



Heritagelore and an Introduction to the Thematic Issue on Culture and Heritage under Construction

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Taking inspiration in Barbro Klein's work, this article focuses on the production of a particular type of institutional lore that we call *heritagelore*. Heritagelore, as we are advancing the concept here, is composed of the discursive practices within the walls and the organizations of museums. It is the lore that shapes and at least partially structures the types of stories that directors, museum boards, curators, programing staff, and other museum personnel tell to one another about their institutions. As this article argues, the heritagelore of a museum legitimates certain curatorial perspectives, while making others more difficult to imagine.



In Honor of Barbro Klein

This special issue of *Ethnologia Europaea* is written as a tribute to the career of late ethnologist and folklorist Barbro Klein (1938–2018), who mentored and inspired several generations of scholars in ethnology and folklore, and who connected colleagues in Europe and the United States. After her passing in the spring of 2018, the Nordic-Baltic section of the American Folklore Society put out a call for papers for a session in her honor to take place during the 2018 American Folklore Society meeting in Buffalo, New York. The call resulted in sixteen presentations spread out over four sponsored panels, a significant testament to the influence and legacy of Klein's importance as a scholar and mentor. At the closure and summing up of all sessions, we agreed that publishing all the wonderful papers we had experienced would be the right thing to do.

It was clear that honoring Barbro Klein would require more than one volume, and further that publication of these works should display the same dedication to trans-Atlantic scholarly relations that Klein had pursued throughout her career. Accordingly, two peer-reviewed academic journals were selected to host the work, *Western Folklore* in the United States, and *Ethnologia Europaea* in Europe. The special issue of *Western Folklore* has been edited by Tok Thompson and includes mainly the work of scholars from Europe. In this issue of *Ethnologia Europaea*, edited by Lizette Gradén and Tom O'Dell, readers will find the works of mostly American scholars. In this way, we hope to potentially introduce what may be less familiar works to colleagues on both sides of the Atlantic.

We mourn the loss of Barbro Klein as an inspirational scholar, enthusiastic colleague, and true friend. But her legacy lives on, displayed brilliantly in the works of the many scholars and students she influenced. We are proud to present this special collection honoring her work in coordination with *Western Folklore*.

Heritagelore

Klein was an intellectually versatile scholar interested in a wide range of cultural fields of investigation including the study of such phenomena as cultural diversity, ritual performance, folklife spheres, tradition, and the analytical act of transcription, among many others (Klein 1990, 1995, 2000a, 2006; Siikala, Klein & Mathisen 2004). For our own part, Klein has inspired us throughout our careers. Most recently, however, we have been inspired by her work on cultural heritage, a theme to which she repeatedly returned. Her thinking was aligned with the manner in which many heritage scholars of the 1990s viewed heritage. Far from being static and immutable through time, heritage is produced in the present by using the past, often with the intention of framing and shaping that which would come in the future (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998;

Lowenthal 1996). This is particularly evident when it comes to the role of institutions such as museums and organizations of expertise. While heritage may at times appear to have a stable form in the guise of song or dance handed down from generation to generation, or a building or monument anchored in the landscape, how it is interpreted, understood and performed can change as it is contextualized in different ways.

Over the past five years, we have studied eight museums located in the United States and Sweden, that in different ways are oriented toward the representation and performance of Swedish heritage.¹ The tensions between stability and change in connection with the forms of heritage presented in these institutions have become a central focus of our work. The context in which these institutions of cultural heritage exist is constantly changing, therefore we have asked: what forces work to structure representations of heritage in museum settings, and what forces prod them to change? There are many answers to this question. However, there are two entwined factors that merit further scholarly investigation and that we focus on here. The first factor concerns how processes of narration affect the manner in which museum personnel and leadership develop an understanding of the museum in which they work. The second factor concerns the linkage between heritage and the economic considerations museums make in order to finance their activities.

In relation to processes of narration and stewardship, we focus on the production of a particular type of institutional lore that we call *heritagelore*. Heritagelore, as we are advancing the concept here, is composed of the discursive practices within the walls and the organizations of museums and other heritage institutions (for reasons of space our discussion shall focus solely on museums). It is the lore that shapes and at least partially structures the types of stories that directors, museum boards, curators, programing staff, and other museum personnel tell to one another about their institutions. It is the lore that employees pass on to volunteers and visitors about the museum, its contents and its collections. The heritagelore of a museum legitimates certain curatorial perspectives, while making others more difficult to imagine.

