Contents / Sommaire / Inhalt

Editors & Editorial board ............................................................................................................... 5
Contributors ...................................................................................................................................... 7

Articles / Aufsätze

Daniel Andersson, “Courting Is Like Trading Horses, You Have to Keep Your Eyes Open.” Gender-Related Proverbs in a Peasant Society in Northern Sweden .......................... 9
Mervi Koskela Vasaru, Bjarmaland and Interaction in the North of Europe from the Viking Age until the Early Middle Ages .............................................................. 37
Andrey Kotljarchuk, Kola Sami in the Stalinist Terror. A Quantitative Analysis ...... 59
Arthur Mason & Maria Stoilkova, Corporeality of Consultant Expertise in Arctic Natural Gas Development ............................................................. 83

Reviews / Comptes rendus / Besprechungen

Cathrine Baglo, På ville veger? Levende utstillinger av samer i Europa og Amerika (Diss., Fakultet for humaniora, samfunnsvitenskap og lærerutdanning, Institutt for arkeologi og sosialantropologi), Tromsø University 2011 (Anne Heith) .................. 97
Wilhelm Heizmann & Morten Axboe (Hrsgg.), Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit. Auswertung und Neufunde (Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit 4.3), Berlin & New York: De Gruyter 2011 (Lars-Erik Edlund) ......................... 111
Dieter Strauch, Mittelalterliches nordisches Recht bis 1500. Eine Quellenkunde (Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde. Hrsg. von
Heinrich Beck, Dieter Geuenich & Heiko Steuer. Band 73), Berlin & New York: De Gruyter 2011 (Lars-Erik Edlund) ........................................................................................................................ 115

Per-Axel Wiktorsson (ed.), Äldre Västgötalagen och dess bilagor i Cod. Holm. B 59. Utgivna av Föreningen för Västgötalitteratur, vols. 1–2 (Skara stiftshistoriska sällskaps skrifter nr 60), [Skara]: Föreningen för Västgötalitteratur 2011 (Lars-Erik Edlund) ........................................................................................................................ 117


Instructions to Authors .................................................................................................................................................. 120

During the nineteenth century the display of foreign peoples at exhibitions intrigued people in the big European cities. Human exhibitions were a form of popular public entertainment whereby the crowds, journalists and scientists were given the opportunity to reflect on racial difference, missionary work and empire. Qureshi emphasizes that these exhibitions have left a lasting legacy both in the formation of early anthropological inquiry and in the creation of public attitudes toward racial difference (Qureshi 2011). The staging of indigenous peoples as different from modern men in ethnographic exhibitions was performed at the intersections of show business and racial science (Magubane 2009). During the nineteenth century new practices for representing strange, “primitive” peoples evolved. One such practice was live exhibitions of peoples in European and American metropolitan areas. By viewing ethnographic showcases arranged for the purpose of entertaining and instructing an urban, white audience the intended spectators of the showcases were shown “how far the exhibited deviated from the European ‘norm’ and thus how low they ranked in civilization” (Magubane 2009: 48).

The theme of Catherine Baglo’s dissertation *På ville veger? Levende utstillinger av samer i Europa og Amerika* [*Going astray? Live exhibitions of Sami people in Europe and America*], published in Norwegian in 2011, is the exhibition of Sami people from Norway, Sweden and Finland on urban stages in Europe and the United States. During the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth century around 400 Sami individuals were installed together with reindeer and tools in reconstructions of settlements where they were to perform everyday activities that could be viewed by visiting spectators. These exhibitions continued until about 1950. The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The first provides an introduction that is followed by a discussion of theoretical and methodological issues. The third chapter analyses various exhibitions of Sami people starting with Mr. Bullock’s “exhibition of Laplanders” in London 1822–1823 and concluding with a section about exhibitions after 1924. The fourth chapter focuses on how live exhibitions intersected with understandings of racial difference in nineteenth century scientific discourse. Chapter five analyses the staging and arrangement of the showcases and their reception. The sixth chapter goes more into depth in the analysis of how the showcases gave rise to audience experiences, negotiations of meanings and how these relate to the motives of the showmen. The chapter further includes sections about self-representation, cultural resistance, exhibitions as a contact zone and live exhibitions as “purifying work”
reviews/comptes rendus/bespprechungen

