48.8%) consider their jobs to be related to the skills developed throughout their undergraduate studies. The data indicate that alumni have jobs in a variety of fields connected to their field of specialization. Furthermore, 52.9% of the respondents agree and strongly agree that the programme has prepared them for their current job, 21.1% are neutral, while 26% disagree and strongly disagree. In addition, 37.4% (17.1% agree and 20.3% strongly agree) reckon that they use Norwegian in their jobs, whereas 43.1% disagree (16.3% strongly disagree and 26.8% disagree), and nearly 20% of the respondents are neutral in this matter.

The findings of this part of the study indicate that 87% of the alumni were employed at the time of the survey, and 52.9 % of them ascribe their accomplishment

to their graduation from the BA programme in Norwegian. Following the same line of thought, the vast majority of alumni declared themselves satisfied with the career path they have chosen.

4.2. Qualitative data

Cluj-Napoca is a cultural, economic, and academic centre. Thus, BBU attracts students from all over the country. Respondents indicated their interest in the student life of the city, their fascination for the Scandinavian languages, Old Norse mythology, Norwegian music, local economic factors or student exchange opportunities. The verbatim below indicates some motivational factors expressed by an alumnus:

I chose to study Norwegian in Cluj-Napoca because I truly felt that studying Norwegian would be an attractive and interesting choice as a higher education programme. Of course, it ended up being more than a simple academic or career choice, but at the time, after having read about the history of the department and after having done a bit of research regarding the course descriptions, I was more than convinced that it was the right choice for me. What also helped was that in the 12th grade, a high school alumna, who was then studying Norwegian in Cluj, came to speak to us about her experience. That in itself turned out to be a life-altering moment for me. (respondent 30)

When it comes to the respondents' domain of activity, 30 of them work in education and research, 15 employees in IT and support, and 11 in translation and proofreading. The answers also reveal other fields in which the alumni work: customer service (9), human resources (7), accounting, finance, and banking (6), media and communication, business and consulting, industry, unemployed (4), and other (19). Figure 2 below offers a visual representation of the data:

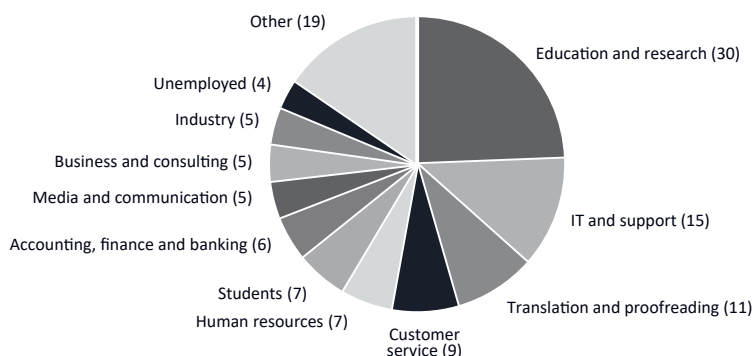


Figure 2. The domains of activity in which the alumni are employed
Source: own work.

The written structured interview addressed to alumni working in Norway offers additional perspectives to the questionnaire given to alumni in Romania. Half of the alumni working in Norway are employed in educational institutions (university colleges, primary and secondary education) and a very small percentage in academia (10%). As for the duration of alumni's experience in Norway, the answers can be grouped as follows: 17–18 years (four alumni), 13 years (one alumnus), 4–7 years (three alumni), and 5 months–2 years (two alumni). These answers can be connected to the next open question addressed to alumni regarding their satisfaction and readiness to integrate into Norway's culture and society. The responses indicate that 90% of them (70% agree, while 20% strongly agree) were satisfied and prepared for employment in Norway after graduation. Still, a small percentage (one respondent) indicated a medium level of satisfaction and that he/she felt less prepared.

Regarding intercultural knowledge, we noticed that respondents distinguished between their Norwegian language acquisition in Romania and their more general understanding of Norwegian acquired in the host culture. As such, the alumni felt they were better equipped to interact with the Norwegian culture and civilization in Norway after having acquired 'abstract knowledge' of Norwegian culture and society during their previous BA studies. The verbatim below indicates such a perspective expressed by an alumnus:

All the other things I learned about Norway at BBU helped a lot in terms of references to culture and civilization. It was somehow abstract while I was studying in Romania, due to the differences between the two cultures, but very good to have when understanding the people and culture of Norway. (respondent 21)

The internationalization of studies in Cluj-Napoca was considered beneficial by two respondents who had their first encounter with Norway either during summer courses or exchange programmes. The word-for-word transcript below emphasizes the academic opportunities that students have had:

The scholarship for international summer schools and the exchange/mobility programmes gave me the opportunity to get acquainted with and use the knowledge acquired in Romania in direct contact with the Norwegian environment, the participation at the International Summer School in Oslo and the exchange/mobility scholarships offered me the possibility to come into contact with a solid network of scholars in the field of Scandinavian studies and enrich my research projects as I could consult resources otherwise difficult to access. (respondent 5)

The respondents indicated that the language competence in Norwegian acquired in Cluj-Napoca has given them an advantage when applying for a job in Norway: ["It was easier to get jobs at first since I spoke the language well enough"] or ["The BA programme has been a good foundation for further studies and working

life”]. Nine out of ten respondents agreed that the development of their language competence in Norwegian was an outcome of graduating from the BA programme in Norwegian at BBU: [“The grammar I learned was the basis of everything else I learned language-wise”]. According to two respondents, alumni continued their MA studies in Norway because in Cluj-Napoca no master’s programme in Norwegian was offered: [“I was fully prepared to work as a teacher in Norway from day 1. I started working as a lecturer at UiO after having finished my master’s at UiO”]. This verbatim stands as proof that one respondent succeeded in integrating into Norwegian academic employment.

Despite the limited number of respondents living in Norway, we found positive insights regarding the capacity of our alumni to integrate in Norway after completing a BA programme in Norwegian language and literature:

First of all, the courses ensured the linguistic and cultural background necessary in order to understand and adapt to the Norwegian cultural community. [...] All this background eventually made it easy to integrate into Norwegian society and adapt to its framework without the feeling that I was abandoning my own cultural background. Thus, the BA programme was an excellent tool and helped me contribute in an active way to a successful Norwegian-Romanian cultural dialogue. (respondent 2)

The employers’ perspective is essential in an analysis of alumni’s professional pathway, as it can offer insightful information about alumni’s skills. Hence, our study included feedback from eight institutions and companies that have hired graduates of the BA programme in Norwegian. All the employers that have provided answers have expressed their satisfaction concerning the collaboration with the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature and graduates’ language skills. Some of these opinions are given below in a word-for-word transcript:

For over 20 years, our institution has enjoyed excellent cooperation with the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature. [...] We have always been a strong supporter of the need to train specialists in the Norwegian language, as over the years the demand on the labour market has been growing continuously in Romania. More and more translators and interpreters of the Norwegian language, and other specialists in Norwegian language from higher education are demanded by various state institutions and companies, both in Romania, and from Norway as regards their branches in Romania. Some of the graduates with this specialization have found a position at our institution and will continue to do so. (employer 1)

Our publishing house operates in the Romanian publishing services market and has a valuable collaboration with the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature, the Norwegian Language and Literature specialization, bachelor’s level, within the Faculty of Letters of Babeş-Bolyai University, which allows us to publish translations from Norwegian, Swedish, Dutch, and Danish, as well as to edit and publish collective volumes produced within the department. The frequency of publishing literary translations from Scandinavian

languages allowed, in 2015, the establishment of the Nordica collection, coordinated by Professor Sanda Tomescu Baciu, Ph.D. [...] These translations have received financial support by NORLA.³ (employer 2)

The relationship with employers is salient as it brings mutual benefits when establishing a connection with the labour market. Throughout their studies in Norwegian, students can take part in different internship programmes that offer first-hand experience with different jobs connected with Norwegian.

5. Discussion

The first research question intended to investigate the types of career paths taken by alumni after graduation to understand the contexts in which they have used their competence in Norwegian. In this respect, the findings indicate that respondents work in education and research (30 respondents), IT and support (15 respondents), translation and proofreading (11 respondents), customer service (9 respondents), human resources (7 respondents), accounting, finance and banking (6 respondents), media and communication, business and consulting, industry, management, data collection and statistics, publishing, arts, government administration, and international relations (45 respondents). Data gathered suggest that alumni with academic degrees in Norwegian languages and literature have taken diverse career paths.

The second research question targeted the alumni's level of satisfaction with their academic preparation. Findings indicate that 48.8% of the respondents consider their jobs to be related to the skills developed throughout their undergraduate studies in Norwegian. Furthermore, 52.9% of the respondents agree that the undergraduate programme has prepared them for their current job. In addition, 37.4% of them conclude that they use Norwegian regularly in their daily lives.

The third research question focused on the alumni's level of motivation to study Norwegian. The analysis of the motivation to study Norwegian has revealed that 56.9% of the alumni chose Norwegian because they were seeking better-paid jobs. As integrative motivation is concerned, 83% of the respondents agreed that the study of Norwegian offers better career prospects, while more than 45% agreed that they studied Norwegian due to Norway's international role in a globalized world. For 91.9% of the respondents motivation to study Norwegian was primarily linked to professional reasons. Moreover, the employers' perspective is part of the quality assessment of the BA programme in Norwegian. Employers were asked to provide feedback after hiring graduates, but also to evaluate their cooperation with the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature. Their responses were

³ Both transcripts were translated from Romanian by the authors.

positive and all considered the BA programme in Norwegian to be highly valuable for their organisations and the local and national economic environment.

Because the BA programme is the only one accredited in this subject at the national level in Romania, the authors considered they had the responsibility to undergo a quality assurance evaluation of the programme, in addition to the one performed by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS).

Limitations

This study is subject to several methodological limitations. The researchers had a dual role as both educators within the undergraduate programme in Norwegian and as investigators of the same educational context. This dual role may have introduced also a degree of subjectivity as all researchers involved have a close connection to the undergraduate programme in Norwegian. Although the number of responses from alumni currently living in Norway was limited (i.e. 10), the data still provide meaningful insights into their experiences following graduation. The findings indicate that graduates of the BA programme in Norwegian Language and Literature at BBU demonstrate a significant ability to integrate socially and culturally within Norwegian society. This outcome likely reflects the programme's success in providing students with linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding. Additionally, scholarship opportunities in Norway, such as those funded by Erasmus+, EEA, Norway Grants, and Hk-dir, as well as scholarships for summer courses at Norwegian universities, played an important role in facilitating alumni's first contact with the Norwegian cultural environment.

6. Conclusions

The qualitative and quantitative research conducted focuses on the academic and professional development of alumni who graduated between 2000 and 2019 with a degree in Norwegian Language and Literature from Babeş-Bolyai University. The study examines their career paths, levels of motivation, and satisfaction with the academic preparation they received during their undergraduate studies. A total of 87% of the 123 alumni were employed at the time the research was conducted. Consequently, 52.9% of the respondents attribute their accomplishment to their graduation from the BA programme in Norwegian. The data reveal that 37.4% of them use Norwegian in their jobs. In addition, 65.2% of the respondents chose to continue their academic development by enrolling in different master's degree programmes. At the same time, 71.5% would have considered enrolling in a master's programme in Norwegian language and literature if one had been available at BBU. Based on students' interest in enrolling in a master's degree, the Department

of Scandinavian Languages and Literature was granted in 2024 the possibility to begin a master's programme accredited nationally.

From our findings, we underline that even if Norwegian is perceived as a relatively rare language in Romania, alumni found various job opportunities with Norwegian in international corporations, IT and support, literary and non-literary translation, proofreading in publishing houses, education and research, and government. The findings targeting alumni living in Romania indicate that 78.9% of the respondents declared themselves satisfied with the career paths they have chosen. A similar pattern can be seen in the case of alumni working in Norway, where nine out of ten reported a high or very high degree of preparedness for and satisfaction in their positions in Norway.

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Sisu-per Power: The Art of Not Giving Up. Applying Finnish Resilience to Enhance University Students' Well-Being

University life presents both personal and academic challenges, often testing students' resilience and emotional strength. The Finnish concept of *sisu*, which embodies grit, perseverance, and the courage to endure, offers valuable strategies to foster student well-being in higher education. This paper explores *sisu* as a psychological tool adapted to the academic context, with practical applications for students aiming to enhance their resilience, manage stress, and maintain motivation. As two academics from the University of Gdańsk – a psychologist at the Academic Psychological Support Centre and a lecturer in Finnish language – we aim to present *sisu* as a framework for improving student well-being.

Keywords: perseverance, mental health, grit, Finnish culture, everyday psychology, academic life, academic success, counselling

1. Introduction

University students frequently encounter challenges that test their mental and emotional resilience, from academic pressures to personal development hurdles. In recent years, university students' mental health has become a growing concern worldwide, reflecting a global trend of increasing psychological distress among young people in higher education (Pedrelli et al. 2015; Auerbach et al. 2016; Dave et al. 2024). Numerous studies highlight alarming levels of anxiety, depression, and burnout, demonstrating that the pressures faced by students globally significantly impact their well-being (Wang et al. 2024). These issues are particularly pronounced among students transitioning into academic life, as they navigate heightened expectations, social pressures, and financial burdens (Forbes-Mewett and Sawyer 2016; Worsley et al. 2021).

Additionally, research indicates that feelings of isolation and a lack of institutional support exacerbate these challenges, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (Rudnik et al. 2021; Hagedorn et al. 2022). The stigma surrounding mental health issues further compounds the problem, discouraging students from seeking professional help due to fear of judgment or unawareness of available resources. Furthermore, the limited availability of mental health services at universities often leaves students without adequate support. Consequently, there is a pressing need to identify protective factors that can buffer against these mental health challenges and enhance students' psychological resilience.

One potential concept that may play a critical role in promoting students' mental well-being is *sisu* – a Finnish psychological strength concept that refers to sustained determination, perseverance, and inner fortitude in overcoming adversity (Lahti 2019). This article explores the concept of *sisu* and its potential benefits within the academic context.

2. The Concept of *Sisu*

People interested in Finland often encounter the short, powerful word *sisu*. It frequently appears alongside other Finnish cultural markers such as Sibelius (the famous Finnish composer), sauna, and *salmiakki* (salty liquorice) in guidebooks introducing key elements of Finnish identity to foreigners. Historically, *sisu* has been associated with soldiers in wartime, athletes pushing their limits, and Finns enduring harsh winter conditions in remote areas.

When the Institute for the Languages of Finland organized a name contest in 2017, during Finland's centenary of independence, Finns voted *sisu* as the most representative word for their nation (Helminen 2019). Over three thousand Finns bear *sisu* as their first or second name (Digital and population data services agency 2024). The word appears in various contexts, from politics – where individuals are encouraged to rely on their *sisu* in times of economic downturn – to business and marketing, where numerous products proudly bear the name *Sisu* (Helminen 2019).

Clearly, *sisu* plays a crucial role in Finnish culture. However, systematic academic interest in the concept has emerged only recently (Henttonen et al. 2022). A search in the Helsinki University database of theses and dissertations reveals that *sisu* is studied across disciplines, from medicine to the humanities. Researchers have explored its connection with well-being and work-related stress (Salo 2023), its darker aspects – such as stubbornness contributing to male mortality in the 20th century (Kirveskoski 2017) – and its frequent appearance in public naming competitions for institutions, animals, coffee brands, and shopping malls (Sirén 2018).

Although *sisu* is often described as ‘untranslatable,’ it is commonly interpreted as endurance, stamina, or inner strength. Although deeply embedded in Finnish identity, the concept of inner strength and refusal to give up is not uniquely Finnish but resonates across various cultures.

2.1. Definitions of *Sisu*

Sisu is a cultural concept deeply embedded in Finnish heritage, evolving over time. While often associated with positive traits, its historical connotations were not always favourable. This section explores its meaning, historical significance, and modern applications.

The Institute for the Languages of Finland defines *sisu* as “tenacious, indomitable willpower, perseverance, boldness, and courage.” However, it also has a more complex side, linked to a “fierce, hard nature” (Kielitoimiston sanakirja n.d.). The term originates from *sisus*, meaning “guts” or “interior,” dating back to the 16th century (Lahti 2019). By the late 19th century, it became associated with Finnish national resilience (Helminen 2022).

Sisu took on a distinctly positive meaning in the 1920s–1930s, shaped by Finland’s historical context. Following the 1918 civil war, *sisu* was redefined as a unifying force, reinforced through sports and national defense (Helminen 2002). During the Winter War (1939–1940), it became emblematic of Finnish heroism (Lahti 2019).

2.2. Positive *Sisu*

Emilia Lahti (2019) identifies three core aspects of *sisu*: extraordinary perseverance, an action-oriented mindset, and latent power.

- **Extraordinary perseverance** refers to exceeding personal limits in both imposed and self-chosen challenges, from overcoming illness to academic or athletic pursuits.
- **Action-oriented mindset** is the resolve to persist despite uncertainty, often involving stepping outside one’s comfort zone.
- **Latent power** represents a hidden inner strength, activated when perceived mental or physical capacities are exhausted.

Each of these themes reflects *sisu*’s depth, ranging from tangible outcomes to intrinsic personal growth. In this paper, we highlight these aspects as protective factors contributing to resilience, adaptability, and psychological strength.

2.3. Negative *Sisu*

While *sisu* can be a powerful force, Lahti also examines its potential downsides, categorizing them as harm to self, harm to others, and harm to reasoning.

- **Harm to self** includes physical and mental strain, such as burnout, due to relentless perseverance.
- **Harm to others** occurs when goal obsession leads to neglecting relationships and dismissing others' contributions.
- **Harm to reasoning** results from an inability to adapt, leading to tunnel vision, poor decision-making, and resistance to help.

While recognizing these potential risks, our primary focus is on *sisu*'s empowering qualities, equipping individuals with resilience needed to navigate adversity and promote long-term well-being.

3. The Finnish Spirit of Resilience in Academia

Recent research explores the Finnish concept of *sisu* and its relationship to well-being, particularly among university students.

Studies suggest that *sisu* is closely linked to mental toughness, resilience, and overall physical and mental health. Strukčinskienė (2021) examines *sisu* as a lifestyle ideology that fosters a balanced, enduring, and harmonious personality. Using a qualitative research approach – including literature analysis and discourse studies – the study identifies key elements for cultivating *sisu*, such as mindfulness of nature, physical activity, positivity, relaxation, stepping outside one's comfort zone, and breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps. The review indicates that *sisu* enhances both physical and mental well-being and can be consciously developed on an individual and societal level to strengthen resilience and overall health. These findings support the application of *sisu* as a well-being model beyond Nordic cultures, particularly in addressing contemporary public health challenges.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, managers faced unprecedented challenges that tested their resilience and well-being. Vuori and Määttänen (2024) investigated the role of *sisu* – a Finnish concept of inner strength and perseverance – in managerial experiences during this crisis. Through qualitative interviews with 15 managers from Finland's hotel, manufacturing, and retail industries, the study identified a dual nature of *sisu*: while adaptive *sisu* fostered resilience and a proactive mindset, excessive reliance on *sisu* led to exhaustion and harmful cognitive distortions. The findings highlight a crucial tension in crisis management – knowing when to persist and when to step back. Additionally, the study introduces the concept of collective *sisu*, emphasizing the role of shared perseverance in workplace resilience. These insights suggest that organizations should balance the promotion

of resilience with an awareness of its potential drawbacks to effectively support managerial well-being (Vuori and Määttänen 2024).

This perspective is particularly relevant for university students, who often navigate academic pressures that demand both endurance and self-care.

Delahunty and O'Shea (2024) offer a compelling perspective by examining *sisu* as a framework for understanding the persistence of first-in-family (FiF) university students. Unlike individualistic notions of resilience or grit, *sisu* encompasses perseverance rooted in both personal determination and collective support. Analyzing qualitative data from 376 Australian FiF students, the authors identify three ways *sisu* manifests in their academic journeys: enduring adversity (navigating financial, health, and emotional hardships), doing the impossible (overcoming societal and familial discouragement), and persisting despite 'failure' (reframing setbacks as part of growth). Their study challenges the dominant neoliberal view of persistence as an individual trait, instead emphasizing the role of external support systems. By recognizing *sisu* as both a personal and communal force, the authors advocate for higher education policies that move beyond deficit models and foster structural support for equity students. Their work positions *sisu* as a powerful framework for understanding and promoting student success in complex educational landscapes (Delahunty and O'Shea 2024).

Sisu, often translated as 'determination beyond reason,' embodies a profound inner strength that surpasses short-term motivation. For university students, understanding and applying *sisu* can mean the difference between succumbing to stress and thriving despite it. Its qualities – courage, perseverance, and commitment to long-term goals – can help students build resilience amid the unique pressures of university life.

The question remains: how can we cultivate *sisu*?

4. Enhancing *Sisu*: Strategies for Strengthening Perseverance and Well-Being

Based on the findings in Strukčinskienė's (2021) summary and the book *Sisu: The Finnish Art of Courage* by Joanna Nylund (2018), several key strategies emerge for cultivating and strengthening *sisu* at both individual and societal levels.