Klein argued that heritage “is phenomena in a group’s past that are given high symbolic value and therefore must be protected for the future” (2000b: 25). In what follows, our aim is to expand on this by focusing on how leadership and staff of museums choose to tell the story of their museum (as well as the story about themselves in relation to the institution’s current context). Beyond this, we demonstrate how

¹ The museums our research focuses upon are: The American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, USA; Fredriksdal’s Museum in Helsingborg, Sweden; The Hallwyl Museum in Stockholm, Sweden; Kulturen in Lund, Sweden; Kulturens Östarp in Blentarp, Sweden; The Museum of Movements in Malmö, Sweden; The National Nordic Museum in Seattle, USA; and Skokloster Castle outside of Stockholm.

institutional heritagelore is currently entangled in economic issues. The stories selected in the present about the past become more or less efficient tools to keep the institution financially afloat. In doing this, they play an important role in keeping the museum's institutional heritage alive. In order to explicate this more concretely, we shall first turn to the Hallwyl Museum in Stockholm, and then to Skokloster Castle, located outside of Stockholm.

The Hallwyl Museum

The Hallwyl Palace (Hallwylska palatset) in Stockholm was constructed at the turn of the nineteenth–twentieth centuries (finished 1898) by Wilhelmina von Hallwyl, nee Kempe (1844–1930), raised in Stockholm, and her husband, Count Walther von Hallwyl (1839–1921), raised in Bern, Switzerland. From the very beginning Wilhelmina von Hallwyl's intention was to create much more than just a state of the art home; she wanted to create a museum that would in part highlight cultural artifacts and pieces of art from around the world, but which would also provide coming generations of visitors with insight into what daily life in an upper–class environment in Stockholm was like in the first decades of the twentieth century. To this end, she amassed a collection of 30,000 items including Asian bronzes, ceramics from China, an armory of antique weapons, leather bound books from around the world, and European silver and fine art.

Beyond this, she organized and catalogued thousands of items from her everyday life. She explained her actions in this way:

I want everything to be included, such as brooms, dust brushes and such, because one day, when everything is being done by electricity, these will be the most remarkable things of all.²

On display in a glass case, in a room behind the art gallery on the top floor, is a space which used to be Wilhelmina von Hallwyl's gym. In it are not–so–everyday pieces such as the cast in which her arm was fixed after a car accident, clippings from Walther's moustache, and frosting from a cake. In Walther von Hallwyl's smoking room is a wastepaper basket still full of crumbled up letters and notes that he “threw away” nearly a century ago. The cellar contains shelves and displays cases filled with hundreds of opened and now emptied wine bottles (**Figure 1**).

² Wilhelmina von Hallwyl's annual notes 1844–1930. The Hallwyl Museum archives. (Cf. Cassel-Pihl 1990, 2006.)



Figure 1: The Hallwyl cellar displays hundreds of opened and now emptied wine bottles. (Photo: Lizette Gradén).

Walther and Wilhelmina von Hallwyl donated their home to the Swedish government in 1920. It opened as a museum in 1938. However, the Hallwyl Palace did not thrive as a museum during its early years. Between 1940 and well into the 1970s, tours of the building were limited and the number of staff employed was very small. Throughout this period, the museum was shrouded in rumors about Wilhelmina von Hallwyl herself. As the current museum director explained:

Wilhelmina was interpreted as a bit crazy. Stories about how she moved around in Stockholm in patched clothes flourished. She was portrayed as eccentric and the museum had an air of the bizarre over it. It was almost scary. You know, she saved sponges, toilet paper, and baby teeth. Still in the early 1990s, we just opened the doors, sold tickets and gave a short tour.³

For decades the Hallwyl museum operated under the shadow of a woman who was portrayed as an eccentric and a hoarder. In this way, she fit into the gendered genre of “the mad woman in the attic” (Gilbert & Gubar [1988] 2000), and little was done to challenge or question this interpretation.