(Norwegian renselsearbeid) and a relational field. The final chapter summarizes interpretations and the impact of exhibitions of live people. In various sections the chapter discusses the fall and return of live exhibitions, genre aspects of the exhibitions and their character of mass medium, the role of museums as an “intermediary” showing dolls instead of real people, and how the exhibitions contributed to shaping consciousness and accumulating cultural capital. Furthermore the chapter highlights how the life-world and lands of the Sami have been mediated in recent times, as well as connections between cultural mediation, commercialism, and performances as the “Other.”

The first introductory chapter gives a background to the phenomenon of live exhibitions of “strange” peoples for western, urban audiences. Baglo points out that the first time Sami people were included in such an exhibition was in London in 1822. London was the centre of the first phase of human exhibitions. During this early period one and the same exhibition could be displayed at a variety of establishments such as theatres, concert halls, pleasure gardens and museums. Baglo concludes that the practice of exhibiting non-western peoples became widespread during the 1870s. From then on zoos, as well as circuses, became arenas where exotic peoples were shown. The geographical focus had by then shifted to Austria–Hungary and Germany. Carl Hagenbeck’s Zoo in Hamburg is particularly mentioned as a mass medium of the time that added humans as new attractions. In 1875 Hagenbeck engaged a group of Sami people from Karesuando and Tromsø who were to be exhibited together with reindeer and ethnographic objects. From then on the Hagenbeck exhibitions were to tour large parts of Europe from their base at the Zoo in Hamburg. Another context for exhibiting non-western peoples was that of the large World Fairs. Baglo mentions the Exposition Universelle 1878 in Paris, which is said to be the first European World Fair that exhibited “primitive” peoples (p. 12). The definite breakthrough for exhibitions of live people in this format came with the Paris exhibition of 1889. On this occasion more than 400 people representing non-western cultures were installed in so called villages indigènes. After this such villages became a popular part of large exhibitions both in Europe and the United States.

The emergence and establishment of showcases of live people is connected with an increased focus on visually oriented institutions for cultural representation exemplified by the development of new technologies such as film, which could provide spectators with enhanced experiences of being immersed in cultural phenomena conceived of as new and exciting. Baglo also discusses terminology used for designating exhibitions of humans such as the rather controversial term “human zoo.” In connection with this she points out that she chose not to use the term “freakshow,” which she conceives of as referring to the showing of individuals conceived of as physically different compared to what was seen as the norm. She claims that in the human showcases of non-western peoples collective groups who were shown were conceived of as being collectively different from the vantage point of western culture (p. 14). While this is true the practice may also imply that “exotic” peoples were being shown as “freaks” from the vantage point of western ideals and norms. The showing of foreign peoples served a number of different purposes. One of them was to amuse the public. Baglo does not dwell on the question of to what extent exhibitors may have manipulated reality in order to put on an entertaining show. When discussing this
issue Magubane quotes an English missionary who claimed that “the Bushmen specimens brought to Europe have been selected [...] on account of their extreme ugliness” (p. 50). He goes on to emphasise the effect this manipulation had on the opinions about strange people formed by the spectators. His point is that the exhibitor consciously chose to show individuals whose appearance deviated from western ideals of beauty and normality. As the term “human zoos” indicates, the staging of indigenous peoples at exhibitions involves elements of dehumanization. Baglo suggests that the Sami people who were exhibited differed from other indigenous peoples, as they were more in control and more prepared for various situations they were to encounter (pp. 24–25). However no evidence is presented which supports this supposition.