- **Developing Nature Mindfulness**

A crucial factor in building *sisu* is maintaining a strong connection with nature. Interaction with natural environments – through activities like forest therapy, outdoor recreation, and immersion in quiet, green spaces – helps to reduce stress, enhance mental clarity, and build inner strength. This practice fosters resilience by aligning individuals with the natural world, improving both physical and mental well-being.

- **Encouraging Positivity**

A positive outlook plays a significant role in perseverance. Cultivating strategic optimism – the belief that challenges can be overcome – enhances resilience and supports mental toughness. Positivity extends beyond personal attitudes; it influences social connections, problem-solving abilities, and emotional regulation, all of which contribute to strengthening *sisu*.

- **Prioritizing Rest, Relaxation, and Recreation**

Sisu does not mean constant struggle; rather, it requires balance between effort and recovery. Implementing structured rest periods, engaging in activities that recharge mental and physical energy, and ensuring adequate sleep are essential for sustaining long-term perseverance. The Finnish model of eight hours of work, eight hours of rest, and eight hours of sleep exemplifies this balance.

- **Promoting Physical Activity**

Engaging in regular movement and exercise is another pillar of *sisu*. Physical activity not only builds endurance but also enhances emotional resilience. Activities such as cold-water immersion (ice swimming), sauna use, and outdoor sports encourage the ability to withstand discomfort and strengthen perseverance.

- **Practicing Withdrawal and Stepping Back**

An essential aspect of *sisu* is knowing when to conserve energy and withdraw from unnecessary struggles. This does not mean giving up, but rather focusing effort on winnable battles. Learning to prioritize tasks, set healthy boundaries, and avoid burnout ensures that energy is directed effectively.

- **Implementing Task Fragmentation**

Breaking large, challenging tasks into smaller, manageable parts prevents overwhelm and promotes sustained progress. This strategy is particularly useful in educational and professional settings, where resilience is required for achieving long-term goals.

- **Encouraging Small Challenges and Exiting the Comfort Zone**

Gradually exposing oneself to controlled discomfort – such as trying new experiences, tackling difficult tasks, or pushing beyond self-imposed limits – helps develop mental toughness. Engaging in small, consistent challenges fosters adaptability and builds confidence in handling adversity.

- **Spreading and Radiating the *Sisu* Mindset**

The cultural transmission of *sisu* occurs through storytelling, role modeling, and community reinforcement. Encouraging parents, teachers, and leaders to demonstrate perseverance and resilience ensures that future generations inherit and embrace *sisu* as a way of life.

- **Rewarding Effort and Achievement**

Recognizing and celebrating personal and collective achievements reinforces motivation and persistence. While the sense of accomplishment itself is rewarding, tangible incentives – such as personal time, social gatherings, or nature retreats – can further strengthen the drive to persevere.

To enhance *sisu* among university students, the following methods can be applied:

- **Nature Connection** – Encourage time in nature for stress relief and mental clarity (e.g., outdoor study sessions, mindfulness walks).
- **Positivity** – Foster a growth mindset by emphasizing perseverance and optimism in academic challenges.
- **Rest & Balance** – Promote structured rest, adequate sleep, and relaxation techniques to prevent burnout.
- **Physical Activity** – Integrate regular exercise (e.g., yoga, running, or sports) to build resilience and endurance.
- **Strategic Withdrawal** – Teach students to set boundaries, prioritize tasks, and manage workload effectively.
- **Task Fragmentation** – Break assignments into smaller steps to improve focus and productivity.
- **Leaving the Comfort Zone** – Encourage new challenges (e.g., public speaking, leadership roles) to build confidence.
- **Peer Support & Mentorship** – Create a culture where perseverance and resilience are shared through role models and peer encouragement.
- **Recognition & Reward** – Celebrate progress and achievements to reinforce motivation and long-term resilience.

By integrating these principles, university students can develop mental toughness, perseverance, and a balanced approach to challenges, strengthening their overall well-being and academic success.

Conclusions

Incorporating *sisu* into daily life can lead to profound improvements in well-being. As a cultural asset, *sisu* offers valuable insights into resilience and life satisfaction, demonstrating that perseverance and mental strength are not merely innate traits but qualities that can be consciously developed. By embracing *sisu*, individuals are empowered to confront challenges with determination, fostering a fulfilling life grounded in endurance and adaptability.

Rather than being a fixed trait, *sisu* is a dynamic mindset that requires intentional cultivation. By integrating key elements such as mindfulness of nature, positivity, rest, physical activity, strategic withdrawal, task fragmentation, small challenges, cultural transmission, and reward systems, individuals and societies can enhance their resilience, perseverance, and overall well-being. The Finnish model of *sisu* provides a valuable framework for fostering a more balanced, determined, and psychologically resilient life.

For university students, *sisu* serves as a powerful tool for navigating the pressures of higher education. Incorporating its principles into daily routines can help

students manage stress effectively, maintain commitment to their goals, and cultivate meaningful relationships. By consciously adopting *sisu*-oriented strategies, students can develop a sustainable approach to well-being that supports both their academic success and personal growth.

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Undervisning och lärande om Förintelsen i Sverige

Teaching and learning about the Holocaust in Sweden

Since the turn of the 21st century, Sweden has been deeply committed to preserving the memory and disseminating knowledge of the Holocaust. The country stands out internationally for its contributions to the establishment of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), which focuses on education, research, and commemoration of the Holocaust. As the organizer of an international conference on the Holocaust, Sweden played a pivotal role in the issuance of the Stockholm Declaration, which emphasizes the importance of Holocaust education in preventing future genocides. Holocaust education is a mandatory component of the history curriculum in Swedish primary schools. This article presents the current research on Holocaust education in Sweden, outlining the educational objectives set for Holocaust teaching, the methods employed by Swedish educators, and the outcomes of such instruction. The empirical section of the article analyses projects by two Swedish educators actively engaged in Holocaust education in Sweden.

Keywords: Sweden and the Holocaust, teaching about the Holocaust, learning about the Holocaust, antisemitism, study trips to Holocaust memorial sites

Nyckelord: Sverige och Förintelsen, undervisning om Förintelsen, lärande om Förintelsen, antisemitism, studieresor till Förintelsens minnesplatser

Inledning

Förintelsen som en särskild historisk händelse har samlat en internationell gemenskap och väckt intresse och engagemang för undervisning och lärande inom området. Sedan grundandet av International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) har undervisning och lärande om Förintelsen gradvis utvecklats och blivit mer professionellt, institutionaliserat och globalt. Förintelsen inkluderas i formella läroplaner och allt oftare även i lärarutbildningar och pedagogiska fakulteter på universitet (Eckmann et al. 2017: 18). Sverige spelade en betydande roll i att Förintelsen fick en framträdande internationell status i historiekulturen, särskilt

under det senaste sekelskiftet (Karlsson 2008: 28). Undervisning om folkmordet blev ett obligatorisk moment i linje med den svenska skolans uppdrag tillsammans med att förmedla och förankra respekt för mänskliga rättigheter och demokratiska värderingar (Ammert 2011: 87). Artikelns syfte är att visa en översikt av aktuell forskning om undervisning och lärande om Förintelsen i Sverige. Den försöker svara på frågorna om vilka mål lärare och elever arbetar mot, vilka metoder som används samt vilka effekter undervisningen har. Översikten tar också hänsyn till en kritisk bedömning av de utmaningar och begränsningar som finns i Sveriges insatser för utbildning om Förintelsen. I artikeln presenteras även analysresultat av ett urval av pedagogiska projekt om Förintelsen som har realiserats i svenska skolor av två erfarna och engagerade pedagoger.

1. Sverige och Förintelsen

Sverige var neutralt under andra världskriget och Förintelsen skedde inte på svensk mark. Trots det gjorde Sverige viktiga humanitära insatser för att rädda judar, bland annat genom Raoul Wallenberg, som 1944–1945 räddade tiotusentals ungerska judar i Budapest med hjälp av skyddspass (Bruchfeld och Levine 2015: 66). En annan svensk insats var räddningsaktionen ”vita bussarna”, ledd av Folke Bernadotte och Svenska Röda Korset i krigets slutskede. Över 20 000 fångar från tyska koncentrationsläger fördes till Sverige för vård. Många av dem som stannade i Sverige, vittnade om Förintelsen. (Bruchfeld och Levine 2015: 67). Direkt efter kriget organiserades två stora dokumentationsprojekt i Sverige: Historiska kommissionen i Stockholm och det Polska källinstitutet (PIZ) i Lund, som samlade vittnesmål från överlevande från Förintelsen och till stor del genomfördes av de överlevande själva. Detta bidrog till att öka medvetenheten om Förintelsen (Tureby och Wagrell 2020: 17–18). Under efterkrigstiden var Sveriges intresse för folkmordet på Europas judar inte så omfattande. Landet deltog inte i världskriget och inte heller i det kalla kriget, och dess medborgare kunde varken känna sig ”delaktiga, drabbade eller ansvariga” (Ammert 2011: 12). Under 1950-, 60- och 70-talen försökte personer som Eli Getreu, Ludwika Broel Plater och Adam Lesniewski sprida kunskap om Förintelsen med hjälp av redan insamlat material. Trots deras insatser har de nästan helt fallit i glömska i svensk historieskrivning. De saknade nämligen det institutionella stöd, vilket begränsade deras genomslag. De tre årtiondena har beskrivits som tysta vad gäller Förintelsen i Sverige (Tureby och Wagrell 2020: 28–29). 1980-talet kännetecknades av ett skifte där stora insamlingsprojekt startades, där överlevande gavs möjlighet att berätta – eller ”ge vittnesmål” – om sina erfarenheter. Ett exempel är Hédi Frieds Café 84 i Stockholm, som blev en viktig stödjande mötesplats för överlevande. Under 1980- och 1990-talen fanns en oro för att Förintelsen skulle falla i glömska, vilket ledde till att överlevande började vittna i skolor. Organisationer som Föreningen

Förintelsens Överlevande och Förintelsens Ögonvittnen bildades för att stödja detta arbete. Sveriges EU-inträde 1995 blev en drivkraft för landet att ansluta sig till det framväxande historiebruket kring Förintelsen. En undersökning bland svenska skolungdomar våren 1997 blev inledningen på denna utveckling. Det visade sig att svenska ungdomar hade bristande kunskaper om Förintelsen eller inte var säkra på om den ägt rum. Regeringens förslag, med Göran Persson som statsminister, var då att genomföra en informationskampanj om folkmordet som fick namnet Levande historia. Inledningsvis var det ett utbildningsprojekt som senare blev en svensk myndighet, Forum för levande historia (FLH), vilken inrättades med syftet att stärka demokratin genom utbildning om Förintelsen.

Informationsinsatsens resultat var även en utgivning av en bok med fakta om Förintelsen *...om detta må ni berätta...* vilken skickades till familjer i Sverige. På initiativ av Göran Persson skapades 1998 IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) vars uppgift är att "genom utbildning, hågkomst och forskning om Förintelsen förebygga intolerans och i förlängningen folkmord och andra brott mot mänskligheten" (Forum för levande historia a, u.å.). Även Stockholmsdeklarationen skapades på initiativ av Sverige, genom regeringen och statsminister Göran Persson, i samarbete med det internationella samfundet under Stockholms Internationella Forum om Förintelsen år 2000. I samband med konferensen antogs deklarationen enhälligt av 51 stater för att dela åtagandet med att stödja "minneshållande, undervisning och studier av Förintelsen" (Forum för levande historia b, u.å.) så att kunskaper om Förintelsens historia inspirerar människor att verka för allas lika värde. Det fastställdes då att den 27 januari, dagen för befrielsen av koncentrationslägret Auschwitz, skulle bli Förintelsens minnesdag. Åren kring millenniumskiftet fick Sverige således en pionjärroll i arbetet med att ge Förintelsen en framträdande plats i den europeiska historiekulturen (Holmila och Kvist Geverts 2011, cit. per Flennegård 2023: 22–23).

Sedan 2011 är undervisning om Förintelsen obligatorisk i svensk skola (Persson 2011: 11). Den är fortsatt en del i kursplanen i historia för åk 7–9 i grundskolan ("De båda världskrigen, deras orsaker och konsekvenser. Förtryck, folkfördrivningar och folkmord. Förintelsen och Gulag. Människors motstånd mot förtryck – Lgr22") (Skolverket, u.å.). År 2019 undersöktes den svenska vuxna befolkningens inställning till Förintelsen och det märktes en förändring inom området i jämförelse med studien från 1997. Tjugo år efter informationsinsatsen Levande historia var 98% säkra på att Förintelsen hade ägt rum, 69% hade hört en överlevande berätta om Förintelsen och 24% hade besökt ett före detta förintelseläger. Dessutom konstaterar Österberg i sin rapport att svenska elever tillägnar sig kunskap om Förintelsen från olika källor, men att skolundervisning är av särskilt stor betydelse Österberg 2019: 4, 38).

Många överlevande från Förintelsen har gått bort, och snart kommer deras förstahandsvittnesmål inte längre vara tillgängliga. Mot denna bakgrund inrättade regeringen år 2022 Sveriges museum om Förintelsen för att bevara minnet och bära

det vidare till kommande generationer. Museet ska samla vittnesmål och berättelser som en del av ett levandegörande och långsiktigt minnesarbete (Sveriges museum om Förintelsen, u.å.).

2. Teaching and learning about the Holocaust (TLH)

Teaching and learning about the Holocaust (TLH) är en engelsk beteckning som används av t.ex. Pearce (2020: 1–27) och är begränsad till pedagogisk verksamhet i framför allt skolor. TLH har blivit ett internationellt forskningsfält inom utbildningsvetenskap (Flennegård 2023: 15). Det finns ingen vedertagen beteckning för området på svenska så den används av flera svenska forskare (t.ex. Flennegård 2023). Även denna artikel följer detta bruk. Eckmann och Stevick (2017) anser att forskningsfältet TLH har flera brister ur ett teoretiskt perspektiv och behöver utvecklas.

IHRA (2019: 18–19) skapade rekommendationer för TLH som Skolverket förordar svenska pedagoger att använda i undervisningen om Förintelsen. Där lyfts Förintelsen som en unik historisk händelse, präglad av sin omfattning, varaktighet och mål att utrota Europas judar och deras kultur. Undervisningen ska visa att folkmord sker i steg och kan förebyggas. Genom att studera Förintelsen kan elever förstå folkmordsprocesser, värna demokrati och rättssäkerhet samt analysera antisemitismens historia och hur hat och propaganda sprids – något som fortfarande är aktuellt i dagens samhälle.

Undervisning och lärande om Förintelsen anses vara av stor betydelse inom utbildningsväsendet i Sverige. Många forskare menar att de flesta svenska lärares syften med undervisningen om Förintelsen är att främja demokrati (Lange 2008; Wibaeus 2010; Ammert 2015). TLH har såväl ett bakåtvänt syfte med fokus på att beskriva Förintelsen som historisk händelse liksom ett framåtvänt syfte att hindra andra folkmord i samtid och i framtid (von Borries 2017, cit. per Flennegård 2023: 25). Ett tredje syfte med TLH är att betona i undervisningen vikten av tolerans, mänskliga rättigheter, demokrati samt minoriteters rättigheter i ett samhälle (Eckmann 2010: 17–32). TLH binds samman med skolans demokratiuppdrag vilket innebär att man undervisar om demokrati (vilken roll och funktion demokrati har i samhället), för demokrati (man förmedlar demokratiska värden) och genom demokrati (man har demokratiska samtal i undervisningen) (Flennegård 2023: 18). Enlig Lange (2008: 78–82) är TLH en mycket bra utgångspunkt för diskussioner om moraliska och etiska frågor. TLH bidrar till en bättre förståelse av hur folkmord sker, varför hatbrott förekommer och varför rasism och nynazism existerar i dagens samhälle (Österberg 2019: 119).

I ämnets kurslitteratur står det relativt mycket om metoder som svenska lärare använder i sitt pedagogiska arbete. Wibaeus (2010: 184–186) märker att lärare använder olika metoder i undervisningen om Förintelsen. Vissa fokuserar på nazisternas

brutalitet för att väcka starka känslor, andra jämför med andra folkmord för att ge ett analytiskt perspektiv. Vissa betonar propaganda, nazismens framväxt eller psykologiska mekanismer bakom folkmord. Andra lyfter Förintelsen som en följd av diktatur och brist på demokratiska rättigheter. Ammerts studie (2011) visar att svenska historielärare lägger stor vikt vid Förintelsen i undervisningen. De fokuserar inte bara på fakta, utan även på historisk kontext och processer för att hjälpa eleverna förstå och reflektera. Undervisningen kan även innehålla personliga reflektioner kopplade till demokrati och mänskliga rättigheter, samt jämförelser med andra folkmord. Vanliga metoder är filmvisning, diskussioner, studiebesök och möten med överlevande – allt för att knyta historien till dagens samhälle (Ammert 2011: 88). Österberg (2019: 123–124) märker två främjande faktorer i TLH, nämligen att besöka före detta koncentrations- och förintelseläger samt att lyssna till överlevandes vittnesmål. Båda inkluderar starka känslor och upplevelser av autenticitet. Österberg hänvisar även till andra forskare vilka understryker vikten av användning av inspelade vittnesmål i TLH¹.

3. Begränsningar och utmaningar inom TLH

I en studie av Lange (2008: 79–82) framkommer att lärare upplever en brist på kunskap samt efterfrågar mer undervisningsmaterial – ett behov som bland annat Forum för levande historia och Svenska kommittén mot antisemitism (SKMA) senare har försökt tillgodose. Studien visar även att lärarna upplever tidsbrist som ett hinder för att kunna fördjupa Förintelseundervisningen. Flera studier pekar på en bristande kunskap bland lärare när det gäller judisk kultur och judiskt liv, både före och efter Förintelsen (Katzin 2021). Kleg (1995: 6) betonar att kunskap om antisemitismens historiska utveckling är en förutsättning för att förstå Förintelsen. I avsaknad av denna kontext riskerar Förintelsen att framställas som en isolerad händelse utan förankring i tidigare historiska processer.

Enligt Foster (2013: 1–2) kan lärarens bristande kunskaper om Förintelsen i vissa fall bidra till att antisemitiska föreställningar omedvetet reproduceras i undervisningen. Studien visar även att undervisningen ofta präglas av ett starkt fokus på förövarna, vilket riskerar att reducera judarna till en anonym och passiv offergrupp, utan att synliggöra deras individuella erfarenheter, röster eller motstånd. Alvén, Karlsson och Sjöland (2022) drog en ganska överraskande slutsats i en studie där de analyserade proven från det nationella provet som svenska ungdomar

¹ Assmann, A. och J. Brauer. (2011). Bilder, Gefühle, Erwartungen. Über die emotionale Dimension von Gedenkstätten und den Umgang von Jugendlichen mit dem Holocaust. *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 37(1): 72–103; Bothe, A. och R. Sperling. (2013). Trauma und Emotion im virtuellen Raum. Historisches Lernen über die Shoah mit virtuellen Zeugnissen. I: J. Brauer och M. Lücke (red.). *Emotionen, Geschichte und historisches Lernen. Geschichtsdidaktische und geschichtskulturelle Perspektiven*. Göttingen: V & R unipress.

genomför i slutet av grundskolan. En fjärdedel av eleverna kunde inte ange två orsaker till Förintelsen, trots att ämnet prioriteras i svensk undervisning. Däremot beskrev de nazisternas grymheter och offrens lidande känslomässigt och visade medkänsla. Forskarna menar att undervisningen lägger för stor vikt vid den moraliska sidan, vilket gör det svårt för eleverna att svara på vetenskapliga frågor. Detta visar lärarnas utmaning att balansera moraliska och vetenskapliga perspektiv i Förintelseundervisningen.