³ Interview with museum director, February 3, 2017.

The 1970s were a time in which growing numbers of Swedes identified with the political left. From these segments of society came voices wondering why the Hallwyl home was relevant as a museum. The museum's director reflected on the situation in this way:

In the 1970s, the entire aristocratic lifestyle was brought into question in Sweden. Why did the palace become a museum, why build a monument to affluence?

In a sense, the story of Wilhelmina von Hallwyl as an eccentric, out-of-touch aristocrat played well to the spirit of the times. She was a very wealthy person with the means to do things that her detractors portrayed as very odd, such as collecting nail clippings and putting them on display. At the time, those in Sweden who wrote off this behavior as bizarre could also frame it as an amoral aspect of the effects of excessive wealth. From the 1940s to the 1970s, the heritagelore of Wilhelmina von Hallwyl as an eccentric upper-class woman dominated how the personnel and staff at Hallwyl thought about the heritage under their auspices. It was in many ways understood to be an immutable truth that wrapped the Hallwyl Museum in a very particular aura of the “bizarre” and “almost scary” as the current director describes it. This would change in the years around the new millennium.

Hallwyl Museum in the new Millennium

In the years following the new millennium, museum leaders throughout Sweden found themselves facing new demands from their stakeholders. In this context, it was no longer enough to just open the doors to the museum and hope people would file in. As part of a museum authority consisting of three institutions (The Royal Armory, Skokloster Castle with the foundation Hallwyl museum), the Hallwyl Museum had to answer to, and follow the directives of, the Swedish Ministry of Culture. In 2018, Hallwyl, along with the other two museums were merged into the agency National Museums of Swedish History, a consolidation that demonstrates the ministry's use of new public management in organizational change. The ministry, for its part, demanded that museums annually account for how they had worked to democratize their institutions. This meant not only constantly increasing the number of visitors, but also showing how they worked to pull in new groups of visitors and larger numbers of school classes. These demands forced the leadership of the Hallwyl Museum to rethink the manner in which they worked, and the types of messages they wanted their museum to communicate.

The heritagelore surrounding Wilhelmina von Hallwyl's eccentricities still exist today, but they are now subordinated to a more personal lore focused on her work as a

museum builder and professional. The museum leadership today emphasizes that the Hallwyl Museum is not a biographical museum, a term which museum scholars use to describe such institutions as the Strindberg Museum or Thiel Gallery (Bohman 2010). However, the staff continuously refer to Wilhelmina von Hallwyl by her first name and the biographical details continue to be the brick and mortar of the tours and the shaping of the museum's story. As one curator explains:

Wilhelmina is at the center of every tour still. The visitors want to hear about her and her family. They are fascinated by her as a person and ask questions about her personality.⁴

Even if the Hallwyl leadership attempts to offer stories that fit with social trends and meet current expectations of the museum stakeholders and funders (the Ministry of Culture and collaborating organizations), the audiences who come to the museum tend to behave as do museum visitors in general. They want the museum and its staff to confirm what they *think* they already know (Smith 2015). The story about a home begs for a story of the people living there. Even if current stories offer new approaches to the heritage of Hallwyl, the palimpsest of stories that make up the museum's heritagelore is difficult to challenge. The manner of referring to Wilhelmina (and Walther) by their first names rather than their full names in tours and conversation is a performance of intimization, a story creating an intimate relationship that reduces both the temporal and social distance to them. More than this, however, the first name basis demonstrates an interpretative shift, in which the protagonists of the story are at the narrator's, hence curatorial staff members', disposal. This is most apparent in dramatized guided tours offered by the museum in which staff members take on the roles of servants, curators, and scholarly figures working together with the absent present Wilhelmina to organize the collections and establish the museum. The rather informal way of referring to both Wilhelmina and Walther as well as to their servants, positions the contemporary curators not only as cultural brokers, mediating between institutional and vernacular culture before an audience (Kurin 1997), but also between an inhouse past and present. In the voices of their narration, the curators, and long-gone owners of the Hallwyl palace co-inhabit the museum.