When presenting a survey of previous research Baglo underlines that little has been written about the exhibition of humans and particularly about exhibitions of Sami. However there are more studies than those mentioned. One study published in the same year as Baglo’s dissertation is Rikke Andreassen and Anne Folke Henningsen’s book on the exhibitions of humans at the Zoological Gardens and Tivoli of Copenhagen (Andreassen & Folke Henningsen 2011). Baglo enumerates a large number of questions she wishes to answer: 1) How did the exhibitions contribute to shaping ideas about the Sami and other indigenous peoples?; 2) In what respect may the exhibitions and activities related to them be seen as “inscriptions” in the sense Bruno Latour uses the term?; 3) How was the genre of live exhibitions transformed over time?; 4) What processes led to the decline and disappearance of human exhibitions?; 5) To what extent were the live exhibitions influenced by other technologies for representation and exhibition?; 6) What was the role of the middlemen and agents?

One main aim of the dissertation is to present a counter-account to previous research, which according to Baglo has victimized and anonymised the Sami people who were exhibited (p. 23). She highlights that exhibitions of live Sami people contributed to the establishment of specific images of Sami and other indigenous peoples (p. 15). When describing this process she suggests that the Sami people involved in this process actually were agents in the negotiation and creation of meanings in the contact zones of the exhibitions. When discussing previous research on the exhibition of Sami people Baglo highlights an article by Gunnar Broberg as a source of inspiration (Broberg 1981–1982). However she is also critical of Broberg’s and other researchers’, in her opinion, one-sided view on the exhibited people as passive victims. On the contrary, she wishes to highlight positive aspects of participating in exhibitions and of life at the exhibitions:

When the working-day was over, as a rule another life began than that of being exhibited as a Sami: the life of a tourist, cultural ambassador, citizen of the world and modern European (p. 24; my translation).

One issue that Baglo’s hypothesis that the Sami people were active agents in control of activities related to being exhibited, does not take into account is that even if there may have been certain individual gratifications, the exhibitions as such contributed to discursively constructing the Sami as the Others of the modern western world. This can hardly have contributed to the formation of a viable Sami ethnic and cultural identity. The differences evoked by the exhibitions im-
ply that the Sami, like other indigenous peoples, were constructed as a remnant doomed in the modern world (Mebius 1999; Smith 2008). This circumstance is not changed by the fact that some of the exhibited people may have had opportunities for tourism and exchange with the modern urban world during hours of leisure.

Another aim that makes this dissertation different from other accounts of ethnographic exhibitions is that Baglo explicitly states that she wants to highlight the individual stories of the various Sami people involved in the exhibitions (p. 23). This involves the ambition to provide detailed information about individuals as opposed to accounts that anonymise participants of exhibitions. Surprisingly Baglo claims that this strategy is more ethical than strategies that treat information about individuals confidentially (pp. 22–23). Baglo highlights interconnections between the colonial heritage the exhibitions of humans sprang out of and objectification, passivisation and anonymisation of participants who were seen as race typological examples (p. 23). In order to counter this she aims at “personalizing” (Norwegian personliggjøre) circumstances and events by providing information about individuals. This is a problematic stance, the ethical aspects of which ought to have been discussed.

The second chapter elaborates on the theoretical foundation of the dissertation contrasting Foucault’s work on disciplinary technologies, power relations and discourses with that of Latour’s theories of networks and “immutable mobiles,” which are highlighted as appropriate for describing the knowledge production about live exhibitions of Sami peoples to which Baglo herself wishes to contribute. According to Baglo Latour’s ideas about the role of people and objects as active elements in a continuous process help to explain the active role she herself assigns to the exhibited Sami people (p. 41). By appropriating Latour’s concept of “mediators” Baglo wishes to show that the Sami were actors that were able to transform, translate, distort and modify (p. 43). Through references to Latour the role of power asymmetries for the production of meanings is downplayed, while the role of mobile networks in which various actors are relatively equal is highlighted.