TLH betraktas som ett av de viktigaste verktygen för att motverka antisemitism i demokratiska samhällen. Bachner (2004) uppfattar antisemitism som ett gemensamt europeiskt fenomen, också väl förankrat i Sverige. Konferensen *Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism*, som anordnades 2021, resulterade i att 43 regeringsdelegationer utfäste sig att vidta politiska åtgärder för att strategiskt motverka antisemitism (Flennegård 2023: 28). Dagens politiska åtgärder och uttalanden pekar på en ökning av antisemitiska uttryck i Sverige och de kallas även av Sveriges statsminister för ”en våg av antisemitism” (Kristersson 2023). Mattsons rapport (Mattsons et al. 2024: 90) bekräftar att judar i Sverige upplever en kraftigt ökad antisemitism i samhället efter den 7 oktober 2023 (krigets utbrott mellan Israel och Hamas i Gaza). Man kan förmoda att många vill se TLH som ett effektivt verktyg för att motverka antisemitism vilken i den nazistiska ideologin var drivkraften bakom Förintelsen. Men det finns rapporter och studier som bekräftar att det finns svaga kopplingar mellan THL och kunskap om antisemitism. Enligt Eckmann (2010: 7) resulterar undervisning om Förintelsen inte nödvändigtvis i minskade antisemitiska eller främlingsfientliga attityder bland elever. Organisationen för säkerhet och samarbete i Europa (OSSE 2007) påpekar att medvetenhet om att Förintelsen har ägt rum inte utesluter förekomsten av antisemitiska attityder, utan att dessa företeelser kan samexistera. Det finns även en risk att de positiva effekter som observerats av Förintelseundervisning är av tillfällig karaktär. I en studie av Cowan och Maitles framhålls att detta delvis kan förklaras av elevers tendens att betrakta antisemitism som ett historiskt fenomen, samt av en uppfattning att judar i dagens samhälle inte tillhör en utsatt grupp. Samtidigt framgår det att undervisningen om Förintelsen inte alltid innefattar en förklaring av antisemitism som företeelse, och sällan behandlar dess roll som en drivande orsak till folkmordet. Avsaknaden av en sådan förståelse riskerar att leda till att eleverna inte får en fördjupad eller adekvat bild av Förintelsen och dess underliggande mekanismer (Maitles och Cowan 2007: 431–444). Flera studier har även visat att läroböcker brister i att skildra det judiska livet före Förintelsen samt att de inte tydligt framhåller antisemitism som en bakomliggande orsak till desamma (Jackson 2013: 11–13). Pistone (Pistone 2021: 87–88, Pistone et al. 2024: 17–18) anger att termen ”antisemitism” endast nämns i förbigående eller inte alls i studierna om TLH:s utbildningsresultat. I stället står mänskliga rättigheter i allmänhet eller rasism och homofobi i fokus. Forskare märker följaktligen ett stort behov av undervisning om antisemitism i dag och hur den kan förebyggas. Det är värt att notera att för

närvarande pågår ett forskningsprojekt ”Lärande, förebyggande och konsekvenser av antisemitism i svensk skola” vars syfte är att forska om hur undervisning om antisemitism är anordnad och vilken kunskap om judar, judendom och antisemitism som reproduceras i svenska skolor².

4. Förintelsens minnesplatser och studieresor

År 2009 genomförde FLH på uppdrag av FRA, en studie om minnesplatser roll i undervisningen om Förintelsen och mänskliga rättigheter för ungdomar inom EU. Studien av 22 institutioner i 10 EU-länder undersökte om Förintelseutbildning på minnesplatser kopplas till mänskliga rättigheter och påverkar ungas förståelse för dessa. Resultatet visade att minnesplatser främst förmedlar historia och sällan integrerar mänskliga rättigheter, på grund av brist på utbildad personal och tid. Rapporten menar att skolorna måste stå för huvuddelen av kopplingen, medan besök på minnesplatser kan stödja undervisningen (FRA 2011: 97–101).

Enligt Flennegård (2023: 19) växte studieresor till Förintelsens minnesplatser fram som en gräsrotsrörelse och är ett unikt fenomen i svensk skola. De genomförs som följd av lärares och elevers engagemang trots att det inte finns några specifika direktiv eller reglering i styrdokumentet. Enligt uppgifter före pandemin har ungefär var fjärde svensk tjugåring varit på besök vid museet och minnesplatsen Auschwitz-Birkenau, huvudsakligen i samband med sin grundskole- eller gymnasieutbildning (Flennegård 2018). Studieresornas syfte är huvudsakligen att fostra eleverna i demokratiska grundvärderingar. Däremot hamnar förklarande perspektiv, såsom antisemitismens roll som drivkraft i Förintelsen, oftast i undervisningens utkanter. Detsamma gäller även kopplingen av undervisningens innehåll till Förintelsens specifika historiska kontext. Detta leder till att fördjupad kunskap om antisemitism ofta förbises i undervisningen (Flennegård 2024: 7–8). Flennegård (2024: 90) konstaterar att ”arbetet med de svenska studieresorna tenderar att sakna förklarande ansatser och historisk contextualisering. Eftersom Förintelsen förstås som en mänsklig katastrof som tillhör det förflutna, och syftet med studieresorna är att illustrera vikten av demokrati i nutid, tilldelas antisemitism en mycket begränsad relevans”. Denna praktik, av forskaren benämnd som ”de-judaifikation av Förintelsen” leder till att studieresor till minnesplatser inte kan vara ett särskilt effektivt verktyg för att motverka antisemitism bland dagens ungdomar (Flennegård 2024: 90). Brist på förklarande didaktiska metoder anses vara en generell tendens inom svensk TLH (Alvén et al. 2022: 67–92). Trots detta skapar elever kausala

² Projekttiden är 2023–2025 och dess deltagare är Segerstedtsinstitutet, Malmö universitet, Uppsala universitet, FLH, <https://mau.se/forskning/projekt/larande-forebyggande-och-konsekvenser-av-antisemitism-i-svensk-skola/> [hämtad: 10.02.2025].

samband, vilket leder till en ytlig förståelse av de bakomliggande orsakerna till Förintelsen (Flennegård 2024: 89).

Flennegård (2024: 77–78) märkte att de flesta didaktiska strategier som tillämpas under studieresorna till minnesplatser syftar till att utbilda om demokrati och framställa Förintelsen som en kränkning av demokratiska värden. En överordnad strategi är att fokusera på offrens lidande och väcka starka känslor samt elevernas empati. Centrala demokratiska värden betonas: människolivets okränkbarhet, allas lika värde och mänskliga rättigheter. En annan strategi är att uppmana eleverna att inspireras av historiska förebilder och deras moraliska handlingar för att försvara demokratiska värden. En annan metod tonar ner skillnader mellan offren och eleverna. Offergrupper särskiljs inte, utan presenteras som ”människor”, och judarnas roll som primära offer betonas inte. En följd blir att pedagogiska metoder för att förklara orsakerna bakom och genomförandet av Förintelsen i stort sett åsidosätts. Antisemitismen ges i detta sammanhang en minimal, om ens någon, betydelse. Även Pistone (Pistone et al. 2024: 17) konstaterar i sin redovisning att antisemitism sällan är i fokus inom TLH-studier.

För närvarande kan man observera åtgärder från svenska institutioner som syftar till att motverka denna situation och att utbilda om orsakerna till Förintelsen samt stödja lärarnas arbete i att integrera undervisningen om antisemitism i lärandet om Förintelsen. Hösten 2024 startade Segerstedtinstitutet vid Göteborgs universitet, tillsammans med Sveriges Museum för Förintelsen, en kurs för pedagoger om Förintelsens historia, minnesplatser och undervisning. Kursen tar även upp demokrati, tolerans, antisemitism och extremism. Christer Mattson, föreståndare för Segerstedtinstitutet, är en uppskattad lärare och forskare inom området.

5. Skolexterna myndigheter och organisationer

Svenska pedagoger har i dag tillgång till en rad guider, handböcker och digitala resurser som kan stödja undervisningen på olika sätt (Eckmann och Stevick 2017: 85). Materialet tillhandahålls av en mängd statliga myndigheter och organisationer vilka stödjer pedagogernas insatser. Det ovan nämnda Forum för levande historia (FLH) erbjuder undervisningsmaterial som är till hjälp för TLH i olika åldersgrupper samt utbildningar för lärare som höjer deras yrkeskompetens. FLH listar även svenska institutioner som i sina arkiv har samlingar med vittnesmål från Förintelsen (Forum för levande historia c,d,e, u.å.).

En annan organisation som stödjer TLH är Svenska kommittén mot antisemitism (SKMA) (Svenska kommittén mot antisemitism a, u.å.) vars syfte är att motverka antisemitism och andra former av rasism samt att sprida kunskap om dessa. SKMA anordnar seminarier om antisemitism, rasism, nazism och Förintelsen, och har tillsammans med europeiska partners (bl.a. POLIN i Warszawa) tagit fram utbildningsmaterialet *Eternal Echoes* med vittnesmål, dokument, bilder och

diskussionsunderlag. Lena Jersenius, tidigare kanslichef, har gjort stora insatser för TLH genom föreläsningar och studieresor till Förintelsens platser i Europa samt relaterade platser i Israel, och har prisats för sitt pedagogiska arbete (Svenska kommittén mot antisemitism b,c, u.å.).

6. Analysresultat av utvalda TLH:s projekt

I artikelns empiriska del visas exempel på två erfarna pedagoger som har gjort speciella insatser inom TLH vilka överskrider en vanlig undervisning om Förintelsen i klassrummet. Slutsatserna som presenteras drogs på basen av intervjufrågor som lärarna ombads att svara på samt av undervisningsmaterial och program för minnesresor vilka skickades i samband med forskning för denna artikel.

Mikael Enoksson lär ut om Förintelsen på grundskolenivå (åk 7–9) på Lillåns skola i Örebro sedan 2000. Han deltog i en av SKMA arrangerade kurser i Israel om Förintelsen, gick en ettårig utbildning anordnad av Levande historia samt var med i flera SKMA:s studieresor till Polen, Vitryssland, Ukraina, Österrike, Lettland och Litauen. 2010 skapade Enoksson ett didaktiskt projekt ”Skuggor från det förflutna” i vilket han använde Örebros lokalhistoria för att skapa intresse för Förintelsen bland sina elever. Grunden till projektet var ett beredskapssjukhus för flyktingar som anordnades i Örebro i slutet av andra världskriget. Våren och sommaren 1945 kom 245 polska och judiska kvinnliga koncentrationslägerfångar till beredskapssjukhuset där de fick hjälp och vård. Enokssons projekt involverade elever på Lillåns skola vilka med hjälp av arkivbesök och fotograferade dokument, som läraren fick tag på i arkiv, konstruerade livsberättelser av kvinnor på beredskapssjukhuset i Örebro samt letade efter uppgifter om platser och händelser som fanns i kvinnornas levnadsöden. Projektets didaktiska syften var att göra eleverna till en del av historien, att stärka förmåga till empati samt att förbättra källkritik, utveckla historisk förståelse och fokusera deras arbete underförstått på mänskliga rättigheter. Elevernas sammanfattade texter, elevövningar samt mycket annat historiskt material (bl.a. ögonvittnen) publicerades på webbsidan (www.skuggorfrandetforflutna.se) vilken blev ett värdefullt pedagogiskt redskap och en riktig informationsportal. Till största delen präglas Enokssons undervisningsmaterial av genomsökningar av digitala arkiv och arbete med källmaterial. Källorna i sitt sammanhang ger fragment till en livsberättelse vilken rekonstrueras och återberättas. Därigenom uppnås TLH: syften vilka är ”att utifrån historiska fakta och moraliska överväganden ta ställning för demokratiska värden” och ”att förstå att undervisning om det förflutna kan handla om oss själva och vårt eget samhälle”³.

2010 och 2011 genomförde Enoksson, med samarbete och stöd av SKMA och Olof Palmes minnesfond, två toleransresor till autentiska platser från Förintelsen

³ Personlig kommunikation, datafiler erhållna via mejl från Mikael Enoksson [9.02.2025].

i Polen under vilka svenska elever (åk 9) besökte Bodzentyn, Starachowice, Oświęcim (Auschwitz) och Kraków. Att bege sig till Auschwitz-Birkenau och Kraków är vanligt för svenska minnesresor till Polen men det kan verka tankeväckande med besöket till Bodzentyn. Anledningen till att besöka Bodzentyn, en småstad i sydöstra Polen, var dess historiska koppling till Förintelsen. Strax före andra världskrigets utbrott utgjorde judar en tredjedel av befolkningen i staden (Det judiska livet i Bodzentyn 2021). I närheten av Bodzentyn, och senare även i gettot, bodde också en ung judisk pojke Dawid Rubinowicz, som skrev sin dagbok i anteckningsböcker från skolan mellan åren 1940 och 1942 (Stańczak-Wislicz 2007; Stockholm University u.å.). Dagboken gavs ut 1960 i Polen och översattes redan samma år till flera andra språk (utgiven i Sverige av Bonniers 1960). Dawids dagbok blev ett unikt vittnesmål om judarnas förföljelser, restriktioner och till slut tvångsförflyttning och deportation till en okänd plats (enligt arkivmaterial och vittnesbörd fördes Dawid och hans familj till dödsläget i Treblinka) (Bodzentyn.net a, u.å.). Med initiativ från Max Safir (Bodzentyn.net b, u.å.) (född i Bodzentyn, överlevande från Kielce) tog SKMA kontakt med Dawid Rubinowicz Society vilket resulterade i toleransresor då Enoksson samarbetade med elever på två skolor i Bodzentyn (Svenska kommittén mot antisemitism d, u.å.). Polska elever och lärare berättade om Bodzentyns historia, vad som hände under andra världskriget, visade monumenten och den judiska begravningsplatsen. Ungdomarna studerade tillsammans vilket inflytande den nazistiska ockupationen utövade på befolkningen i Bodzentyn samt läste ur Dawids dagbok och också andra vittnesmål. De pratade om viktiga samhällsfrågor utifrån en historisk erfarenhet. ”Detta samarbete ger ett helt annat perspektiv på Förintelsen och hur denna påverkade lokalsamhället. Vad är ett samhälle? Vad är en människa? Och vad betyder det som hänt för oss i dag?” (Enokssons rapport 2010). Enoksson understryker i sin slutrapport att ett pedagogiskt resultat av elevresan var att åskådliggöra konsekvenser av rasism och nyttan av tolerans samt att få en helt annan förståelse för den europeiska historien (”nyttan av internationell förståelse”).

En annan enormt engagerad i TLH pedagog är Ewa Wymark, lärare på Södra Vätterbyggdens folkhögskola (Svf) i Jönköping, textförfattare till bl.a. en överlevnadsberättelse av Max Safir (*Bäste herrn, låt mig få leva*, XP Media, 2012), medverkande och projektledare för flera av SKMA:s projekt, samt föreläsare med fokus på överlevandes berättelser från Förintelsen och Gulag. Sedan 2008 har hon gjort egna studier och efterforskningar om den tidigare judiska befolkningen i Bodzentyn i Polen och samlat omfattande material i ämnet. Insatsen resulterade i att Wymark skapade webbsidan www.bodzentyn.net där personliga berättelser och historiska fakta om judar i Bodzentyn presenteras. ”The Site commemorates the lost Jewish community of Bodzentyn. It is a monument built with pictures and words” (Bodzentyn.net c, u.å.). Wymark fokuserade även på Dawid Rubinowicz dagbok. Pedagogen gjorde en särskild studie, där hon jämförde vittnesmål från judar som upplevt tiden i gettot i Bodzentyn, med anteckningarna i dagboken. Resultatet blev en komparativ studie (*Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza — Bodzentyn 1939–1942*.

Studium porównawcze. Towarzystwo Dawida Rubinowicza, Bodzentyn, 2010). 2025, tillsammans med Agata Wicenciak-Szulc, översatte hon på nytt Dawid Rubinowicz dagbok till svenska. Wymark var engagerad i att anordna en resa till Polen i Dawids fotspår som genomfördes i april 2025. Wymarks avsikt var att efter resan skapa en resehandledning som andra pedagoger kunde bygga vidare på. Med på resan var även andra lärare verksamma inom TLH samt studerande på SvF. Programmet inkluderade besök i städer med minnesplatser och museer för Förintelsen: Warszawa, Treblinka, Starachowice-Wierzbnik, Kielce och Bodzentyn. Under vandringen i Bodzentyn kopplades utdrag ur Dawids dagbok till andra vittnesmål. Deltagarna deltog i workshoppar och tränade på att se olika perspektiv på Förintelsens aktörer, såsom förövare, åskådare, räddare och offer. Resans syfte var att öka deltagarnas förståelse av Förintelsen, ge en vidgad kunskap om det judiska livet i Polen som förstördes, visa stegen i hur förföljelser och massmord planerades och genomfördes, samt konsekvenserna av detta. Metoder användes som främjade kritiskt tänkande och reflektion, och deltagarna gavs tid att reflektera över det individuella och kollektiva ansvaret för medmänniskan. Ett av syftena var att medverkande i resan ”fick en djupare insikt och kunskap om antisemitism och hur den kom till uttryck både före, under och efter Förintelsen”. Som en del av utvärderingen av läranderesultatet och studieresans förlopp ombads deltagarna att skapa föreställningskartor både före och efter resan. Jämförelsen av dessa kartor visade tydligt att deras förståelse av Förintelsen hade fördjupats avsevärt. Deltagarna visade på mer detaljerad kunskap om systematiken och organisationen av folkmordet, motståndsrörelsens verksamhet, konsekvenserna av förlusten av judiska samhällen samt vikten av att vårda minnet. Deras insikter om antisemitism hade också till viss del ökat. Efter resan visade deltagarna också mer nyanserade och reflekterande perspektiv på förövare och offer (Bodzentyn.net d, u.å.). Detta visar tydligt på att resan realiserar ett önskvärt lärandemål i TLH som Flennegård (2024) märker saknas i dagens svenska minnesresor.

Slutord

Förintelsen utgör i dag centrala och obligatoriska moment i historieundervisningen i grundkolan i Sverige. Undervisning om Förintelsen omfattar statens demokratiuppdrag och att dra lärdomar från dåtiden för framtiden. Förintelseundervisningen har dock sina begränsningar och utmaningar i flera områden. Det största problemet verkar vara att kunskaper om antisemitism förbigås i TLH. Lärarnas bidrag har ändå stor betydelse för TLH:s utveckling och framgång. I analysresultatet visades pedagogernas insatser som tyder på stort intresse och engagemang i TLH vilka överskrider en vanlig lärares arbetsuppgifter inom området. Sökning och analys på arkiv samt utnyttjande av historiska källor och även lokalhistoria möjliggör att skapa ett unikt undervisningsmaterial i TLH. Användning av den autentiska platsens kraft under minnesresorna bidrar till att nå lärandemål avsedda för TLH.

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RECENZJE I KOMUNIKATY

Zoltán Németh, Magdalena Roguska-Németh, Anna Buncler,
Łukasz Sommer (eds.), *Oblicza romantyzmu*,
Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA, 2024, 258 pp.

The year 2022 was exceptional for the Department of Hungarian Studies at the University of Warsaw. The celebration of its 70th anniversary gained a special dimension by coinciding with the Year of Sándor Petőfi, commemorating the bicentenary of the eminent Hungarian poet whose works left a lasting mark on Romantic literature and Hungarian culture. The academic conference provided an opportunity for scholars from diverse fields and countries to exchange insights. The reviewed volume, *Oblicza romantyzmu* [Faces of Romanticism], which serves as a post-conference publication, is an inspiring and interdisciplinary summary of the event.

The volume contains articles in three languages – Polish, Hungarian, and English. This multilingualism highlights the international character of the conference and its openness to collaboration with researchers beyond Poland. The linguistic diversity also makes the publication accessible to a broader audience, which is a significant advantage. The topics of the articles span literary studies, linguistics, cultural studies, and history. This wide range allows Romanticism to be presented not only as a literary phenomenon but also as a cultural and historical one, shaping the national and artistic identities of various countries. The volume includes reflections on Hungarian Romanticism as well as Finnish and Estonian literature and culture, which hold a significant place in the publication.

The Finnish and Estonian themes, which are particularly relevant and eagerly anticipated from my perspective as a scholar of Finnish literature, go far beyond scattered examples in linguistics articles on Finno-Ugric languages. They are explored in-depth in three articles representing diverse research approaches. Anna Buncler, in her linguistic article *Tryb życzący i Kalevala* [Optative Mood and Kalevala], examines the grammatical aspects of the Finnish language through the lens of the national epic *Kalevala*. Martyna Kokotkiewicz, in her historical-biographical piece *Lydia Koidula – dziennikarka, poetka, dramatopisarka estońskiego narodowego romantyzmu* [Lydia Koidula – Journalist, Poet, Playwright of Estonian National Romanticism] portrays a pivotal figure in Estonian history, linking her literary and journalistic work with the construction of Estonia's national identity. Meanwhile, Łukasz Sommer, in his bold article *Racial Homelands Revisited: From Romantic Linguistics to Modern Populism*, analyzes the Finno-Ugric kinship theory, presenting its historical and contemporary interpretations in the context of Hungary's current political climate. These articles are well-written and represent a valuable contribution to the broader field of Fenno-Ugric studies.

Anna Buncler's article, *Tryb życzący i Kalevala* [Optative Mood and Kalevala], provides a fascinating exploration of the influence of the *Kalevala* on the development

of Finnish grammar, particularly in the creation of the optative mood. Before the publication of the *Kalevala* in 1835 and 1849, the only mood used to express requests or commands in Finnish was the imperative, which appeared in various forms depending on dialectical differences. Buncler shows how Elias Lönnrot, in his compilation of *Kalevala*, popularized the optative mood, expressed with the suffix *-ko*, as a way to convey wishes or desires across all persons, introducing a new grammatical mood into Finnish.