When the curatorial team prepared *För all framtid*, an exhibition celebrating the Hallwyl Museum's 80th anniversary that opened in May 2018, they decided to bring Wilhelmina von Hallwyl's role as a career woman and museum maker to the fore.

⁴ Quote from a Hallwyl curator in a guided tour performed for staff and board members from the American Swedish Institute based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. This was a tour in which the research team participated.

They also emphasized her role as benefactress for major museums such as Skansen and Nordiska museet, The Gotland Museum (Gotlands Fornsal), Kulturen in Lund, Kulturen's Östarp, Nationalmuseum, and Schloss Hallwil in Switzerland. In this exhibition, the depiction of an eccentric woman and wealthy heiress had shifted to that of a professional who, through her cataloguing, management of curators and staff, and deliberate making of heritage (through donations to other museums, for instance), played an important role in Swedish museum history. This was a story which had previously not been told. As stated on the museum's website:

The exhibition emphasizes the cataloguing of the collection that Wilhelmina initiated and then supervised for decades, and which made her preservationist attempt unique. Take part in the stories about how the museum started and learn about the details of the objects. A new film shares the story about how, in her role as cultural benefactress, she left a legacy far beyond the museum.⁵

In this exhibition, Wilhelmina was cast as a protagonist in the professional development of not only her own museum but also in the museum heritage of Sweden more generally. Beyond this, the Hallwyl Palace took center stage in a story of feminist heritage-making. The contemporary story about Wilhelmina is presented as a progressive herstory, pointing out that her contributions were crucial for Artur Hazelius' and Georg Karlin's work as museum founders (the former at Nordiska museet and the latter at Kulturen in Lund). Reflecting on the time when the role of museums and cultural heritage was to provide a collective identity for emerging nations by providing them with origin stories and a folklife sphere (Klein 2006), the exhibition *För all framtid* positions Wilhelmina von Hallwyl as the "Other" (a woman in a man's world). In order to do this, archival materials were mobilized and put on display (see **Figure 2**). These included letters to employees giving them clear instructions on how to go about their work, and firm orders for those employees to follow her wishes and ignore the directions and agendas of male colleagues such as Professor Nils Lithberg.

If Wilhelmina von Hallwyl was once perceived to be an eccentric oddity in the heritagelore of the museum, that image was erased here and replaced by that of a decisive woman leading a squad of employees scattered around Europe with the determination of a general.

Although Wilhelmina von Hallwyl deliberately curated her home for future visitors and left her annual notes, the catalogue, and the archive for future research, it has never been fully clear as to how the story about life at the palace ought to be told. This is

⁵ <https://hallwylskamuseet.se/sv>.



Figure 2: From the exhibition *För all framtid*, where archival materials were mobilized and put on display. (Photo: Lizette Gradén).

perhaps not at all strange since museums at the time of her death in 1930 did not focus so much on telling stories as trying to communicate “truths” and marvel collections. Everything in the household was catalogued, from the start, or so the story goes. Interestingly, Wilhelmina von Hallwyl’s primary focus was on the cataloguing of the objects in her home, and much less on cataloguing her own activities. While traces of her activity can be excavated from her archives, it was not the telling of her own story (or the cult of her personality) that she focused upon. Wilhelmina herself became the focus posthumously.

Assembling the collection and cataloguing was a collective effort involving Wilhelmina, Nils Lithberg, the Hallwyl professor of European ethnology, as well as young museum workers and numerous students. This work was a huge collaborative undertaking. However, in tours today docents often highlight Wilhelmina’s sole effort, but say only little about the role of Lithberg, the curators, or the students. The heritagelore which is conveyed by staff today has a feminist emphasis in which the image of a professional woman focused on her work has replaced the stories of an eccentric old lady. This is an emphasis which fits in well with the current social and political atmosphere in Sweden. However, it is also an emphasis that resonates well with the primary group of visitors to the museum: educated upper- and middle-class culturally interested women.

The exhibition celebrating the museum's 80th anniversary was a temporary one that highlighted Wilhelmina von Hallwyl's professional life as a museum founder. Producing temporary exhibitions has become part and parcel of the museum's work in recent years. Other exhibitions have included one featuring men's fashion and clothing, a second displaying costumes from films made by Ingmar Bergman, and a third designed for the Halloween season full of ghosts, werewolves, and elements from the occult.