The longest chapter of the dissertation, chapter 3 (pp. 46–183), gives a chronological presentation of various exhibitions of Sami people from the start with Mr. Bullock’s Exhibition of Laplanders in London 1822–1823 until the decline of the phenomenon in the first part of the twentieth century. As far as possible Baglo renders the names of the Sami people who were exhibited as well as of the people in the networks organizing the exhibitions. She emphasises that although the exhibitions were mobile in the sense that they were shown at various places there was a high degree of standardization and conformity in the way the Sami were presented. Attributes such as reindeer, tents and household items from the reindeer-herding nomadic Sami culture became standard ingredients in the display and construction of Saminess. Baglo highlights that although the material expressions of Saminess were quite in accordance, the discursive contexts and networks surrounding the exhibitions varied over time. From the 1870s a gap between the spectators and exhibited people was increasingly evoked. The exhibited people were now seen as primitive and as different from the spectators. It is also during this period that the exhibitions are being shown at zoos. During the 1880s and 1890s exhibitions of live people were incorporated in large state-spon-
sored international exhibitions. In this context strange peoples were shown for didactic purposes as illustrations of racial variation, in which modern western people represented the pinnacle of evolution. Exhibitions were legitimized as valuable field laboratories where scientists could examine racial variation. Baglo points out that during this period anthropologists did not travel to strange parts of the world in order to do fieldwork, but that the “field” was brought to them in the form of exhibited people and items brought to the exhibitions' sites as props and illustrations. During the twentieth century there was an increased critique of human exhibitions. The connection to the state and scientific community was dissolved and gradually the phenomenon of exhibiting peoples came to an end, as the general public lost interest in it as a form of popular entertainment.

The idea of human exhibitions as anthropological field laboratories is further discussed in the fourth chapter. Baglo recounts how the Sami people in the exhibitions were measured and photographed. Plaster casts were made of hands and feet. At least on some occasion singing and yoik were recorded. Anthropological societies where the accumulated findings were presented were established in France, Germany and Great Britain. Physical anthropology emerged as an academic discipline and the exhibitions of Sami people were integrated in a scientific discourse on race. Germany’s most prominent anthropologist, Rudolf Virchows, was an ardent spokesman for human exhibitions until his death in 1902. The Sami people were constructed as “primitive” but opinions differed among scientists in Germany, France and Britain whether the Sami were doomed in the modern world, or not, and if, or to what degree, they were “degenerate.” Eventually new ideas concerning the study of non-western cultures emerged. Franz Boas, for example, propagated that cultures ought to be studied on their own premises and in their original context. By and by these ideas were adopted by the scientific communities and as a result the interconnection between human exhibitions and the scientific study of non-western peoples and cultures was disrupted.

In the fifth chapter Baglo elaborates on Carl Hagenbeck’s role as a renewer of the genre of human exhibitions. She suggests that previous interpretations of the use of zoos as exhibition spaces are misleading. According to Baglo Hagenbeck did not intend to suggest that there was an evolutionary continuum stretching from the animals that were exhibited to the humans. Instead she makes the point that the genre which Hagenbeck himself called “antropologisch-zoológische Ausstellung” (p. 221) connotes a specific form of assemblage of strange peoples and exotic animals within the same exhibition space (p. 222). Animals, as well as plants, ethnographic objects, clothes etcetera were used by Hagenbeck in the reconstruction of environments which aimed at visualizing the habitat of the strange people that were exhibited. Baglo further points out that one effect of this was that the exhibited people were essentialised. As opposed to modern man they were seen as closely connected with a natural habitat. Hagenbeck’s enterprises were commercial and as such he had to consider the expectations of the audience. Contracts were signed with the exhibited people regulating how they were to dress and act during the exhibitions. In order to appear authentic they were forbidden to cut their hair during the time the exhibition lasted. They agreed to wear traditional clothes during the shows, which they were not allowed to wear if they left the exhibition area etcetera. As Baglo remarks, the authentic-
ity of the exhibited people was heavily regulated through contracts stating their obligations. Naturally there was a conflict between the role of the exhibitions as scientific field-laboratories and as public entertainment. One way of expressing this is to say that the exhibitions filled multiple purposes and were arranged with a view to a segmented audience. According to Baglo their role as mass-entertainment has been under-communicated. She makes the point that in this context there was no stress on racial differentiation and evolutionary stages, which was the case in contemporary scientific discourses. As the genre became more diverse the element of comparison and celebrations of modernity and progress became essential elements of the large World Exhibitions’ staging of hierarchic comparisons between peoples and cultures (p. 242).