What makes Buncler's article particularly compelling is her careful examination of the historical and linguistic significance of Lönnrot's innovation. By drawing on forms already present in folk poetry and introducing new ones, Lönnrot established a precedent that would later influence Finnish grammar textbooks, with the works of Collan (1847) and Eurén (1849) incorporating the optative into Finnish grammatical paradigms. Buncler traces the gradual distinction of the optative from the imperative in 20th-century Finnish grammar, highlighting how certain forms, like the 3rd person imperatives *tulkoon* and *tulkoot* ("let him/her come" and "let them come"), were reclassified as jussives, marking a clear morphological and syntactic shift. The article provides valuable insight into the intersection of literature and linguistics, showing how *Kalevala* not only shaped Finnish literary identity but also played a key role in the evolution of the Finnish language itself.

Martyna Kokotkiewicz's article, *Lydia Koidula – dziennikarka, poetka, dramatopisarka estońskiego narodowego romantyzmu* [Lydia Koidula – Journalist, Poet, Playwright of Estonian National Romanticism] offers a thorough and insightful examination of one of the most significant figures in Estonian National Romanticism. Kokotkiewicz delves into the life and works of Lydia Koidula, whose contributions to Estonian literature and theater have made her a key figure in shaping the country's national identity. As the author of over 300 poems and numerous prose pieces, Koidula's influence extends beyond literature, earning her the title of the "mother of Estonian national theater." Kokotkiewicz highlights how Koidula's work has inspired not only Estonian authors but also her Fenno-Baltic counterparts in Finland yet remains somewhat underrecognized in broader international literary circles. The article aims to bridge this gap by offering a detailed exploration of Koidula's life and literary legacy, bringing her closer to both readers and scholars unfamiliar with her work. With this paper, the author contextualizes Koidula's significance within Estonian and Finnish literary traditions, while emphasizing her role in the formation of national identity in Estonia. By connecting Koidula's contributions to broader cultural and historical developments, Kokotkiewicz provides readers with a deeper understanding of her importance, not only as a literary figure but also as a key cultural symbol in Estonia's romantic nationalist movement. The article serves as a valuable introduction to Koidula's works, encouraging further engagement with this influential yet often overlooked figure.

Lukasz Sommer's article, *Racial Homelands Revisited: From Romantic Linguistics to Modern Populism*, offers a striking and thought-provoking analysis of how intellectual traditions from the Romantic period continue to influence contemporary

political rhetoric. Using Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's 2022 statement about the war in Ukraine and the "threat" of foreign races as a starting point, Sommer traces the intellectual roots of such rhetoric, particularly focusing on the 19th-century philosophy of language by Johann Gottfried Herder. He argues that Herder's ideas about the connection between language, culture, and national identity were incorporated into Romantic nationalist and academic discourses, often conflating linguistic and racial categories. Although modern discourse largely abandoned this view, Sommer demonstrates how it endures in cultural imagination and resurfaces in public discourse. The article stands out for its interdisciplinary approach, merging historical linguistics, philosophy, and political analysis to show how Romantic-era ideas about linguistic kinship and racial identity still inform today's populist ideologies. Sommer skillfully links the historical origins of these ideas to contemporary political figures, showing their lasting influence on how national identity and "otherness" are constructed in the modern world. His analysis is both rigorous and accessible, offering important insights into the persistence of Romantic nationalism in today's political climate.

The volume excels in terms of editorial quality. The layout is clear, facilitating the reader's navigation through the articles. The introduction, which outlines the context of the conference and its main goals, serves as an essential point of reference for the subsequent chapters. Each article includes footnotes and a bibliography, underscoring scholarly rigor and enabling further exploration of the topics discussed.

Oblicza romantyzmu [Faces of Romanticism] is a publication of high academic value. It exemplifies an interdisciplinary approach to Romanticism studies and an openness to diverse cultural contexts. The articles not only document the achievements of the anniversary conference but also introduce new perspectives on studying the Romantic era in Central and Northern Europe. The volume's international nature makes it a must-read for scholars specializing in literature, language, and culture of this period, as well as for those interested in the cultural specificities of Hungary, Finland, and Estonia.

The volume, resulting from the anniversary conference of the Department of Hungarian Studies at the University of Warsaw, is not only a tribute to history and tradition but also an example of openness to new research challenges. Thanks to its thematic diversity and varied research perspectives, the publication allows readers to gain a deeper understanding of Romanticism as a universally significant era. Its high academic standard, editorial precision, and interdisciplinary approach make the book a valuable contribution to the advancement of Romanticism studies. We know about it well at the University of Gdańsk, where the late Prof. Maria, one of Poland's most recognized researchers of Romanticism, worked for years.

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Dagfinn Skre, *The Northern Routes to Kingship:
A History of Scandinavia AD 180–550*,
London and New York: Routledge, 2025, 666 pp.

Dagfinn Skre's *The Northern Routes to Kingship: A History of Scandinavia AD 180–550* is a significant and innovative contribution to the study of early Scandinavian history. This work, published by Routledge in 2025, offers a comprehensive, interdisciplinary analysis of the emergence of kingship in Scandinavia during a formative period that predates the Viking Age. Skre's book is distinguished by its ambitious scope, methodological diversity, and its challenge to established historiographical paradigms. It is positioned to become a foundational reference for scholars interested in the sociopolitical evolution of Northern Europe, as well as for those engaged in comparative studies of early state formation. Skre's book is structured into five major parts, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the transition from tribal societies to early kingdoms in Scandinavia. The work is grounded in a wide body of evidence, including archaeological material and runic inscriptions, place names, and historical accounts. The author employs a pan-Scandinavian and comparative approach, situating developments north of the Baltic within the broader context of late Roman and post-Roman Europe. This constitutes a substantial departure from the more conventional, nation-centred studies that have historically dominated Scandinavian historiography since the 19th century.

The temporal frame (AD 180–550) has been carefully selected. Skre's argument is that this period was characterised by significant transformations, including the arrival of Roman-trained warrior groups, the establishment of lordly centres, the monetisation of Scandinavian economies, and the eventual rise of kingdoms that were modelled, at least in part, on Roman and Continental precedents. The book's structure is indicative of an emphasis on contextual, multi-thematic analysis, with each section and chapter addressing a particular set of research issues through a distinct lens of evidence. A notable feature of the book is its explicit methodological stance. Skre proposes a "multilinear and multilayered research practice" (p. xxv) as a theoretical framework, which integrates diverse lines of evidence to construct robust historical explanations. He is sceptical of both purely systemic (neo-evolutionary) models and narrow disciplinary boundaries, and instead argues for an integrated, problem-driven approach drawing on insights from archaeology, linguistics, anthropology, and history. This methodological pluralism is evident throughout the book. For instance, Skre's analysis of personal names in runic inscriptions and place names is employed to trace the emergence of new social identities and power structures. Moreover, the author uses sociological theories of agency and structure, as well as evolutionary psychology, to explain the motivations and values of key historical actors, notably warriors, lords, and kings.

A central thesis of the book is that the “route to kingship” (p. 13) in Scandinavia was decisively shaped by the arrival of warrior groups dismissed from the Roman army after the Marcomannic Wars (AD 166–180). These well-equipped, experienced warriors, familiar with Roman institutions and practices, seized land and established new lordships across Scandinavia. Skre’s argument is that their presence catalysed a series of political, economic, and cultural changes, including the founding of lordly centres, the stimulation of artisanal and commodity production, and the cultivation of a heroic warrior ethos. This “military twist” (pp. 119–200) is evidenced by a thorough examination of archaeological sites, armament deposits, and the distribution of Roman coins (denarii) in Scandinavia. Skre’s analysis of the chronology and circulation of denarii provides novel insights into the monetisation of Scandinavian societies and the integration of local elites into broader networks of exchange and patronage.

Skre challenges the dominant narrative of a gradual, linear evolution from tribes to chiefdoms to kingdoms. Instead, he argues that the arrival of Roman-trained lords led to the creation of new, non-tribal polities which coexisted with traditional tribal structures for several centuries. These lordships were distinguished by the presence of sworn retainers, control over commodity production, and a focus on long-distance trade and warfare. It was only in the latter 5th and early 6th centuries, under the combined pressures of the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the influx of gold from the south-east, that these lordships began to evolve into kingdoms, particularly among the early Danes. This argument is supported by a nuanced discussion of the evidence for land rights, settlement patterns, and the role of personal names in both runic inscriptions and place names. Skre’s interdisciplinary analysis allows him to trace the shifting boundaries between tribal, lordly, and kingly authority, and to highlight the contingent, often conflict-driven nature of early state formation in Scandinavia.

Another major theme is the centrality of wealth acquisition and distribution in the consolidation of power. Skre examines the production and trade of iron, arctic wildlife commodities, and slaves, as well as the role of raiding and warfare in generating the surplus needed to reward retainers and allies. He shows how control over key resources and routes, both maritime and overland, enabled certain lords to accumulate the wealth and prestige necessary to claim kingly status. The book further explores the symbolic and ideological dimensions of kingship. Skre analyses the development of a heroic warrior ethos, hall culture, and the use of gold bracteates that were modelled on Roman medallions as religious amulets and political media. These cultural innovations, he argues, were both products and instruments of the new political order.

A notable strength of the book is its sustained engagement with continental and British parallels (p. 45). Skre situates Scandinavian developments within the broader context of migrations and the formation of kingdoms among the Franks, Goths, and other Germanic peoples. However, he is careful to avoid simple

diffusionist models, and instead emphasises the complex, bidirectional flows of people, ideas, and institutions between Scandinavia and the continent. Skre demonstrates impressive interdisciplinary breadth, reflected by his command of diverse evidence and scholarship. The author moves seamlessly between archaeology, linguistics, anthropology, and history, and thus offers a model for genuinely interdisciplinary research. The book's methodological reflections are notably explicit and thoughtful. Skre's critique of both systemic models and disciplinary insularity is well-argued and persuasive. The analysis is grounded in a meticulous examination of primary evidence, from armament deposits and runic inscriptions to settlement patterns and material culture. Numerous illustrations, together with the various statistical representations, serve to enhance the clarity and accessibility of the argument. Skre's challenge to the conventional, nation-centred narrative of Scandinavian state formation is both timely and convincing. The emphasis placed on the role of Roman-trained warrior groups and the coexistence of tribes and lordships has added new complexity to our understanding of early Scandinavian polities.

The book's breadth and depth, while indicative of its strengths, also render it a challenging read. Specialists from particular disciplines may encounter chapters that fall outside their area of expertise; however, Skre offers guidance for selective reading to facilitate comprehension. Another factor to be considered is that some of his arguments, particularly those concerning the motivations and identities of individual actors inferred from personal names and limited archaeological evidence, necessarily involve a degree of speculation. Skre is generally careful to acknowledge this, but readers should be aware of the interpretive risks involved. Lastly, while the book discusses the Sámi and other non-Germanic groups, the primary focus remains on Germanic-speaking Scandinavians. Future research is therefore encouraged to engage in a more comprehensive examination of the interactions that occur between these populations.

In conclusion, *The Northern Routes to Kingship* is a landmark study that redefines our understanding of early Scandinavian history. Its interdisciplinary methodology, revisionist arguments, and empirical rigour set a new standard for the field. While demanding, it rewards close reading with a wealth of insights into the complex processes that led to the emergence of kingship in the North. Skre's book will be indispensable not only for specialists in Scandinavian studies but for anyone interested in the dynamics of early state formation, the legacy of Rome, and the complex history of European polities.

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Henning Howlid Wærp, *Dyr og mennesker i norsk litteratur*,
Stamsund: Orkana Akademisk, 2025, 245 pp.

At a time when Anthropocene narratives are subjected to a discursive shift reshaping the grand narrative of planetary change and the human-nonhuman dichotomy, Henning H. Wærp's most recent book, *Dyr og mennesker*, is committed to a local, cohesive examination of interspecies entanglements. The author makes a valuable contribution to the Animal Studies field by rereading and reframing animal depictions in Norwegian literature. The study spans from the 18th century to the present, with an exclusive focus on prose.

Although the author mentions in the preface of the volume that the study is not exhaustive (p. 9), it provides a substantial insight into different types of prose. The book consists of 14 chapters, ranging from early depictions of wilderness and human-animal bonds to ecological narratives addressing environmental collapse, posthumanism, and Sámi science fiction. Interestingly enough, all of these chapters can be read separately, each having its own methodology and conceptual framework. They function both as individual essays and complementary parts of the unitary structure of the book. Consequently, the animal representations are not treated hierarchically either. Each chapter, whether it deals with pets, wild animals, aquatic life, or insects, explores its subject on equal terms, based on close readings of the literary works. Accordingly, it does not assign greater value to one species or category over another. What is more, each chapter is followed by a fitting Norwegian illustration to the extent that the author showcases the convergence between the literary and visual imaginary and their integration in the animal turn.

As the author's method is more exploratory than purely systematic, one of the key questions guiding this volume's chapters concerns the engagement with the animals beyond their symbolic or anthropocentric frameworks. In this regard, the book reaffirms the necessity of exploring alternative methods to relate to animals (p. 15), without examining only literature that deals directly with the topic, but also changing the hermeneutic perspective (p. 17).

This shift in the perspective gave rise to a series of questions: What type of language do we use to refer to animals and animal rights? What are the insufficiencies of other ways of representing animals and how can literature be explored as a prosperous meeting point between humans and animals? These are just some of the leading questions that end the first chapter and open up the trajectory of intentional or non-intentional environmental debates in Norwegian literature that will be examined in the following chapters.

The second chapter examines how dogs are represented in four different novels. Two of the novels are from the 18th century: *Berre ein hund* (1887) by Per Sivle and *Ulveslaget* (1892) by Jacob Breda Bull, while the other two are from the 19th century:

Revir (1994) by Ingvar Ambjørnsen and *Hunden* (1994) by Merethe Lindstrøm. Following Donna Haraway's argument from *The Companion Species Manifesto* regarding the rich yet chaotic relation between humans and dogs, the author extends the feminist-cultural lens to the literary medium. While the story *Berre ein hund* is considered by the author as "fineste hundepotretter" (p. 46), the story *Ulveslaget's* biographical stance makes it stand out as a portrayal of the multiple dimensions that human–dog interactions can have. Similarly, *Revir* is analyzed by the author as representing a shift in Ingvar Ambjørnsen's writing, with a newer focus on "angst, ensomhetsfølelse og en opplevelse av tilværelsens meningsløshet" (p. 50). At the same time, the story *Hunden* is critically examined as an attempt to eradicate the dog-human differences through exaggerated anthropomorphism that often leads to not recognizing the specificity of the interspecies interactions.

In the third chapter, the author applies an ecocritical lens to Knut Hamsun's *Victoria*. Little attention has so far been given to an interspecies-centered reading of Hamsun's works, including this book, as the author mentions in the introduction of this section. The author makes an interesting point about how this work goes beyond being just a piece of representative decadence literature. Although symbolism is highly prevalent, Wærp identifies a distinctive type of symbolism that is not separated from the sensory and corporeal experience. Guided by Arne Næs' deep ecology, the author explains how Hamsun's spiritualization of nature can be traced back to Spinoza through the intermediary book *Den nyere Filosofis Historie*, written by the Danish philosopher Harald Høffding. Although *Victoria* does not specifically deal with a specific animal, the author's contribution lies in refining the subtle trajectory of how Hamsun is parting ways with the symbolism and decadence that influenced him heavily.

The fourth chapter takes us further north, to polar expedition literature and Otto Sverdrup's *Nyt Land. Fire Aar i arktiske Egne*, published in 1903, that depicts the second expedition of Fram. While the author questions Sverdrup's literary style, he still manages to acknowledge a certain thematic merit of the book. This owes much to how the author is mostly interested in the representations of the arctic wildlife, as well as sledging dogs. Although the sled dogs keep the utilitarian value, Wærp emphasizes how they are referred to in human terms (p. 74). The author stays critical of the story's imperialistic and exploitative view of the Arctic, yet acknowledges its take on wildlife.

The fifth chapter is dedicated to Regine Normann's debut book, *Krabvaag Skil-dringer fra et lite fiskevær* (1905). This section inquires into the debates centered around belonging and spatial inclusion of animal representations in literature, with a focus on Normann's novel. Building on Erin James' term of "storyworld", the author seeks to examine a type of decentralization that opens space for animals. While the encounters with animals are not individualized, Wærp reframes this narrative in ecological terms because it reveals a shared human-nonhuman environment. Starting from the interpretations of how birds are at place in the fishing village

and highlighting how children and adults alike perceive them with joy (p. 90), to the farm animals perceived as receiving the most attention in the novel (p. 91), the author depicts how this novel stands out as a localized portrayal of the sense of home and place.

The sixth chapter reintroduces another ecological reading of Knut Hamsun's works, this time with a surprising focus on insects. Wærp offers an insightful inquiry into how insects are depicted in Hamsun's bibliography. He starts by noticing Hamsun's interest in insects as depicted in *Pan* (1894), especially in relation to other animals that could be found in the forest, but were intentionally omitted. Next, he focuses on spiders and other insects' depiction in Hamsun's biographical short story, *Under høststjernen* (1906), and the novel *Rosa* (1908). The author also showcases how Hamsun's engagement with insects is depicted in his nonliterary works as well, by revealing his review of J.-H. Fabre's *Instinktets mysterier hos Insekter og Edderkopper*.

The topic of the seventh chapter is the author Mikkjel Fønhus and his place in Norwegian literature in regard to wild animal depictions. Grounded in Margaret Atwood's account of differences between English, American and Canadian wild animal representations in literature, Wærp attempts to explore the same debate in the Norwegian literary space. The author focuses on four books with animal protagonists: *Der villmarka suser* (1919, bear), *Det skriker fra Kverrvilljuvet* (1920, hawk), *Jerv* (1959, wolverine), and *Villgås flyr mot nord* (1968, goose), concluding with general reflections on animal depictions in Fønhus' work, including *Trollelgen* (1921). Accordingly, as he further mentions, in Fønhus's books, there is no room for a complete appropriation of wildlife through anthropomorphism. This is due to his attempts to capture the human-nonhuman complex network by focusing on specific animals and their vulnerability, experiences and feelings.

Moving next to the eighth chapter, the discussion centers around Trygve Gulbrandsen's *Og bakom syngerskogene* historical trilogy. A notable point of the analysis undergone here is the metaphorical language used to describe, this time, the humans. Consequently, the author builds on Garrard's term of *zoomorphism*, highlighting how wild animals are the main imaginary elements. Similarly, the forest and wildlife experience is conducted through hunting, but also synesthetic modes of interacting with and rejuvenating it through a comparison to a song (p. 144). While keeping a critical lens on outdated social representations of family dynamics, the literary relevance is brought into discussion due to a form of resistance to dominant narratives that advocate for the occupation and modernization of the environment.

The ninth chapter aims to challenge the widespread view on Tarjei Vesaas' four first books: *Menneskebonn* (1923), *Sendemann Huskuld* (1924), *Grindegard* (1924) and *Grinde-kveld* (1926) as "sentimentale eller dyster-romantiske" (p. 149). Shifting from literary theory to sociological inquiry, the author addresses the experience of *resonance*, in Hartmut Rosa's words, with the nature encounters in Vesaas' literary works. This section aims not only to showcase the nonhuman representations

(that are extended from animals to the vegetative world or celestial objects), but to emphasize how they are precisely the elements that could reframe the general view on Vesaas' earlier works as equally central as his other works that are more dominant in the academic discourse (like *Det store spelet*, for example).

The next chapter, *Isbjørn i nordisk barne- og ungdomslitteratur*, takes the reader back north, to the literary explorations of the polar bears. Here, the author is interested in how polar bear literary representations potential to take on a formative and educational role. This section is a comparative analysis of the history of the polar bear in Norwegian literature. Starting with Rasmus Løland's *Kvitebjørnen* (1906), children's books gradually shift from Svalbard as a test of manhood: Peder Flints *Speidergutter på Spitsbergen. To norske gutters sommereventyr* (1922) to ecological themes in the 1970s and '80s Harald Sverdrup's *Isbjørn. En ishavsberetning for barn og voksne* (1977) and Thor Larsen's *Espen i isen* (1981), while Lars-Henrik Olsen's *Isbjørn mod hvalros* (2009) features animals without human traits.

The eleventh chapter analyses how Cora Sandel, Brit Bildøen and Tove Nilsen depict their connections to the animal world. The author uses Don Scheese's term of "nature writing" to place these writings within a framework between classical categories. Cora Sandel's *Dyr jeg har kjent* is examined through Greg Garrad's concept of "critical anthropomorphism", with a focus on the exploratory function of literature and companion animals. Similarly, Brit Bildøen's *Over land og hav. Eit år med trekkfuglar* is deemed a risk-oriented ecological depiction of ethical bird-watching. In other words, it means that it both makes the risks visible and depicts possible responses to environmental uncertainties. Finally, Tove Nilsen's *Nordens elefanter og andre bekjente* is addressed as a highly relevant study in the animal studies field, especially regarding animal depictions in artworks and research.

The twelfth chapter is introduced by the cover illustration of the book and focuses on Ole Robert Sund's trilogy: *Penelope er syk* (2017), *Jeg føler meg uvel* (2019) and *Langsom marmor* (2020). The focus here is on how the character is dealing with a traumatic experience, after the loss of his wife because of a terminal illness. The author integrates theoretical points between humanistic disease research (for example, Unni Langås' analysis) (p. 217) and ecocriticism while also considering that it has autobiographical features. Thus, he succeeds in depicting how the active perception (p. 218) and the experience of the environment and nature can be a means of working through trauma.

The thirteenth chapter deals with the dystopic work of Knut Faldbakken, *Uår. Aftenlandet* (1974). The author identifies utopian characteristics in this novel, as he also recognizes alternatives outside of the social order, in Norheim's words (p. 232). The landscape depicts a total wasteland, which is thought to reflect the title of the novel's reference to the German philosopher Oswald Spengler's pessimism regarding the decadent state of the West. It is a depiction of an almost completely lost animal life. As the author suggests, however, what has been lost is the human-nonhuman interconnections in a highly dystopic environment.

The fourteenth and the last chapter of the book includes both an examination of the Sámi science-fiction book *Fugl* (2019) by Sigbjørn Skådens and its nonhuman (non)depictions. Here, the author explores ways in which the Sámi identity is portrayed, by not being engaged with directly, neither geographically (as the setting is a fictional planet called “Heim”), nor explicitly (as the same culture is not mentioned). What is most impressive in this chapter is that the animal life is depicted in its absence (p. 246), a key element that makes this section one of the most provocative chapters. In this regard, the author identifies the community that colonized that planet as the Sámi people, tracing several key points to his argument. The barren planet that has almost no traces of vegetation and no animal life is perceived (not even traces of previous such life), in contrast to the rich Arctic life that surrounds Sámi communities. The author demonstrates how the book is both an allegory for the colonialism and systemic violence that the Sámi people were subjected to, as well as a climate dystopia.

In conclusion, this study represents an enriching contribution to the history of Norwegian literature that takes an interest in animal and nonhuman depictions. Lying at the intersection of ecocriticism and animal studies, it can be considered both a history of animal depiction in Norwegian literature, as well as a homage paid to all the literature that contributed to complementing these representations.

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August Strindberg, *Gra snów*.

Opracowanie dramaturgiczne, teksty ballad, reżyseria:

Sławomir Narloch

Premiera: Teatr Narodowy, Scena przy Wierzbowej

im. Jerzego Grzegorzewskiego, 13 kwietnia 2024

Hieronim Bosch namalował obraz zatytułowany *Syn marnotrawny* w 1498 roku. Praca ta ma charakter monochromatyczny, z dominującymi barwami ziemi, żółciami i szarościami, co nadaje całości charakter melancholijny. Obraz przedstawia mężczyznę – wędrowca. Ma siwe włosy, a na jego twarzy widać zmarszczki podkreślające wiek i dające się odczuć zmęczenie doświadczeniem życiowym. To osoba uboga, o czym świadczą porwane ubrania, buty nie do pary i nędzny dobytek na plecach. W tle obrazu znajduje się podupadająca gospoda (być może symbolizująca życie ziemskie?), od której bohater odchodzi. W drzwiach gospody jakiś mężczyzna obłapia kobietę, z okna wygląda inna kobieta, a pod ścianą włóczęga załatwia potrzeby fizjologiczne. Mężczyzna oddala się, jego twarz jest zwrócona w kierunku przeciwnym do kierunku podróży, jakby jeszcze się żegnał, nie chciał odchodzić. Bohater jest rozdarty – podąża w stronę furtki, ale patrzy wstecz, machając na pożegnanie kapeluszem trzymany w ręku. Mija warczącego psa, nieopodal znajduje się drzewo. Obok drzewa, na którym siedzą dwa ptaki – puszczyk (oznaczający tajemnicę, duchowość) i dzięcioł (rozwaga, praca) – jest furtka, brama do innego świata. Bohater obrazu to *homo viator* (łac. podróżny, pielgrzym, wędrowiec) podróżujący po świecie, rozdarty między cielesnością a duchowością, przytłoczony światem, a jednak w jakimś stopniu tęskniący za doczesnością. Warto podkreślić, że obraz jest znany także pod tytułem *Wędrowiec* (lub *Pielgrzym*), który w dużym stopniu akcentuje nie tyle związek z biblijną drogą do zbawienia, ile staje się alegorią każdego człowieka, „everymana”.

Prawie wszystkie wyżej wymienione elementy możemy dostrzec też na plakacie do przedstawienia *Gra snów* Augusta Strindberga wyreżyserowanego w Teatrze Narodowym przez Sławomira Narlocha. Na plakacie wędrowiec ma twarz Cezarego Kosińskiego, odgrywającego w tym przedstawieniu rolę Poety, Adwokata i Oficera.

Plakat i jego jednoznacznie nawiązanie do obrazu Boscha wydają się istotne, ponieważ stanowią pierwszą wskazówkę do odczytania klucza interpretacyjnego, jakim posłużył się Narloch do reinterpretacji dramatu Strindberga. Reżyser warszawskiej inscenizacji sięga do tradycji średniowiecza, a konkretnie do formy moralitetu, aby tekst szwedzkiego dramatopisarza ująć w ramy opowieści o życiu i poszukiwaniu sensu. Narloch nawiązuje do tej formy dramatu średniowiecznego między innymi przez kreację postaci Poety, Adwokata, Oficera – to „każdy”, człowiek w wymiarze ogólnym, a jego wędrówka to ciągle stawanie przed wyborem między doczesnym a duchowym, wędrówka w przestrzeni konkretnej, ale schematycznej,

a sam bohater jawi się jako postać pozbawiona cech jednostkowych, ścierająca się z alegoriami idei, wartości. Taką właśnie strategię aktorską przyjął Cezary Kosiński, jego Poeta, Oficer czy Adwokat to postaci zmęczone, przytłoczone codziennością, szare, rozdarłe – niczym wędrowiec z obrazu Boscha.

Utwór Strindberga jest tekstem raczej trudnym do wystawienia. W swojej przedmowie do dramatu autor pisał: „Autor, w nawiązaniu do swojej poprzedniej sztuki o charakterze gry snów, «Do Damaszku», próbował w niniejszej sztuce naśladować nieskoordynowaną, lecz pozornie logiczną formę snu. Wszystko może się wydarzyć, wszystko jest możliwe i prawdopodobne. Czas i miejsce nie istnieją. Na błahej podstawie rzeczywistości fantazja snuje i tka nowe wzory: mieszaninę wspomnień, przeżyć, swobodnych pomysłów, nonsensów i improwizacji. Osoby rozdwarzają się i podwajają, są dublowane, roztapiają się, zagęszczają i jednoczą” (Strindberg 1976).

Poetyka snu, afabularność, fragmentaryczność ciągu obrazów, podwojenia postaci zostają przez Narlocha ujęte z jednej strony w konwencję moralitetu, z drugiej strony na poziomie realizacji zostają zamknięte w formie teatru w teatrze – całość jest odgrywana przez średniowieczną trupę aktorską, a jeden z jej członków, pełniący funkcję Suflera, przy akompaniamencie instrumentu w sposób bezpośredni wprowadza widza w tematykę i objaśnia sytuację. Warto podkreślić, że rola muzyki jest w tym przedstawieniu niezwykle istotna. Reżyser przedstawienia przygotował szereg ballad, które wykonywane są w towarzystwie zespołu na żywo na scenie. Ballady – często na poziomie języka żartobliwe (jak ballada o pietruszce) – stanowią pewnego rodzaju dialog z tekstem Strindberga, dopowiedzenie wpisane w formę ludyczną, budują swoisty dystans wobec mrocznego tekstu autora *Gry snów*. Na poziomie muzycznym jednak daje się wyczuć element gorzkości – ujawniają to między innymi wykorzystane instrumenty, takie jak piła albo lira korbowa, które wprowadzają akcent rozdrażnienia czy niepokoju. Element ludyczności przejawia się także w nieustannym przeplataniu się przeciwstawnych odczuć i form, miłość przekształca się w zubożenie, wiedza w głupotę, dramatyczny dialog – w scenę procesji. Tym samym Narloch silnie akcentuje formę groteski jako narzędzia nie tyle opisu rzeczywistości, ile próby opanowania świata w całej jego złożoności. Pojawia się jednak pytanie dotyczące istoty tej groteskowości. Sceny mają charakter epizodów, nie są powiązane logicznie – elementem spajającym jest wędrówka córki boga Indry, przemieszaniu ulegają przestrzeń i podwajani bohaterowie. Jeśli istotą groteskowości ma być wybiecie z rytmu, wyrzucenie odbiorcy poza ramy świata bezpiecznego, wytłumaczonego, wydobycie z codzienności grozy i jednocześnie próba opanowania nierozumianego przez dystans ironii, to wydaje się, że w przedstawieniu Narlocha silnie rozbudowane aspekty humorystyczne połączone z niezwykle dynamiką akcji osłabiają czasem wymiar tragiczny.

Gra snów napisana została przez Strindberga po jego okresie inferna, czasie kryzysu twórczego. Był to moment w życiu szwedzkiego autora, któremu towarzyszyły poczucie rozpadu własnej tożsamości, izolacja, niemoc twórcza, brak poczucia sensu

w wymiarze religijnym i egzystencjalnym. Podczas pobytu w Paryżu Strindberg przeżywał stany o charakterze paranoidalnym, ogarniały go myśli samobójcze, które przeplatały się z poczuciem własnej wielkości. Doświadczenia tego kryzysu znalazły swoje odzwierciedlenie zarówno w tekście zatytułowanym *Inferno*, jak i w jego późniejszej twórczości dramatycznej. Strindberg odchodzi od dramatu naturalistycznego (choć nigdy nie realizował tego typu dramatu w czystej postaci) i wprowadza elementy dramatu psychologicznego, wizyjnego, połączone z mistycyzmem. Wiąże się to z szeregiem eksperymentów o charakterze alchemicznym, których autor *Gry snów* dokonywał w czasie kryzysu – eksperymentów, które były formą poszukiwania sensu, transcendencji. Mistyczne i symboliczne aspekty twórczości wpisane są w tekst dramatu. Sama konstrukcja akcji odwołuje się do aspektu religijnego – córka boga Indry (grana przez Ewę Bukałę, absolwentkę Akademii Teatralnej z 2024 roku) zstępuje z nieba, aby poznać ludzki los. Jej misja ma charakter wędrowki boga wcielonego w ciało człowieka w przestrzeni codzienności, bólu i trosk. Córka Indry schodzi z nieba i wędruje w dynamicznie zmieniającym się otoczeniu, wśród jednostkowych historii ludzkiego życia. A są to historie tragiczne i gorzkie. Bogini dostrzega, czym jest rozczarowanie wynikające z oczekiwania (historia podrywki), czym jest miłość, która rozpoczyna się od deklaracji zgody na współcierpienie, a kończy wzajemnym niezrozumieniem i oskarżeniem (wyrzuty Adwokata dotyczące brudu są silnym akcentem dramatu relacji między małżonkami). Krytyce poddane zostają podziały społeczne. Groteskowo-ironiczna lekcja o czasie czy też absurdalna dyskusja przedstawicieli różnych dyscyplin akademickich obnażają jałowość wiedzy. Świat jawi się jako przestrzeń pełna cierpienia, bólu i niespełnienia – dlatego niczym refren pojawia się komentarz wędrującej córki boga – „biedni ludzie”. Taka formuła zbliża tekst do alegorii ludzkiej egzystencji, w której samotność, ból i cierpienie definiują istnienie człowieka. Absurdalność, humor i groteska odgrywanych scen pozwalają przybliżyć dramat człowieka z tekstu Strindberga człowiekowi współczesnemu. Scena może stanowić lustro dla gorzkich refleksji dotyczących współczesnego zagubienia. W tym kontekście można powiedzieć, że aspekt egzystencjalny zawarty w tekście Strindberga wybrzmiał na scenie Teatru Narodowego przy ulicy Wierzbowej w sposób mocny, jednak – jak wydaje mi się – jednocześnie osłabiony został kontekst metafizyczny. Postaci – jak to w moralitecie bywa – są raczej uproszczone, stanowią pewne figury, taką też figurą staje się córka boga Indry. Wymiar transcendentny zostaje osłabiony, choć jest sygnalizowany w samej konstrukcji przestrzeni teatralnego widowiska. Przestrzeń początkowa zamknięta jest przez dwa skrzydła bramy – otwartej później przez narratora-suflera – spoza których widać wystające ręce, dłonie. Mamy tu dwa światy – zewnętrzną przestrzeń metaforyczną i, na początku jeszcze ukryty, świat ludzkiego cierpienia. Druga część zaczyna się od powtórzenia motywu otwarcia, tyle że, bogatsi o doświadczenia część pierwszej, patrzymy na świat od strony życia, w którym na moment uwięziona zostaje córka Indry. Widzimy więc ludzi, ale świat boski nie jest już dostępny. Symboliczny wymiar przestrzeni mocno

akcentują drzwi, którym co jakiś czas bohaterowie spektaklu poświęcają uwagę, a po otwarciu których – jak się okazuje – już nic nie ma. Być może jak poza furtką, którą ma przekroczyć wędrowiec na obrazie Hieronima Boscha.

Przedstawienie w reżyserii Sławomira Narlocha w ciekawy sposób próbuje przybliżyć trudny tekst Strindberga. Wykorzystanie formy moralitetu, liczne ballady połączone z plastyczną stroną przedstawienia wpisują ten spektakl do teatru-obrzędu, w którym widz zostaje wprowadzony w przestrzeń mroków egzystencji. Dynamika scen, fragmentaryczność i rozpad postaci stają się niezwykle bliskie współczesnemu człowiekowi, dla którego niepewność własnej tożsamości, zmienność świata i wyczerpanie wiedzy oraz tradycyjnych form poznawczych są doznaniem codzienności. Groteskowe przerysowanie scen z życia codziennego oddaje tragizm współczesnych relacji międzyludzkich. Postaci Poety, Adwokata i Oficera, których wewnętrzna pustka, zmęczenie, powszechność zostały świetnie oddane na scenie przez Cezarego Kosińskiego, stanowią manifestację człowieka wypalonego, wędrującego po ziemi jałowej. I chociaż moralitet z założenia dokonuje uproszczenia postaci scenicznych, a intensyfikacja scen absurdalno-groteskowych może dystansować odbiorcę wobec prezentowanych obrazów, to jednak wydaje się, że próba odczytania egzystencjalnego (z osłabieniem aspektu metafizycznego) przybliży tekst Strindberga i pozwala na autorefleksję dotyczącą samoświadomości egzystencji i absurdalności istnienia człowieka, które – być może – należy zaakceptować.

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Against All Odds – Historical Women and New Algorithms,
Statens Museum for Kunst, Kopenhaga,
31 sierpnia – 8 grudnia 2024

Against All Odds – Historical Women and New Algorithms w Duńskiej Galerii Narodowej to wystawa, na której zaprezentowano prace 24 artystek nordyckich tworzących na przełomie XIX i XX wieku. Malarki i rzeźbiarki, których prace można było podziwiać, odniosły znaczące sukcesy w latach 1870–1910, później jednak ich twórczość została zmarginalizowana lub wręcz zapomniana. W zamierzeniu kuratorów wystawa nie miała jednak jedynie przypomnieć postaci poszczególnych artystek i ich twórczości, miała również – a może przede wszystkim – zadać pytania dotyczące sposobów reprezentacji historycznej oraz działania mechanizmów pamięci i zapomnienia. Istotnym elementem tej wystawy było także wykorzystanie nowych technologii nie tylko jako instalacji mających charakter dialogiczny z tradycyjnymi dziełami sztuki, ale jako narzędzi dyskursu reinterpretacyjnego, pozwalającego na nowe spojrzenie na działalność kobiet-artystek i ich wzajemnych powiązań. Nowe technologie miały stać się narzędziem reinterpretacyjnym, pozwalającym na stworzenie nowej narracji historycznej.

Ważnym elementem budującym narrację wystawy była zaprojektowana przez autorów przestrzeń. Twórcy odeszli od tradycyjnego układu linearnego, w którym kolejne sale reprezentują następujące po sobie okresy twórcze lub zawierają zbiory zorganizowane wokół tematu dominującego – choć pozostałości układu z tematem dominującym w tej wystawie w pewnym stopniu pozostały – a skupili się na kreacji punktu centralnego, od którego rozgałęziały się różnorodne ścieżki zwiedzania. W ten sposób organizacja przestrzeni pozwalała na dowolny sposób wędrówki po wystawie, bez jednoznacznego punktu wyjścia i dojścia. Sale wystawowe zorganizowano tak, aby zawiesić paradygmat poznania jako drogi ukierunkowanej, a wprowadzić koncept spaceru, błędzenia jako możliwych form nieustannego poznawania, które jednocześnie pozwala na ujęcie różnych punktów widzenia oraz relacji i powiązań. Warto podkreślić, że taka koncepcja przestrzeni stanowi nawiązanie do nośnej metafory kłącza zdefiniowanej przez Gilles’a Deleuze’a i Feliksa Guattario. Zaprezentowany w pracy tych francuskich myślicieli zatytułowanej *Tysiąc plateau* koncept kłącza był przeciwstawieniem dla klasycznej metafory drzewa jako metody poznania. Przeniesione z dziedziny botaniki pojęcie kłącza, charakteryzujące łodygę rozrastającą się poziomo, która swoje pędy może wypuszczać z dowolnego miejsca, staje się szeroką metaforą ujmującą poznanie nielinarne, niecentryczne, rozproszone. W kontekście tej metafory hierarchiczny, zorganizowany porządek poznania zamknięty w metaforze drzewa zostaje zastąpiony formą myślenia otwartego, opartego na sieciowym pojmowaniu relacji między twórcami, ideami i dziełami. Realizację tego konceptu można było dostrzec nie tylko w kreacji

przestrzeni wystawowej, ale także w konkretnej instalacji. Dla zwiedzających przygotowana została mapa linearnie prezentująca najważniejsze miasta Europy, które w bardzo klarowny sposób połączono, wskazując na ruchy poszczególnych artystek, których biogramy znajdowały się w dolnej części projektu. Mapa sieciowa nie tyle odzwierciedlała koleje losów poszczególnych postaci, co prezentowała różnorodne połączenia malarek, bezpośrednie i pośrednie, jednocześnie wskazując na dalsze promieniowanie prądów i idei. W ten sposób plastyczny wymiar sieciowych połączeń miał wskazywać na wielopłaszczyznowość relacji i niehierarchiczny charakter rozwoju sztuki. Warto jednak zaznaczyć, że ogólna idea zawarta w projekcie nie stanowiła całkowitego przewartościowania dotychczasowej wiedzy – punktem centralnym w sposób jednoznaczny był Paryż, i właśnie wyjazdy do Paryża, pobyt w stolicy Francji stanowiły podstawowy element formatywny dla twórczyni przełomu XIX i XX wieku, a doświadczenia tam zdobyte ulegały później transformacji po powrocie do stolic nordyckich, w których na elementy awangardowe wpływ miały aspekty lokalne.

Istotnym elementem wystawy były projekty związane z wykorzystaniem sztucznej inteligencji. Znacząco reprezentowana na wystawie była panamska artystka Itzel Yar występująca pod pseudonimem Ix Shells. Artystka ta, skupiając się na sztuce abstrakcyjnej, wykorzystuje eksperymenty audiowizualne, często korzystając z dostępnych danych i przetwarzając je w dzieła wizualne. Twórczyni studiowała technologię architektoniczną w Toronto. Tam też, analizując wzorce występujące w naturze oraz podstawowe założenia brutalizmu, sprecyzowała swoje podejście do sztuki opierające się na badaniach relacji między cyfrową symulacją a umysłem artysty i odbiorcy. W dużej mierze jej projekty stanowią próbę reinterpretacji świata fizycznego w formie cyfrowej wizualizacji, która ulega przetworzeniu w wyniku interakcji z impulsami przekazywanymi w momencie percepcji dzieła.

Doskonałym przykładem takiej realizacji była zaprezentowana na opisywanej wystawie instalacja oparta na danych dotyczących artystek przełomu XIX i XX wieku. Dla Ix Shells dane to nie tylko liczby, to także barwy, dźwięki, a nawet historie związane z poszczególnymi postaciami ze świata sztuki. Różne fakty – dotyczące podróży bohaterek wystawy, ich wzajemnych relacji, a także barwy z prezentowanych dzieł – stały się punktem wyjścia do plastycznego, immersyjnego projektu. Projekt *Interlinked* miał charakter dwoisty i dynamiczny – funkcjonujący na poziomie dwóch stanów. Stan abstrakcyjny charakteryzował się wizualizacją prezentowaną na otaczających widza ekranach, przedstawiającą formy geometryczne, które w sposób płynny przesuwają się przy akompaniamencie muzyki ambientowej. Ten stan miał dać szansę zwiedzającym na poddanie się kontemplacji wynikającej z nastroju stworzonego przez plastyczny projekt zbudowany z danych związanych z artystkami. Stan interaktywny natomiast charakteryzował się współuczestnictwem widzów w projekcie. Zainstalowane w pracy Ix Shell czujniki rejestrowały ruchy widzów znajdujących się w przestrzeni projektu, a następnie odzwierciedlały je w wizualizacjach reprezentujących podróże bohaterek. W ten

sposób zwiedzający mógł współuczestniczyć w wędrówce artystek i stać się częścią projektu. Konstrukcja przestrzeni wystawy pozwalała na uczestnictwo w nim zarówno jako element wprowadzający, przed zapoznaniem się z pracami artystek, jak i element zamykający, który mógł stanowić podsumowanie wcześniejszej wędrówki w przestrzeni wystawowej.