When discussing the physical demarcations of human exhibitions Baglo proposes that previous researchers who have emphasized that there is a distance and demarcation between the exhibited people and the audience have neglected that these were not absolute. She even suggests that the exhibitions engendered contact zones for people of diverse cultural backgrounds making it possible for the exhibited and visiting people to interact (p. 252). There is no discussion of the concept of the “contact zone” when it is first used. The concept was launched and elaborated by Mary Louise Pratt (Pratt 1991; Pratt 1992), who used it to designate social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other (Pratt 1992: 4). After Pratt the concept has also been used to designate forms of hybridity resulting from transcultural exchange in contact zones. As Baglo emphasizes in her discussion of contracts regulating the participation of the Sami people, they were required to appear “authentic” and “natural,” certainly not as “contaminated” by modern life. In other words the concept of the “antropologisch-zoologische Ausstellung” implied the construction of “authentic, natural” Sami culture by keeping it apart from influences from the modern world. In no way do the examples provided by Baglo of contacts between the exhibited and the viewers qualify as transcultural negotiations resulting in new hybrid cultural constellations. On the contrary Baglo’s discussion of the role of regulation and arrangement for the presentation of the Sami as different, and the role of the audiences’ expectations of presenting them as such, speaks against the notion of the human exhibitions as contact zones.

In the following chapter there is a section with the subtitle “Utstillingene som kontaktsone” ['The exhibitions as contact zones']. The chapter includes explicit references to Pratt and the claim that, far from being spaces where binaries were strengthened, the exhibitions were complex mixtures, “or hybrids” where “animals, objects and people, nature and culture, exhibitor and exhibited, the well-known and strange intermingled” (my translation). However, Baglo does not give any examples of in what respect the exhibitions resulted in hybrid constellations and how they functioned as “relational fields” (p. 308). One example of how a Patagonian man is greeting a Sami man in Hamburg in 1879 mentioned by Baglo, recounts how the Patagonian performs a greeting ceremony which the Sami finds utterly strange. When it is his turn to greet the Patagonian he mimics the strange behaviour thus giving the Patagonian the impression that the Sami have the same kind of greeting ceremony. The quote which is being recounted in support of the claim that the exhibition formed important spaces for meetings between indigenous peoples and minorities ends as follows: “Afterwards they
[the Sami and the Patagonian] shook hands, and thus this encounter where one did not understand the other, was over” (p. 306; my translation). The question that remains to be answered is: in what respect is this type of meeting significant as a transcultural encounter in a contact zone? Of course Baglo is right in emphasizing that the Sami people who participated in the exhibitions had new experiences of modernity and that they saw new places which some of the travellers experienced as exciting. However, the responses of the participants vary, as Baglo points out, so it is hardly possible to draw any other conclusion than that different people experienced the life at the exhibitions in diverse ways. Baglo discusses the construction of the Sami as “authentic,” “natural,” “primitive,” and rightly underlines that this is a construction. In real life many, perhaps the majority, of the Sami who were engaged for the exhibitions, had experienced modern life in their countries of origin. With this in mind it may be argued that they already were familiar with transcultural negotiations and cultural hybridization before they started their lives as exhibition elements in (re)constructed “natural” environments.

One problem with an examination like Baglo’s is that there are not many sources that provide reliable information. This is mentioned, but in my opinion it ought to be emphasized more and the material ought to be scrutinized critically. The sixth chapter includes a discussion of the middleman Adrian Jacobsen’s role in hiring people for Hagenbeck’s shows. Baglo mentions Jacobsen’s extensive documentation. He wrote journals, had an extensive correspondence, took photographs, and published books. This, of course, is interesting material. Baglo proposes that the journals may have been written with the aim that they would later be published as books. This interesting observation might have been elaborated upon. If this is the case, what might this imply for the way Jacobsen tells about his encounters with various agents and representatives of indigenous peoples and the events that take place during negotiations and journeys?