Innym, równie ciekawym projektem było stworzenie chatbota. W specjalnie przygotowanej sali odwiedzający mogli zadawać pytania chatbotowi reprezentującemu rzeźbiarkę Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen. Możliwe odpowiedzi zostały zaprojektowane na podstawie listów i pamiętników artystki, a także dokumentów oraz współczesnych prac naukowych. Projekt chatbota miał wskazać możliwość nawiązania ponownego, bezpośredniego kontaktu z artystką, której życie i twórczość zostały opisane i zinterpretowane, a sposób odczytania jej sztuki ustalony przez tradycyjną narrację. Pojawia się tu jednak pytanie, do jakiego stopnia został dopracowany zakres danych i czy algorytmy chatbota nie są jedynie iluzją możliwości nawiązania kontaktu, a nie kontaktem bezpośrednim. Równie istotną wątpliwość budzi kwestia kosztu energetycznego takiego projektu w kontekście proekologicznej polityki Muzeum.

Konstrukcja przestrzeni wystawy nawiązująca do metafory kłacza nie wykluczała – jak wcześniej wspomniałem – pozostałości tradycyjnej formy wystawienia. Mimo braku silnego podziału na wydzielone sale wystawowe przestrzeń i wypełniające je dzieła artystek nordyckich przełomu XIX i XX wieku podporządkowano określonym tematom, wskazując na nowatorstwo w sposobie ujęcia tradycyjnych tematów.

Jednym z takich motywów tematycznych były obrazy kobiet – tuż po wejściu na wystawę zwiedzający mieli możliwość zetknięcia się z portretami kobiet stworzonymi przez twórczynie. Warto zauważyć, że opracowanie kuratorskie nakierowało odbiorców na nowe możliwości interpretacyjne, co wiąże się z kierunkiem wystawy zdefiniowanym w jej tytule. Przykładem realizacji klasycznego motywu oddającego nowe spojrzenie na tradycyjny temat malarski był między innymi portret autorstwa szwedzkiej malarki Hanny Hirsch-Pauli zatytułowany *Venny Soldan-Brofeldt* (1886–1887). Hanna Hirsch-Pauli w latach 1885–1887 studiowała w Paryżu w Académie Colarossi, jednej z najważniejszych pracowni, w której przebywało w tamtym czasie wiele artystek nordyckich. Obraz przedstawia przyjaciółkę szwedzkiej artystki, Venny Soldan-Brofeldt, w ich wspólnym paryskim studio. Kobieta zaprezentowana została w czarnym ubraniu, siedząc na podłodze w pozie lekko skręconej, nadającej tej postaci charakter dynamiczny. Jej dłonie są brudne od gliny, a twarz skierowana w stronę odbiorcy, malarza. Półotwarte usta oraz gesty wskazują jednoznacznie na bliski kontakt między artystką a jej modelką, wzmacniają także intymność sytuacji. Otaczająca przestrzeń jest niezwykle ascetyczna, surowa, widzimy fragmenty zamalowanego płótna na podłodze, a w tle rzeźbę. Z jednej strony obraz wpisuje się w tradycyjny temat dyskusji dotyczącej hierarchii sztuk – malarstwa i rzeźby, z drugiej strony jednak – dynamiczne ukazanie postaci,

bliski kontakt modelki z malarką oraz surowa przestrzeń stanowią silne akcenty wzmacniające głos w dyskusji dotyczącej ówczesnej roli i kobiet, i istoty sztuki. Sztuka, akt twórczy pozbawione zostają aspektu wzniosłości, idealizmu – to praca, a kobieta wpisana w tę przestrzeń staje się twórczynią, aktywną, pozbawianą tradycyjnej formy delikatności. W podobny do pewnego stopnia sposób postać kobiety przedstawiła na swoim obrazie *Madam Anna Seekamp, the Artist's Sister* (1882) artystka Bertha Wegmann. Ta duńska malarka poprzez zestawienie ciemnych barw tła i równie ciemnych i ciężkich mebli z rozświetlonym kłębkim włóczki i fragmentem pracy na kolanach modelki nadaje zwykłej czynności – oddanej w sposób niezwykle realistyczny – ulotny, efemeryczny charakter. Warto dodać, że rozświetlenie pojawia się także na twarzy modelki, która wpatruje się bezpośrednio w widza (autora portretu), ponownie tworząc przestrzeń intymnej relacji.

W przestrzeni wystawowej zatytułowanej „Paris” prezentowane prace wskazywały na nowe perspektywy stosowane w malarstwie przez kobiety-artystki. Doskonałym przykładem była między innymi prezentowana na wystawie praca Evy Bonnier *Interior of a Studio in Paris* (1886). Obraz przedstawia wnętrze pracowni artystycznej – a konkretnie wnętrze paryskiej pracowni samej Evy Bonnier – a w jego centralnym punkcie zaprezentowane jest rzeźbiarskie dzieło przedstawiające głowę młodego chłopca. Lekko przechylona głowa, półdługie włosy opadające na uszy, zamknięte oczy i mocno zarysowane wargi oddają emocje zamyślonego młodzieńca. Jednak najistotniejszym elementem tego obrazu jest światło – padające z ukosa promienie światła słonecznego, dostające się do zamkniętej przestrzeni pracowni z otwartego świata natury, nadają rzeźbie lekkości. Diagonalne układy promieni dynamizują materię, odrealniają rzeźbę i jednocześnie stanowią narzędzie połączenia trzech płaszczyzn – materialnej rzeźby, ujętej w ramy malarstwa przez światło, wpisujące popiersie chłopca w wymiar ponadmaterialny. Światło jako nowy wymiar malarstwa jest też tematem obrazu Helene Schjerfbeck *Still Life with Onions* (1885). Trzy cebule znajdujące się w centralnej części pola obrazowego zostały przedstawione za pomocą podstawowych barw brązu i ochry. Jednak zastosowanie szerokiej gamy odcieni od pełnego, ciemnego brązu przez jego jaśniejsze odmiany po tony złote połączone z bladymi różem i zielenią powodują, że tekstura powierzchni staje się niezwykle lekka i przezroczysta – co nadaje prezentowanym przedmiotom wymiar ponadmaterialny. Tematem stają się więc nie tyle cebule, ile światło i jego rola w wydobywaniu aspektów niematerialności.

Kwestia światła była również ważna w sekcji „Summer In The North”. Doskonałym przykładem reprezentacji krajobrazu przez kobiety był prezentowany na wystawie obraz Kitty Lange Kielland zatytułowany *Evening Landscape at Stokkavannet* (1890). Kielland podczas pobytu w Paryżu zainspirowała się między innymi twórczością Pierre'a Puvisa de Chavannes'a. Praca przedstawia wieczorny krajobraz. W dolnym rogu widać część łodzi, na której dziobie siedzi mężczyzna. Zastosowana kompozycja półotwarta nadaje prezentowanej na obrazie sytuacji lekkiego ruchu. Postać oraz łódź ukazane są w sposób uproszczony – detale nie są widoczne, jednak

opuszczona głowa mężczyzny, odłożone wiosła i opuszczone na kolana ręce nie tylko spowalniają ruch, ale i nadają zatrzymanemu w czasie momentowi charakter niezwykle. Całość pola obrazowego skonstruowana zostaje pomiędzy uproszczoną formą postaci a dokładną reprezentacją nieba i wybrzeża. Kontrast budowany jest także na poziomie barw – prawa, ciemna część zderzona zostaje z lewą, rozświetloną przez zapadające za wzgórzami słońce. I to właśnie blask słońca stonowany przez ciemność gór, a w szczególności odbicie tego blasku w niezwykle spokojnej toni jeziora, nadaje całości sceny charakter kontemplacyjny, wręcz metafizyczny.

Dwoistość znaczeniowa uzyskana przez stosowanie barw i światła ujawnia się także w dziełach pochodzącej z Finlandii Ellen Thesleff. Jej paryskie doświadczenia przyczyniły się nie tylko do specyficznego użycia koloru, ale także do tworzenia obrazów operujących napięciem pomiędzy konkretnym a symbolicznym. Doskonałym przykładem takiej realizacji jest obraz *Thyra Elisabeth* (1892). Portret przedstawia młodą dziewczynę na tle niezwykle ascetycznego, surowego tła w barwie ochry. Tło – zaczynając od głowy bohaterki – stopniowo ciemnieje, a widoczne pociągnięcia pędzlem układają się wokół postaci w formę aureoli, nadając jej charakteru sakralnego. Warto jednak zauważyć, że sama postać dziewczyny bliższa jest jednak reprezentacji młodej kobiety. Całość utrzymana jest w formie monochromatycznej, długie brązowe włosy opadają spokojnie na ramiona, na których układają się szeroko, tworząc formę peleryny. Tułów zarysowany jest w sposób niezwykle uproszczony, ale właśnie ta rama układu włosów połączona ze złotym tłem akcentuje główny punkt obrazu – twarz dziewczyny. Jej zamknięte oczy oraz wyraźnie zarysowane zmysłowe usta łączą w tej postaci elementy duchowe i cielesne, co wraz z lekko niedbałą postawą (jej ramię opiera się o poręcz) buduje atmosferę tajemniczości i niedostępności. Postać, jej zmysłowość, jednoznacznie wpisuje bohaterkę tego obrazu w typowy dla tamtego okresu motyw *femme fatale*, przypomina także *Madonnę* Muncha. Niejednoznaczność reprezentacji wzmocniona zostaje przez kwiat, który bohaterka trzyma w ręku, a właściwie bawi się nim, na co wskazuje układ jej palców. Łączenie dwóch światów i wieloznaczność reprezentacji ujawnia się także w innym dziele fińskiej artystki zatytułowanym *Echo* (1891). Obraz można wpisać w tradycję narodowego romantyzmu. Bohaterką jest kobieta z ludu, która została ukazana na tle bliskiego człowiekowi świata natury. Pole obrazowe zestawione zostało na zasadzie kontrastu między ciemną zielenią natury a jasną częścią nieba. Postać dziewczyny łączy obie przestrzenie – jej białe ubranie idealizuje ją i jednocześnie wprowadza nastrój sielankowy. Jednak obraz wyłamuje się z ogólnych tendencji tego okresu. Tu najistotniejszy jest krzyk. Lekko odchylona głowa dziewczyny i otwarte usta powodują, że dźwięk wypełnia płaszczyznę obrazu, nadając całości wymiar niejednoznaczny – radości, wytchnienia, bólu?

Nowe sposoby myślenia o sztuce oddawała także zaprezentowana na wystawie rzeźba *Typhon* (1903–1905) Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen. Autorka w 1903 roku odbyła podróż do Aten, gdzie kopiując klasyczne rzeźby, zwróciła uwagę na fakt, że antyczne dzieła, które przez długi czas nie tylko stanowiły wzorzec do naśladowania, ale

były również formą paradygmatu rozumienia kultury antycznej – interpretowanej jako harmonijna, symetryczna, wzniosła, także przez swoją monumentalną biel – w rzeczywistości były barwne. Bogata kolorystyka, nasycone barwy przyczyniały się do innego spojrzenia na myśl antyczną. Sztuka przestała być jedynie racjonalna – w duchu Platona przybliżająca do niezmiennych Idei – wielobarwność wskazywała na zainteresowanie Greków różnorodnością i sensualnością otaczającego świata.

Kuratorka wystawy, Emilie Boe Bierlich, w eseju otwierającym katalog podkreśla, że prezentacja prac 24 artystek ma stanowić punkt wyjścia do reinterpretacji miejsca tych kobiet w przestrzeni historii sztuki. Bierlich akcentuje, że istotnym elementem ma być aktywne przemyślenie roli kobiet, a nie tylko prezentacja prac zapomnianych artystek. Dlatego też, według założeń twórców, prezentacja nowych form – ujęcie postaci kobiet, użycie światła, reinterpretacja paradygmatu klasycznego, wprowadzanie nowych kontekstów (sztuka japońska) – stanowi jedynie część projektu, którego równie ważnym elementem miała być sztuka współczesna i użycie przez nią cyfrowych narzędzi pozwalających na reinterpretację roli artystek i próbę ponownego ich zrozumienia. Kuratorka używa kategorii „ec/centric”, która wskazuje na odmiennność i jednocześnie (w kontekście geometrycznym) podkreśla istnienie poza punktem centralnym wobec osi. Innymi słowy dotyczy tego, co na krawędzi, na granicy w stosunku do głównego punktu odniesienia. Wystawa w sposób przemyślany realizowała próbę nie tylko przywrócenia, ale i ponownego odczytania relacji artystek, między innymi wskazując bogactwo wzajemnych powiązań. Niezwykle interesujące wydaje się użycie cyfrowych form artystycznego wyrazu, jednak kwestia wyników nowych odczytań dzięki narzędziom powiązanim z AI rodzi szereg wątpliwości dotyczących zakresu wprowadzonych danych i – co równie ważne – etycznych aspektów związanych z zużyciem energii przy realizacji takiego projektu. Wartością wystawy była na pewno kreacja przestrzeni wystawieniowej, pozwalająca na dokonywanie różnych form wędrówki. Błądzenie w niej, spacer, nawroty umożliwiały wielorakie doświadczanie zebranych dzieł. Istotnym elementem były także same dzieła – ich unikalny charakter podkreślony przez układ kompozycyjny wystawy. Projekt *Against All Odds – Historical Women and New Algorithms* stanowił pewną próbę dla odbiorcy, który zmuszony do dokonywania wyborów i zderzany z różnymi formami stawał przed wyzwaniem przekraczania także swoich utrwalonych schematów poznawczych.

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Hertervig – Hill. Dream and Reality
[*Hertervig – Hill. Sen i rzeczywistość*].

Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde, Sztokholm, Szwecja,

21 września 2024 – 26 stycznia 2025,

Stavanger Art Museum, Stavanger, Norwegia,

21 lutego – 18 maja 2025

Dzieliła ich różnica dziewiętnastu lat. Należeli do odmiennych pokoleń artystów. Lars Hertervig reprezentował tendencje późnego romantyzmu, jego technika została ukształtowana przez założenia szkoły w Düsseldorfie. Malarstwo Carla Fredrika Hilla natomiast wyrasta z tradycji realistycznej, ale w dużej mierze zostało ukształtowane przez nowe szkoły artystyczne Paryża, szkołę z Barbizon oraz malarstwo impresjonistyczne. Artyści nigdy się nie spotkali bezpośrednio. Obu łączy jednak dramatyczna biografia, obaj po przeżyciu załamania nerwowego izolowali się od świata, tworzyli w osobistej przestrzeni, obaj również wyszli od malarstwa krajobrazowego do malarstwa duszy – ujawniania za pomocą obrazów natury stanów wewnętrznych. Ich forma malarska od precyzyjnego studium otaczającej rzeczywistości przeszła do kształtowania przestrzeni malarskiej w sposób bardziej zindywidualizowany. Prace obu malarzy zawierają pierwiastki późniejszych tendencji artystycznych – niepokojącego symbolizmu, surrealistycznych projekcji podświadomości czy też ekspresjonistycznych wyrazów stanów wewnętrznych. Choroba, izolując ich od świata, jednocześnie stała się przestrzenią wyrazu artystycznego wykraczającego poza współczesne obu artystom tendencje i konwencje artystyczne, pozwalając na bezpośrednie wyrażanie siebie.

Głównym celem wystawy, na której przedstawiono szeroki zakres prac obu artystów, było przybliżenie twórczości norweskiego artysty (Herterviga) publiczności szwedzkiej oraz ukazanie twórczości malarza szwedzkiego (Hilla) widzowi norweskiej. Oprócz pierwiastka poznawczego ważnym elementem wystawy była także dokonana przez kuratorów próba zestawienia prac obu artystów w celu ukazania dialogicznego charakteru ich twórczości, podkreślającego podobieństwa w odbiorze świata i przekształceniach form artystycznych do oddania subiektywnych stanów wewnętrznych. Istotną rolę wystawy było także ukazanie ich twórczości w szerokim kontekście relacji człowieka z naturą, która stanowi jeden z ważniejszych aspektów współtworzących mentalność nordycką.

Lars Hertervig urodził się w biednej rodzinie zajmującej się rolnictwem. Jego wczesne życie związane było w sposób bezpośredni z otaczającą go naturą gminy Tysvær na zachodnim wybrzeżu Norwegii, na północ od Stavanger. Dzika przyroda, fiordy, monumentalne góry kształtowały w młodym malarzu specyficzny dla kultury ludowej stosunek do świata natury. Z jednej strony przyroda jawiła się jako przestrzeń pracy, walki, przestrzeń, którą należy znać, rozumieć i odczytywać

w odpowiedni sposób pozwalający na przetrwanie, z drugiej natomiast – tajemnicza i monumentalna – odczuwana była jako element baśniowy, metafizyczny. Warto podkreślić, że rodzina Herterviga była związana z ruchem kwakrów, który definiował w sposób specyficzny z perspektywy protestantyzmu relacje między człowiekiem a Bogiem. Ruch ten w istotny sposób podkreślał indywidualny i emocjonalny charakter relacji z transcendencją. Nie tylko Biblia stanowiła fundament wiary, ale i wewnętrzne światło pochodzące bezpośrednio od Boga. Istotne było też świadectwo tej relacji ujawniające się w prawdzie, prostocie i skromności, wyrażane w stosunku zarówno do drugiego człowieka, jak i do świata natury. Sam Hertervig w 1853 roku słuchał kazań Jamesa Backhouse’a oraz Lindleya M. Hoaga, którzy odrzucali sztukę jako przejaw bogactwa, akcentowali jednak rolę obserwacji natury, studiowania jej w celu zrozumienia Boga i kształtowania wartości pokory. Niezwykle istotnym elementem w biografii Herterviga był jego wyjazd do Düsseldorfu, gdzie podjął studia na tamtejszej Akademii Sztuk Pięknych. Wykładał tam między innymi Hans Gude, który w pewnym sensie ukształtował elementy techniki malarskiej. Gude i inni profesorowie tej uczelni odrzucali sztywne ramy akademizmu. Inspirowali się między innymi myślą i twórczością związanego z Dreznem Carla Gustava Carusa. Przewartościli tradycyjny system motywów malarskich, wyznaczając malarstwu krajobrazowemu istotną rolę. Uważali, że źródłem tej twórczości ma być dokładna, bezpośrednia obserwacja otaczającego świata przyrody, bliska analizie naukowej (warto dodać, że Carus był malarzem, a także lekarzem). Jednocześnie natura miała być prezentowana przez pryzmat przeżycia indywidualnego, emocjonalnego – jej obraz miał stanowić reprezentację stanów wewnętrznych kontemplującego. Istotnym elementem takiego spojrzenia na rozumienie natury stały się techniki malarskie. Gude zalecał stosowanie kompozycji horyzontalnych, zaznaczanie tekstury świata materialnego (kamienia, drzewa, skały), użycie światła podkreślającego zmienność oraz dynamikę scen centralnych w kontekście rozbudowanego krajobrazu nieba (z dynamicznymi, przekształcającymi się chmurami). Wszystkie te aspekty można było odnaleźć w zaprezentowanych na wystawie pracach Herterviga. Typowym przykładem takiej realizacji jest między innymi praca *Fra Skånevik* (1854). Krajobraz przedstawiony został w polu obrazowym o kształcie podłużnego prostokąta. Kolejne, horyzontalnie ułożone linie równiny, ciemne plamy jeziora, za którym pojawiają się bardziej zdynamizowane grupy drzew, zamknięte zostają ciemnymi pasami wzgórz. Całość dopełnia obraz nieba, w dolnej części szaroniebieskiego, w górnej błękitnego, przedzielonego dynamicznym – ale nadal horyzontalnym – układem obłoków uplastycznionym przez zastosowanie światłocienia. Choć źródło światła nie jest widoczne, z układu elementów można wnioskować, że jest to rozproszone światło słoneczne. Przestrzeń jawi się jako surowa, monumentalna, obserwator – znajdujący się przed obrazem – nie tylko dostrzega poszczególne elementy świata natury, ale jednocześnie odczuwa nastrój melancholijny, kontemplacyjny, Natura prezentuje się jako siła potężna, poruszająca wewnątrz obserwatora. Podobne elementy można

zaobserwować na płótnie *Widok ze Skånevik* [*Utsikt fra Skånevik*] (1854). Tu jednak układ kompozycyjny zostaje silniej zdynamizowany przez zastosowanie elementów diagonalnych. Linia od lewej części płótna wraz z układem terenu stopniowo obniża się, sięgając tafli wody, która przez zastosowanie białej barwy rozświetla błękit powierzchni. Linia terenu zostaje jednak zaburzona przez ukośne (przeciwstawne do opadającej linii terenu) zgrupowanie skalne, wzmocnione przez cienie i szczegóły struktury minerału. Nastrój niepokoju jest spotęgowany układem ciemnych obłoków zakrywających słońce. Na obrazie *Stare drzewa sosnowe* (1865) napięcie jest jeszcze silniejsze. Tu pole obrazowe zbliżone jest do kwadratu. Napięcie jest budowane przez kontrastowe zestawienie błękitu nieba z ciemnym obrazem lasu. Szczegółowo zaprezentowane na pierwszym planie drzewa ukazane są w sposób niezwykle dynamiczny – pnie obu drzew lekko odchylają się w przeciwnych kierunkach, a korony z pogmatwanym, połamany układem konarów wzmacniają dramatyzm sceny. Obraz *Borgøya* (1867) wydaje się zdecydowanie spokojniejszy – tu układ kompozycyjny jest zdominowany przez zimną, szarą i błękitną barwę tafli wody oraz nieba, linia rozgraniczająca obie przestrzenie zostaje zamglona przez kłębiące się na pograniczu świata wody i nieba obłoki. Przenikanie się obu światów podkreślone zostaje przez majestatyczny obraz masywu skalnego, który traci swoją materialność w plastycznie ukazanym układzie chmur.

Pobyt Herterviga w Düsseldorfie nie był jedynie szkołą malarstwa, nauką percepcji natury, warsztatem stosowania technik malarskich pozwalających na oddanie złożonego charakteru przyrody. Dla Herterviga pobyt w tym mieście wiązał się z przeżyciem sytuacji traumatycznej, będącej konsekwencją zachowania wobec niego innych malarzy. Jeden wieczór stał się początkiem stopniowego dystansowania się malarza wobec świata zewnętrznego, załamania nerwowego, które przyczyniło się do całkowitego wycofania się Herterviga z życia. Ostatnie trzydzieści lat malarza to nieustanne zmaganie się z problemami finansowymi i zdrowotnymi, samotność, pobyt w zakładzie dla umysłowo chorych oraz w przytułku dla ubogich. Hertervig nie przestał jednak tworzyć. Nie mógł już ze względów finansowych skupić się na malarstwie olejnym, dlatego też tworzył akwarele oraz gwasz, często na papierze, do wykonania którego wykorzystywał bawełnę czy też len (co ze względu na strukturę nadało jego pracom charakterystycznego wyrazu). Jego początkowe rysunki i akwarele miały charakter projektów do planowanych obrazów olejnych, nigdy jednak nie zostały one zrealizowane. I to właśnie w tych pracach silniej odzwierciedlone zostały niepokoje malarza. Pociągnięcia pędzlem stają się szerokie, gama barwna ograniczona (szarość, błękit), elementy niepewności silniejsze. Na przykład w pracy *Jeździec przed frontem drzew* (1872) w monochromatycznym obrazie natury reprezentowanym przez niezróżnicowaną ścianę drzew pojawia się postać pochylonego jeźdźcy. Postać zarysowana jest schematycznie, właściwie jest całkowicie anonimowa. Jawi się też jako samotna, lekko pochylona (może melancholijna) wobec tajemniczej ściany drzew. Obraz buduje napięcie między tymi dwoma światami, pojawia się tajemnica i silnie zarysowany aspekt

samotności. Jeszcze inaczej siła natury jest oddana w pracy *Krajobraz ze słońcem*, w której dynamika budowana jest przez ostre promienie słońca. W kolejnej – *Krajobraz nabrzeża z kamieniem* – materialność bryły uzyskana zostaje przez mocny zarys krawędzi oraz zastosowanie układu kompozycyjnego, w którym skała bezpośrednio maluje się przed oczami widza. We wszystkich tych pracach dominuje nastrój melancholii, silnie podkreślona jest tajemniczość natury, a ludzki bohater często wydaje się samotny i przygnębiony.

Biografia Carla Fredrika Hilla z pozoru rozpoczyna się inaczej. Hill należał do klasy średniej, wychował się w Lund, mieście uniwersyteckim, a jego ojciec był profesorem matematyki, który początkowo sprzeciwiał się studiom artystycznym syna i starał się, aby ten skupiał się na studiach z estetyki. Jednak już wycieczki młodego artysty w okolicach Lund i fascynacja otaczającym krajobrazem (wybrzeżem, drzewami, a także głazami) połączone z próbami oddania wrażeń z tych wędrówek na płótnie tworzą element wspólny z historią malarza z okolic Stavan-ger. Hill rozpoczął swoją edukację artystyczną na Królewskiej Akademii Sztuk Pięknych w Sztokholmie. Tam poznał techniki zastosowania perspektywy oraz światła, doskonalił swój warsztat, kopiując znajdujące się w Muzeum Narodowym w Sztokholmie dzieła Rembrandta i van Ruisdaela. Po dwóch latach studiów udał się do Paryża, a podróż ta stała się doznaniem formatywnym dla malarza z Lund. Szwedzki artysta pojawił się we Francji po wystawieniu obrazu Moneta *Impresja, wschód słońca* – dzieła, które stało się w pewnym stopniu punktem zwrotnym w sposobie prezentacji natury. Nie tyle szczegół i reprezentacja świata, ile nastrój, chwilowość, zmienność stały się ważne dla młodych malarzy (krytykowanych przez członków Akademii). Rezygnacja z konturu, codzienność, perspektywa barwna, kompozycja otwarta, dywizjonizm, wykorzystanie struktury farby i płótna stały się nowymi technikami; wędrówkę artysty, bezpośrednią obserwację rzeczywistości rozumiano jako nowy model pracy artystycznej. Tak jak dla Herterviga szkołą malarstwa był Düsseldorf, tak dla Hilla Paryż, a właściwie Barbizon. Artyści związani z tą szkołą artystyczną położoną w okolicach lasu Fontainebleau kładli nacisk na malowanie natury w sposób bezpośredni. To właśnie wędrówka po okolicznych lasach i obserwacja życia codziennego miały być źródłem aktywności twórczej. Krajobraz, rzeczywistość miały być oddane bezpośrednio, bez idealizacji – odrzucano tradycję sielanki. Barbizończycy zafascynowani byli światłem, starali się oddać jego migotliwość, zmienność, używali ograniczonej palety barw ziemistych. Krajobraz stał się intymny. Hill został częścią tej artystycznej kolonii, wędrował wśród drzew lasu Fontainebleau, spacerował wzdłuż wybrzeża Atlantyku. Jednak na jego płótnach pojawia się pewien element tajemnicy. Na obrazie zatytułowanym *Jesień* (1876–1877) krajobraz jest niezwykle surowy. Praca przedstawia mały wycinek krajobrazu, wiejską drogę lekko zakręcającą w lewą stronę i ukrywającą się za szpalerem smukłych drzew tworzących wręcz pionową ścianę. Monochromatyczne barwy, obniżona linia horyzontu wzmacniają poczucie pustki (niebo jest jednolite, sine i – co ważniejsze – puste). Po drugiej stronie drogi znajduje się pojedyncze, niższe

drzewo, jego pień jest wygięty, a konary niezwykle zdynamizowane. W dolnej części obrazu, tuż pod samotnym drzewem, można zauważyć postać kobiety odwróconej do nas plecami, podpierającej się kijem. *Jesień* przestaje być jedynie realistycznym oddaniem natury, silniej zaakcentowany jest nastrój smutku, melancholii, a postać wędrującej kobiety wprowadza element tajemniczości, niedookreślenia – typowy dla późniejszego malarstwa symbolicznego. Podobnie skomponowany jest obraz zatytułowany *Droga do Paryża* (1875). Płótno jest zdominowane przez ciemną plamę ściany lasu, którą przecina poprowadzona diagonalnie gruntowa droga. W dolnej części dwie niezwykle małe postaci rozmawiają – na co wskazuje układ ich ciał – nie wiemy jednak, co jest tematem ich rozmowy. Ponownie nad odzwierciedleniem świata dominuje atmosfera nieokreśloności. Obraz *Kwitnąca jabłoń* (1877) pokazuje zainteresowanie Hilla światłem, sposobem jego oddania oraz wpływem na tworzenie nastroju. Praca prezentuje w punkcie centralnym potężną jabłoń, biel jej kwiatów mocno kontrastuje z monochromatycznym tłem utrzymanym w typowych dla tej szkoły barwach ziemi. Ale to właśnie korona jabłoni i sposób użycia barwy, zastosowanie plamy oddają migotliwość światła, nadającą jabłoni charakter niezwykłości. Nastrojowość uzyskana dzięki operowaniu światłem to temat obrazu *Światło księżyca i wysoka sosna* (1875). Kryjący się wśród ciemnych drzew księżyc i jego – typowa dla nokturnu – świetlistość wpisują się w romantyczne postrzeganie natury, akcentujące panteistyczny charakter przyrody. Jeszcze bardziej tajemniczy charakter i niejasność prezentowanej sytuacji znaleźć można na obrazie *Wrzosowisko z powozem* (1878). Obniżona linia horyzontu, dominacja barw zimnych tworzą nieprzyjemną w odbiorze płaszczyznę. Jedynym punktem jest nikły powóz zagubiony w tej pustej przestrzeni, którego punktowe światło sugeruje stopniowe oddalanie, zanikanie. Z czasem płótna Hilla stały się krajobrazami intymnymi, oddaniem stanu ducha, nieokreślonego nastroju. Rok 1878 był punktem zwrotnym. Hill przeszedł wtedy załamanie nerwowe. Przyjaciele oddali go do kliniki w Paryżu, następnie był leczony w Roskilde, a ostatecznie trafił do Lund, najpierw do kliniki, a później pod opiekę rodziny. Nie przestał jednak tworzyć. W jego twórczości zaczął dominować rysunek. Pracował bardzo kompulsywnie, miał halucynacje, jego prace stały się wyrazem wewnętrznych stanów napięć, odzwierciedlały walkę artysty z demonami, wyłaniały się zapamiętane, przetworzone obrazy. Technika jest bliższa ekspresjonizmowi, wyznacznikami tej twórczości są mocna kreska, silna deformacja, zaburzona proporcja. Nastrojowość i niejednoznaczność wpisują się w obrazowanie romantyczne, jednak alogiczność zbliża do obrazowania onirycznego. Świat jawi się jako rozpad, co oddane zostaje przez chaotyczną kompozycję. Niekreślone lęki zobrazowane są za pomocą zdeformowanych postaci. Sztuka staje się krzykiem, walką. Oddaje to, co ukryte, do czego sięgać będzie później Freud i surrealizm.

Wartością wystawy – oprócz samej możliwości zapoznania się z prezentowanymi dziełami obu artystów – była kompozycja, która pozwoliła przyjrzeć się twórczości Herterviga i Hilla z różnych punktów widzenia. Układ umożliwiał chronologiczne przesłedzenie ewolucji twórczej obu artystów, ukazując jednocześnie te procesy

równolegle. Inną możliwością interpretacyjną była płaszczyzna biograficzna, pozwalająca na analizę wpływu wydarzeń z życia artystów na ich dzieła. Sposób prezentacji dzieł pozwalał także na próbę interpretacji przemian technik artystycznych w kontekście zjawisk zachodzących w czasach twórczości obu malarzy. Jeszcze inną perspektywę stanowi próba wpisania twórczości Herterviga i Hilla w szeroki kontekst malarstwa duszy, mający swoje korzenie już w twórczości Goi i Blake'a. I wreszcie można było również odczytać tę wystawę jako zapowiedź nowych form reprezentacji w sztuce. Warto jednak zwrócić uwagę na jeszcze jedną możliwość interpretacji tej wystawy – jako próby zwrócenia uwagi na szaleństwo i alienację. Szaleństwo, które z jednej strony – jak pisze Foucault – nie jest czymś obiektywnym, a jedynie konstruktem społecznym definiowanym przez władzę w celu podporządkowania sobie jednostek, z drugiej natomiast – to stan pozwalający na wyjście poza konwencje i formy myślenia definiujące sposób postrzegania rzeczywistości. Można też było odczytać przedstawione prace jako odzwierciedlenie alienacji jako kondycji człowieka w świecie – izolacji wynikającej z niemożności bycia zrozumianym.

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PRZEKŁAD

Pippi Pończoszanka powraca. Osiemdziesiąte urodziny najsilniejszej dziewczynki wszech czasów

Pippi to ikoniczna postać literatury dziecięcej, bohaterka nieszablonowa, która pokruszyła paradygmaty i wymknęła się z genderowego szablonu. Stała się wyzwaniem dla norm społecznych, norm tradycyjnego dobrego wychowania, norm posługiwania się językiem. Rok 1945, w którym ukazał się pierwszy tom słynnej trylogii Astrid Lindgren, uznawany jest symbolicznie za początek nowej, szwedzkiej literatury dla dzieci.

Pippi, choć z początku w oczach wielu dorosłych czytelników była dość kontrowersyjna, to z czasem stała się nie tylko ulubienicą najmłodszych, ale też obiektem tak wielu naukowych eksploracji, że można pokusić się o wyodrębnienie niszy badawczej i nazwanie jej „pippilogią”. Obejmuje ona omówienia monograficzne oraz niezliczone artykuły i rozdziały podejmujące zagadnienia osadzające rudowłosą bohaterkę w kontekście historycznym, intertekstualnym, biograficznym, genderowym czy edukacyjnym.

W osiemdziesiąte urodziny tej nietypowej dziewięciolatki chcemy zwrócić uwagę na jeden z kluczowych aspektów jej charakterystyki – siłę. Pippi jest uosobieniem marzeń dzieci o wolności i niezależności w dużej mierze dzięki owej nadnaturalnej sile, którą podkreśliła sama Lindgren. W liście do wydawnictwa Bonnier, który załączyła do maszynopisu książki, pisała: „Pippi Pończoszanka jest, jak Państwo zauważą, jeśli zechcą sobie zadać trud, małym ‘Übermenschem’ w postaci dziecka, wprowadzonym w zwyczajne środowisko. Dzięki swym nienaturalnym siłom i innym okolicznościom Pippi jest całkowicie nietypalna dla wszystkich dorosłych i żyje sobie akurat tak, jak jej się podoba” (Strömstedt 2000: 2015).

Studentki trzeciego roku gdańskiej skandynawistyki i członkinie Naukowego Koła Tłumaczy Literatur Nordyckich, Oliwia Kibitlewska oraz Jagoda Koszałka, wybrały i przełożyły tekst naukowy autorstwa szwedzkiej badaczki Katariny Eriksson Barajas¹ analizujący różne funkcje siły Pippi, uznając go za ważny i aktualny. Wynikami swojej pracy dzielą się poniżej.

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¹ Dziękujemy Katarinie Eriksson Barajas za udostępnienie praw autorskich.

Czy tata Pippi był Kanadyjczykiem? Siła jako motyw przewodni w trylogii Astrid Lindgren o Pippi Pończoszance²

Powszechnie wiadomo, że Pippi Pończoszanka jest najsilniejszą dziewczynką na świecie, ale co to oznacza z perspektywy literaturoznawczej? W trylogii Astrid Lindgren o Pończoszance jej nadzwyczajna siła fizyczna stanowi motyw przewodni całej opowieści. Siła ta jest wątkiem wplecionym w wiele przygód Pippi, który – stojąc w kontrze do tradycyjnego wyobrażenia, że przed okresem dojrzewania dziewczynka bez nadzoru dorosłych może być jedynie bardzo słabą i bezbronną istotą – spaja historię i przykuwa uwagę czytelnika, powracając i znajdując potwierdzenie w kolejnych rozdziałach.

Claes-Göran Holmberg i Anders Ohlsson (1999: 100) uważają, że pierwszym krokiem w badaniach „tego, co trzyma w całości epicki tekst, jest studium symboli, motywów przewodnich i wzorów alegorycznych” (tłum. O.K. i J.K.). Motyw przewodni opisują jako „powracający w tekście szczegół, który nadaje lekturze strukturę – taki jak przedmiot, sytuacja, myśl, wyrażenie językowe niosące emocje” (tłum. O.K. i J.K.) (Holmberg i Ohlsson 1999:16).

Peter Hallberg określa motyw przewodni jako „artystyczne powtórzenie konkretnych sytuacji, aluzji, wyrażeń lub cech muzycznych” (tłum. O.K. i J.K.) (Hallberg 2014: 225) i wskazuje na genezę tego pojęcia w muzyce operowej i orkiestrowej (2014: 38).

Poza tym, że siła działa jak spoiwo w historii, buduje też ważną część osobowości Pippi. Daje możliwość ukazania jej systemu wartości: nawet jak jest się najsilniejszym, trzeba być miłym i używać siły po to, aby walczyć przeciwko niesprawiedliwościom. To, jak istotna jest siła, widać już na pierwszych stronach pierwszej książki o Pippi. Czytamy tam, że to siła fizyczna dziewczynki jest jej najbardziej wyjątkową cechą. W dziewięciu z jedenastu rozdziałów w *Pippi Pończoszance* (Lindgren 1958a), w siedmiu z dziewięciu rozdziałów *Pippi wchodzi na pokład* (Lindgren 1958b) i w pięciu z jedenastu rozdziałów w *Pippi na Południowym Pacyfiku* (Lindgren 1960)³ wspomniana jest siła głównej bohaterki. Ta cecha występuje w sumie pięćdziesiąt razy – w opisach dziewczynki lub jako część wydarzenia. Czy pełni jednak jakieś funkcje w powieści?

Przejrzałam trzy tomy serii o Pippi i wyodrębniłam wszystkie fragmenty o sile. Analiza treści pod kątem tego motywu wykazała, że siła Pippi pełni w tekście trzy funkcje: 1) zwalcza niesprawiedliwości; 2) bawi przyjaciół i czytelników; 3) wiąże

² Tekst w oryginale ukazał się jako rozdział zatytułowany „Var Pippis pappa kanandensare? Styrkan som ledmotiv i Astrid Lindgren Långstrumptrilogi” (Eriksson Barajas 2015) w tomie *Nya läsningar av Astrid Lindgren författarskap*.

³ Książki te na rynku szwedzkim pojawiły się odpowiednio w latach: w 1945, 1946 i 1948 (od tłum.).

Pippi z tatą, który pomimo że jest najsilniejszym mężczyzną na świecie, to nie jest silniejszy od córki.

Już w pierwszych rozdziałach wszystkich trzech książek Pippi przedstawiana jest jako silna: w pierwszym rozdziale *Pippi Pończoszanki* (Lindgren 1958a) na siódmej stronie znajduje się ilustracja, na której dziewczynka podnosi konia. Na kolejnej stronie narrator wspomina, jak jeden z marynarzy kapitana Pończochy opisał dziewczynkę: „Pippi była bardzo dziwnym dzieckiem. A najbardziej zadziwiała jej siła. Była tak niezwykle silna, że na całym świecie nie znalazłoby się policjanta równie silnego jak ona. Mogła podnieść nawet konia, jeśli chciała” (Lindgren 1958a: 8).

W *Pippi wchodzi na pokład* to narrator wprowadza motyw siły bohaterki w swoich wyobrażeniach o tym, jak Pończoszanka podnosi konia (Lindgren 1958b: 11–12). We wstępnym rozdziale *Pippi na Południowym Pacyfiku* dziewczynka chroni Annikę i tym samym powstrzymuje dręczyciela: „Chwyciła eleganckiego pana wpół i kilka razy podrzuciła wysoko w powietrze” (Lindgren 1960: 15).

Funkcja siły a poczucie sprawiedliwości Pippi

Siła jest zatem jedną z cech charakterystycznych Pippi. Sposób, w jaki ją wykorzystuje, definiuje też jej osobowość – Pippi jest bardzo życzliwa. Staje w obronie swoich przyjaciół, Tommy’ego i Anniki, pomagając im zarówno w sytuacjach przemocy psychicznej ze strony prześladowców, jak i w obliczu fizycznych zagrożeń, takich jak rekiny. Ponadto Pippi pomaga też osobom, których nie zna: „po czym uniosła go na swych silnych ramionach wysoko w górę, podeszła do rosnącej w pobliżu brzozy i przewiesiła go przez gałąź” (Lindgren 1958a: 26).

Kiedy widzi nieznanego dziecko dręczone przez innych, natychmiast interweniuje. Używa siły, aby chronić słabszych i przeciwstawiać się niesprawiedliwościom. W efekcie sama jest zmuszona do złośliwości w stosunku do oprawcy. Wcześniejsze badania pokazują jednak, że dzieci mogą postrzegać dokuczanie prześladowcy jako „usprawiedliwioną” formę przemocy (por. Eriksson Barajas i Lindgren 2009).

Nie tylko pokrzywdzone dzieci są ratowane przez Pippi. Podczas wycieczki z klasą Tommy’ego i Anniki bohaterka zauważa mężczyznę o nazwisku Blomsterlund, który znęca się nad swoim koniem: „Pippi doskoczyła do Blomsterlunda, złapała go wpół i wyrzuciła wysoko w górę. Gdy upadł, znów go chwyciła i podrzuciła. Musiał odbyć tę powietrzną podróż cztery, pięć, sześć razy” (Lindgren 1958b: 55).