Baglo explicitly states that she wishes to question prevailing negative ideas about live human exhibitions. Particularly she wants to problematize the notion that the exhibited people were innocent or reluctant victims without a will of their own and without the capacity to participate, experience and enter into dialogue (p. 264). She suggests that becoming a member of a metropolitan show in fact was a viable alternative both for people who were badly off at home due to discrimination and hard times and for people who were better off who wanted to see the world. By establishing analogies with American Indians whose participation in shows has been described as a means to preserve a culture that was disappearing in the modern world, Baglo suggests that this may have also been the case with the Sami people who were exhibited. While not wishing to deny that there were multiple reasons for people to let themselves be exhibited, the idea of cultural preservation through participation in human exhibitions needs to be analysed more in depth in order to become convincing. As Baglo herself mentions, the construction of Saminess at the exhibitions was regulated by the wishes of various groups (exhibitors, scientists, journalists, the public, the exhibited people themselves). To what extent could the exhibited people perform cultural “resistance” to cultural marginalization, as Baglo claims they did? The example given of how an audience is scared by a performance by a group of indigenous people that included elements of cannibalism (pp. 300–302) speaks against the idea of
successful resistance in the shape of performances that were at odds with western ideas of propriety and beauty. Baglo mentions the performance of yoik as a Sami form of resistance, but she concludes that: “No matter what the intentions were, unfortunately the outcome was often the same, namely a reinforcement of people’s opinion that the exhibited people were primitive” (p. 302; my translation). Surely Baglo has a point, and if this is the case, cultural performances that contributed to a dichotomization between indigenous peoples and modern man can hardly be seen as a viable form of resistance to cultural marginalization and effacement.

The final chapter emphasizes the conclusion that the live exhibitions with Sami participants ought to be seen in a more positive light than has been the case in previous research. When discussing the reasons for the decline and end of human exhibitions Baglo introduces the notion that they perhaps did not come to an end after all, by discussing the emergence of museums such as the open air museum Skansen in Stockholm as a development of the genre of exhibiting live people for mass audiences. Baglo’s point is that new ethnographic and anthropological museums actually were inspired by earlier live exhibitions in zoos, which is manifested through the emphasis put upon presentations of cultural contexts and the construction of realistic environments for exhibited wax figures, stuffed animals and ethnographic objects. In the case of Skansen real people and animals were used. While there had been academic protests against the “old” form of human exhibitions, the museum context legitimised the new open-air museums’ displays of people and animals representing traditional life. Baglo also draws a line from Sami participation in live exhibitions to present-day constructions of experiences for tourists in the form of Sami villages and theme parks. She makes the claim that the Sami people who were exhibited helped to accumulate a competence that helped Sami people to arrange events and attractions based on self-exotification. Present day eco-tourism and the development of heritage industries managed by Sami people themselves are mentioned as offsprings. It is proposed that the often invoked concept of “authenticity” is neither useful, nor relevant, for describing constructions of Saminess in the shape of attractions for tourists. By pointing out that much that today is conceived of as traditional and authentic once was seen as new and “inauthentic” Baglo highlights the constructed nature and ongoing transformation of tradition (p. 338).

Baglo’s study introduces interesting perspectives both on the complex character of live exhibitions during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and on possible connections with present-day efforts at creating experiences for tourists related to ideas of tradition and heritage. The author explicitly states that she wishes to question previous accounts that have victimized the people who were exhibited as well as the genre of commercial live exhibitions produced for the instruction and entertainment of mass audiences. While the author has a point in emphasizing the network of actors involved in the production and consumption of exhibitions, and the multiple interests and expectations that the people who were involved had, there are also problematic aspects. The discussion of the relationship between the exhibited and exhibitors, middlemen, producers and audience as more symmetrical than what is usually assumed is not altogether convincing. Furthermore there are ethical aspects related to the de-anonymisation of exhibited people that ought to have been addressed. How-
ever, as a whole *På ville veger? Levende utstillinger av samer i Europa och Amerika* is thought-provoking reading that introduces new perspectives on the study of live exhibitions of Sami people.

REFERENCES


Anne Heith
Department of Culture and Media Studies
Umeå university
anne.heith@littvet.umu.se