Pippi przejmuje opiekę nad koniem po tym, jak Blomsterlund dostaje nauczkę i zostawia zwierzę w spokoju – „I wzięwszy go w swe silne ramiona, zaniósła go do stajni” (Lindgren 1958b: 57). Wydaje się, że słowa wypowiedziane wówczas przez nauczycielkę są życiową dewizą Pippi: „Trzeba być dobrym dla zwierząt. I dla ludzi też, oczywiście” (Lindgren 1958b: 58).

Pippi pomaga przyjaciołom i nieznanym radzić sobie nie tylko z codziennymi niebezpieczeństwami, takimi jak dręczyciele czy pożary, ale także z bardziej nietypowymi zagrożeniami, jak tygrysy z menażerii czy rekiny z południowego Pacyfiku.

Historia o tym, jak Pippi ratuje samotną hrabinę Aurorę w sztuce teatralnej, wydaje się niemal metafikcyjnym zabiegiem. „– Ja na to nie pozwolę! – krzyknęła Pippi i jednym susem znalazła się na scenie. Wciąż płacząc, chwyciła łobuza wpół i rzuciła go na widownię” (Lindgren 1960: 74). Ta odsiecz jest przykładem, jak siła, będąca motywem przewodnim, jednocześnie pełni funkcję prezentowania poczucia sprawiedliwości Pippi i rozbawienia czytelnika.

Ulf Boëthius przeanalizował wykorzystanie skazu w książkach o Emilu (1998). Skaz to forma humoru wywodząca się z tradycji ustnej. Jest to opowieść, która imituje ustną wypowiedź, w której kluczowym elementem jest sposób mówienia, a nie fabuła. Narrator bawi czytelnika anegdotami i żartami językowymi, które mogą być fonetyczne, etymologiczne lub czysto absurdalne. Podobnie jak w niektórych sekwencjach w książkach o Emilu, tak i w trylogii o Pippi istnieje wątek śmiania się kosztem innych: czy fikcyjna bohaterka Pippi naprawdę nie rozumie, że Aurora jest fikcyjną bohaterką teatralną w fikcyjnej serii powieści o Pippi? Możliwe, że w tej scenie dojrzymy zwrot – za plecami dzieci – do dorosłego czytelnika.

Pippi używa też siły we własnej sprawie. To właśnie ta cecha sprawia, że może mieszkać sama. Bez niej dziewczynka nie mogłaby na dłuższą metę radzić sobie samodzielnie – zostałaby zabrana przez policję/opiekę społeczną, a złodzieje rozkradliby jej pieniądze. Dzięki sile Pippi może stawić czoła autorytetom: „Mówiąc to, chwyciła mocno obu policjantów za pasy, wyniosła ich za furtkę i posadziła na drodze” (Lindgren 1958a: 38).

Nawet w kłamstwach Pippi opowiada czasami o tym, jak używa siły, aby chronić siebie:

Nie wyobrażacie sobie, jaki to był wstrętny wąż – miał czternaście metrów długości i był zły jak osa, i co dzień zjadał pięciu Hindusów i dwoje małych dzieci na deser, i raz przyszedł i chciał mnie zjeść na deser, i okręcił się wokół mnie – trach! – ale pomyślałam: „Nieraz się bywało w gorszych tarapatach” – i trzasnęłam go po głowie – bum! – wtedy syknął – uiuiuiuiuczl! – a ja trzasnęłam go jeszcze raz – bum! – i – bach! – zdechł, ach, tak, więc to jest litera „w”, coś podobnego!... (Lindgren 1958a: 47).

Funkcja siły w bawieniu czytelnika

Jak wcześniej wspomniano, siła fizyczna Pippi oprócz oczywistych korzyści wynikających z bycia najsilniejszą dziewczynką na świecie pełni również funkcję czysto rozrywkową – dodając zarówno zabawne elementy w samej powieści, jak i bawiąc czytelnika. Gdy Pippi udaje się do cyrku z Tommym i Anniką, podejmuje wyzwanie dyrektora, by pokonać Adolfa Silnego.

- Ale i tak byś tego nie potrafiła! – zaprzeczyła Annika. – To przecież najsilniejszy mężczyzna na świecie.
- Mężczyzna, być może – odpowiedziała Pippi. – Ale ja jestem najsilniejszą dziewczynką na świecie, weź to pod uwagę! (Lindgren 1958a: 87).

Wy tłumaczenie Pippi stanowi wyraźnie feministyczne podejście, sformułowane w postaci błyskotliwej riposty. Jej upór, by sprzeciwić się wizji świata prezentowanej przez dyrektora cyrku – według której żadna kobieta, a tym bardziej dziewczynka, nie może być silniejsza od muskularnego mężczyzny – przywodzi na myśl to, jak kobiety, które łamią tradycyjne schematy, muszą stawiać czoła autorytetom podtrzymującym społeczną i patriarchalną strukturę wspieraną przez dominujące przekonania, że kobiety są słabsze od mężczyzn.

Karen Coats w swojej analizie klasyki literatury dziecięcej z perspektywy teorii Lacana na temat podmiotowości i pragnienia pisze, że „queerness positions her outside of a binary that would disempower her”⁴ (2004: 114). Pippi nie przejmuje się żadnymi pozornie oczywistymi hierarchiami zawartymi w opozycjach dziecko–dorosły oraz mężczyzna–kobieta, które zakładają, że dorosły mężczyzna będzie naturalnie silniejszy od dziewczynki. Poprzez to, że Pippi nie tylko łamie, ale całkowicie odrzuca obowiązujący porządek, dochodzi do dekonstrukcji władzy i relacji, które definiują i podtrzymują patriarchalną strukturę – zarówno w fikcyjnym świecie powieści, jak i w rzeczywistości czytelnika.

Istnieje długa tradycja postrzegania tekstów literackich jako potencjalnych przyczynków zmian politycznych. Valerie Walkerdine (1990) twierdzi, że obrazy przekazywane przez opowieści współtworzą rzeczywistość. Nie należy jednak oczekiwać, że opowieści ją zmieniają. Mogą one natomiast tworzyć przestrzenie, w których czytelnik rozpozna sytuacje ze swojego życia i będzie mógł utożsamić się z bohaterami. Przestrzenie te obecne w fikcji mogą odnosić się do społecznych i psychologicznych zmaganiań związanych z tożsamością czytelnika. I to one wprowadzają go w głąb tekstu⁵.

Funkcja siły w relacji Pippi z tatą

Pojedynek Pippi z Adolfem Silnym w cyrku stanowi zapowiedź konfrontacji sił z jej ojcem. Przez całą pierwszą książkę Pippi jest samotna. Czytelnik mógłby się zastanawiać, czy jej ojciec rzeczywiście istnieje. I nagle w siódmym rozdziale tomu *Pippi wchodzi na pokład* bohaterkę odwiedza niespodziewany gość. Jednym z pierwszych zdań, które wypowiada kapitan Efraim podczas spotkania z córką po roku rozłąki, jest: „Moja mała, jesteś zawsze tak samo silna?” (Lindgren 1958b: 112).

⁴ „dziwność Pippi pozycjonuje ją poza binarnością, która mogłaby pozbawić ją siły” (tłum. J.K.).

⁵ Szczegółowy opis w (Eriksson Barajas 2012: 69–70).

Na świecie był tylko jeden człowiek równie silny jak Pippi – jej tatuś. Zmierzyli się teraz z całych sił, ale żadnemu z nich nie udało się pokonać przeciwnika. W końcu ręka kapitana Pończochy zaczęła trochę drżeć, więc Pippi powiedziała:

– Zwycięzę cię, jak będę miała dziesięć lat, tatusiu Efraimie (Lindgren 1958b: 112–113).

Motyw przewodni siły Pippi uwidacznia się również w tym, jak mierzy się ona ze swoim ojcem. Jest to przedstawienie rzeczywistego konfliktu pokoleniowego między rodzicem a dzieckiem, w którym dorastające dziecko stopniowo zyskuje możliwość dorównania, a nawet przewyższenia rodzica. Opis relacji Pippi i Efraima obrazuje to, jak wspierający i silny ojciec może wychować córkę nie tylko silną, lecz wręcz silniejszą i samodzielną. Taka dynamika relacji została z czasem uznana za jeden z czynników sprzyjających wychowywaniu kobiet odnoszących sukcesy (zob. np. Nielsen 2014 oraz Blanchfield 2002).

W latach pięćdziesiątych XX wieku obraz rodziny nuklearnej jako normy społecznej stał się powszechny w Szwecji (Lindgren 2006: 144). Samotne rodzicielstwo, niezależnie od płci, należało do rzadkości. Istnieją jednak przykłady, jak choćby przypadek wdowca z lat dwudziestych, który mimo samotnego statusu matrymonialnego mógł dokonać adopcji (Lindgren 1996). Adoptowane dziecko spędzało dni u sąsiadki, a dom nie był wzorem porządku – decydujące okazało się jednak to, że wdowiec „obdarzył chłopca całą swoją miłością”. Można uznać, że z podobną sytuacją mamy do czynienia, gdy Efraim, choć niedobrowolnie, to pozostawił Pippi samą sobie, co skutkowało tym, że dziewczynka mieszkała w niezbyt zadbanym domu. Nie ma jednak wątpliwości, że Efraim „obdarza Pippi całą swoją miłością”.

Choć było to możliwe, to w Szwecji lat czterdziestych XX wieku należało do rzadkości, by dziecko wychowywało się samotnie z ojcem. Nie wiemy, dlaczego Astrid Lindgren świadomie zdecydowała się umieścić Pippi w tak niezwyklej sytuacji rodzinnej. Tata Pippi na pierwszy rzut oka reprezentuje typowego mężczyznę: jest postawny, radosny, wykonuje zawód o charakterze macho. Choć fizycznie najczęściej jest nieobecny, to gdy pojawia się w życiu córki, jest bardzo zaangażowany emocjonalnie – utwierdza ją w poczuciu własnej wartości, wspiera i dodaje odwagi. To, że Pippi może wkrótce stać się silniejsza od ojca, najwyraźniej wcale go nie niepokoi. Wręcz przeciwnie – wydaje się, że uznaje za naturalną kolej rzeczy, że tak właśnie powinno być, bo dopiero wtedy, gdy córka go przewyższy, on sam będzie spełniony jako mężczyzna.

Taki model wychowawczy i taka postawa nie były jednak oczywistym wyborem w ówczesnej Szwecji, gdyż tradycyjnie mężczyzna spełniał się poprzez czyny i styl życia swojego syna. Skąd więc Astrid Lindgren mogła czerpać inspirację do tak przełomowej i odważnej opowieści?

Margareta Strömstedt (2000), autorka biografii Astrid Lindgren, wskazuje na oczywiste powiązania między wydarzeniami z życia pisarki a materiałem fabularnym w jej twórczości. Strömstedt przyznaje też, że sama Lindgren jedno z tych powiązań uznała za nieprzypadkowe: podczas wizyty u Ellen Key w Strand

Lindgren zauważyła na ścianie cytaty z Thorilda: „Denna dagen, ett liv”⁶ – te same słowa stają się później tytułem jednego z rozdziałów książki *My na wyspie Saltkrakan*. W wywiadzie wchodzącym w skład telewizyjnego serialu dokumentalnego *Astrid* (Lindström 2014) Lindgren podaje przykłady wydarzeń z życia prywatnego i społecznego, które stanowią podstawę, tworzywo do jej książek. Hallberg (2014) pisze, że tworzywo literackie jest dla pisarza nieobrobionym surowcem. Może to być „historia, aktualne wydarzenia życiowe, już istniejąca literatura, własne doświadczenia pisarza” (tłum. O.K.) (Hallberg 2014: 40), z których każde funkcjonuje oddzielnie lub w kombinacji z innymi.

W serialu dokumentalnym *Astrid* można usłyszeć, jak Lindgren opowiada, że w młodości odwiedzała często oba kina w Vimmerby (Lindström 2014). Nieraz puszczano w nich amerykańskie filmy; w 1922 roku był to *Through the Back Door* (Green i Pickford 1921) w szwedzkim tłumaczeniu. W filmie postać Mary Pickford trzyma konia w kuchni i szoruje podłogę przyczepionymi do stóp szczotkami – dokładnie tak jak Pippi. W tym samym serialu czytane są też listy, w których Astrid Lindgren pisze o tym, jak w dzieciństwie odwiedzała cyrk. Materiał do książek o Pippi pochodzi więc częściowo z wcześniejszych doświadczeń autorki.

Eva Wahlström (2011) w swojej pracy badawczej przyjrzała się dwóm możliwym wzorom Pippi Pończoszanki z twórczości Ester Blendy Nordström i Karin Michaëli. Wahlström bazuje na pojęciu „dialogiczności” Kjella Espmarka, które zakłada świadomy dialog z wcześniejszym tekstem, oraz na pojęciu „intertekstualności”, czyli świadomego lub nieświadomego dialogu z innym tekstem (Espmark 1985: 26–28; Wahlström 2011: 24). Jednym z celów Wahlström jest „umiejscowienie tekstów we współczesnym im dyskursie” (tłum. O.K.) (2011: 25).

W taki sam sposób postrzegam książki o Pippi – jako owoc czasów, dzieciństwa oraz wielu świadomych i nieświadomych wspomnień. Analizując koncept siły jako motywu przewodniego w trzech książkach o Pończoszance, doszłam do hipotezy dotyczącej jednego z możliwych – świadomych bądź nie – źródeł inspiracji Astrid Lindgren przy tworzeniu postaci Pippi i jej ojca. Poniżej rozważam możliwość, że pierwowzorem dla taty Pippi mógł być kanadyjski siłacz Louis Cyr. Ta propozycja może być postrzegana jako uzupełnienie interpretacji Langer i Regiusa z książki *Kung Kalle av Kurrekurreduttön: en resa i Efraim Långstrumps fotspår* [Kalle, Król wyspy Kurrekurredutt: podróż śladami Efraima Pończochy] (2002).

Astrid Lindgren była bardzo oczytana, zanim napisała pierwszą książkę o Pippi Pończoszance, pracowała już między innymi w gazecie „Vimmerby Tidning” jako korektorka i dziennikarka (Strömstedt 2000). Nie znalazłam żadnego dowodu na to, aby Lindgren słyszała o Louisie Cyrze, ale powinien być już wtedy znany w Szwecji, ponieważ poza ustanowieniem niepobitego rekordu w podnoszeniu ciężarów pokonał on szwedzkiego siłacza Augusta W. Johnsona w The Central Music Hall w Chicago 31 marca 1896 roku (Michaud 2014). Cyr został opisany

⁶ „Ten dzień – całe życie” (tłum. J.K.).

w międzynarodowej prasie, a ponieważ Astrid Lindgren władała zarówno angielskim, jak i niemieckim, jest możliwe, że usłyszała o najsilniejszym mężczyźnie na świecie. Jens Andersen pisał w biografii Lindgren, że gazeta „Vimmerby Tidning” zawierała „duży przekrój wiadomości z kraju i ze świata, poruszających wiele dziedzin” (Andersen 2014: 44).

W dalszym opisie siłowania się Pippi z Efraimem można doszukać się wzorców z dawnych pokazów siły. Być może z dzieciństwa Astrid Lindgren?

Wtedy kapitan Pończocha wyjął z zawiasów drzwi kuchenne, Fridolf i siedmiu innych marynarzy stanęli na nich, a on dźwignął ich wszystkich razem wysoko i obniósł dziesięć razy dookoła trawnika.

[...] Wtedy Pippi na drzwiach kuchennych postawiła konia, na jego grzbiecie umieściła Fridolfa i trzech innych marynarzy, którzy trzymali po dwoje dzieci na ręku. Fridolf trzymał Tommy'ego i Annikę. Potem podniosła drzwi i obesła z nimi cały trawnik dwadzieścia pięć razy wokoło. Wspaniale to wyglądało w świetle pochodni.

– Nie ma co, j e s t e ś silniejsza ode mnie, moja mała – przyznał kapitan Pończocha (Lindgren 1958b: 131).

Opis tego, jak mierzy się siłę, stawiając ludzi i zwierzęta na drzwiach, przypomina zawody siłaczy w XIX wieku. Jednym z tych, których nazywa się najsilniejszymi ludźmi świata, był Kanadyjczyk Louis Cyr. Wykonywał on między innymi tak zwane podnoszenia platformowe, podczas których na jego plecach umieszczano platformę wielkości drzwi lub blatu stołu z maksymalnie czternastoma mężczyznami – łącznie do 1950 kg, co stanowi rekord, który do dziś nie został pobity (Finch i Marovitch 1999).

Istnieje plakat występu Louisa Cyra, na którym podnosi dwudziestu pięciu mężczyzn na desce położonej na plecach. Na innej ilustracji, prawdopodobnie fotografii, w jednym z tych podnoszeń platformowych Cyr dźwiga deskę, na której siedzi czternastu mężczyzn. Platforma wygląda jak drzwi, które leżą oparte na dwóch kozłach gimnastycznych, a Cyr stoi pochylony nad taboretami pomiędzy nimi i ją unosi.

Tak jak kapitan Pończocha – Louis Cyr miał córkę, Emilianę (znaną też jako Miliana), która także była niesamowicie silna. W wieku siedmiu lat uniosła na pokazie trzy hantle o łącznej wadze 139 kg (Finch i Marowitch 1999). Istnieje ilustracja, prawdopodobnie zdjęcie, przedstawiająca Emilianę podczas pokazu siły, z bujnymi, falującymi włosami do pasa przerzuconymi przez ramię. Ma na sobie czarną sukienkę z białym, koronkowym kołnierzykiem i prawą ręką unosi ponad głowę hantlę oznaczoną liczbą 33. Lewa dłoń spoczywa na talii. Przed sobą ma ustawione ciężarki oznaczone 306 (funtów) i 90. Cyfry wyglądają, jakby były domalowane później już na zdjęciu. Emilianę nazywano uroczą, ale mocno zbudowaną.

Louis Cyr urodził się w Kanadzie jako Cyprien-Noé Cyr i żył w latach 1863–1912. Podróżował po Ameryce i zarabiał, prezentując swoją siłę. Od listopada 1891 roku

do końca marca 1892 roku przebywał w Anglii i Walii, gdzie zmierzył się z najsilniejszymi mężczyznami z paru kontynentów. Jego rekordy raportowano w wielu gazetach w różnych zakątkach świata.

Zakończenie

To ogólne omówienie siły jako motywu przewodniego wskazuje na kilka możliwości wykorzystania książek o Pippi w kontekście dydaktycznym. Teksty te można omawiać z perspektywy pojęć z zakresu literaturoznawstwa: motywu przewodniego, tworzywa literackiego, dialogiczności i skazu.

Pippi stała się przedstawicielką silnych i niezależnych dziewczynek. To temat, który z powodzeniem można badać i poddawać dyskusji we wszystkich trzech książkach. I jest to temat, który nawet dziś, 70 lat później⁷, pozostaje aktualny. Rozwój dziewcząt we współczesnym świecie wciąż jest hamowany przez struktury patriarchalne, z góry narzucone role i społecznych despotów. Jest to na porządku dziennym w Szwecji, jednym z najbardziej równouprawnionych krajów, a jeszcze częściej dzieje się to poza jej granicami. Wizja silnej dziewczynki, która radzi sobie sama, nie jest utopią, ale urzeczywistnienie tego wyobrażenia musi zostać poprzedzone zmianą w podejściu ojców, czyli mężczyzn, do własnej roli i samorealizacji, której spełnienie może równie dobrze polegać na tym, że zostaną prześcignięci przez swoje córki pod względem siły (fizycznej i psychicznej). Kiedy mężczyźni będący ojcami odbędą taką (mocno ideologiczną) podróż, powinni w dalszej perspektywie być także w stanie wychować (również ideologicznie) świadomych chłopców, którzy będą potrafili zakwestionować obowiązujący patriarchalny dyskurs i osiągnąć spełnienie jako mężczyźni. Siła Pippi może zatem stać się symbolem bardziej równościowego porządku społecznego, w którym zarówno mężczyźni, jak i kobiety osiągają spełnienie poprzez obecność, wspieranie i motywowanie, a także poprzez życzliwość i wykorzystywanie swojej siły do walki z niesprawiedliwością.

Pytania do dyskusji

- Jakie inne motywy przewodnie, poza siłą, można odnaleźć w trylogii o Pippi?
- W jaki sposób informacje o rzeczywistych okolicznościach wpływają na odbiór fikcyjnego tekstu?
- Zastanów się nad wpływem, jaki ma postać Pippi na dzieci dorastające współcześnie. Jak się on przejawia? Czy różni się on od wpływu, jaki miała wcześniej?
- Czy książki wpływają na sposób myślenia czytelników? Czy dzieci stają się bardziej uprzejme, czytając o tym, że Pippi jest miła? Czy dorośli zaczynają bardziej motywować swoje dzieci, gdy czytają o wspierającym tacie Pippi?

⁷ Tekst został opublikowany 10 lat temu, w 70. urodziny Pippi (przyp. tłum.).

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