While the museum leadership had a difficult time explaining the connection between Wilhelmina von Hallwyl and costumes from Ingmar Bergman's films (or to werewolves for that matter), they explain that these exhibitions have been popular and fun. Arguably, they have a stronger entertainment value than an educational value, but they are important sources of revenue. Since the Hallwyl Museum is a national museum, it has free admission. The museum is, however, allowed to take fees for those who want to visit a temporary exhibition. Thus, while there may not be a close connection between Bergman costumes and the Hallwyls, this type of temporary exhibition fills the function of bringing in extra revenue and expertise at the same time that it dramatically increases the number of visitors to the museum and its collaboration with universities, the cultural sector and private actors. These are all factors that can be recognized as measures of success by the museum director and staff when reported annually to the Ministry of Culture. However, the growing tendency to use temporary and traveling exhibitions in the museum sector also conceals processes that lead staff at many of the museums we studied to feel they are losing touch with their permanent collections. This is experienced as hindering their ability to work with their collections in new and innovative ways.

Skokloster Castle

All of the museums that we have worked with have been entwined in forms of heritagelore of their own. At times, temporary exhibitions align seamlessly with that institutional lore or at least fit in well with the museum's environment. At times, however, temporary exhibitions can push boundaries that pull the heritagelore of a museum into question, and provide museum staff and leadership with a new perspective on their museum and its collections. This is exactly what happened at Skokloster Castle in 2017.

Skokloster Castle was constructed in the latter half of the seventeenth century by Baron Carl Gustaf Wrangel. Upon his death in 1676, the castle was inherited by his daughter Margareta Juliana who converted it into an entailed estate in 1701. This act forbade the selling, giving away, or transference via inheritance of any of the castle's belongings. It is considered by many to be one of Europe's most intact baroque

castles in Northern Europe. In 1967, the von Essen family faced financial challenges and sold Skokloster Castle to the Swedish state. The castle was then converted into a museum. Since that point in time, Skokloster has been seen by its director, board members and staff as a place in which to present and problematize elements of cultural history emanating from the seventeenth century. Over the course of five decades, the heritagelore of Skokloster bound the castle itself, as well as all the core and temporary exhibitions to the seventeenth century. This despite the fact that Skokloster Castle had been inhabited by private owners from the time of its building and all the way up to 1967. In the summer of 2017, the museum director and staff organized a temporary exhibition which proved to be the museum's most successful exhibition ever in terms of the eleven thousand visitors it attracted during the summer season. It featured clothing from films based on Jane Austen's novels such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. The costumes were provided by the British costume and prop company Cosprop (see **Figure 3**).



Figure 3: Scene from the temporary exhibition *Jane Austen's World* at Skokloster Castle, 2017. One of the aims of this exhibition was to activate Austen's stories in the castle setting to shed light on the role of women in the aristocratic society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. (Photo: Lizette Gradén).

Working with the Jane Austen exhibition gave the museum staff pause to take a step back and reframe a small section of the castle as it might have appeared in its nineteenth century guise. The opportunity to work with the exhibition had something of a startling effect on the museum personnel as they realized that they had always framed the castle as belonging to the seventeenth century, but in fact the castle was

used and lived in (at least periodically) right up until 1967, the day it was purchased by the Swedish state. However, this was an insight that the heritagelore of the castle as bound to the seventeenth century had made difficult to see and acknowledge. This, in short, limited the way in which the museum and its collections could be imagined in relation to new themes or topics. Since the Jane Austen exhibition, staff at the museum have increasingly drawn upon artefacts and phenomenon from the nineteenth century when developing exhibitions and programs. Feedback the museum has received from visitors has also indicated a strong interest in understanding life at Skokloster in relation to the nineteenth century. Staff have a difficult time seeing any deeper quantitative impact of the Jane Austen exhibition (in terms of increased visitor number in the years following the exhibition), but they do claim to have experienced a qualitative impact as the castle has fallen into a new nineteenth century light since they worked with the exhibition.⁶

Heritagelore in this sense was not just a case of storytelling, a term often used by museum development staff or marketing to indicate a strategically chosen narrative form that is consciously used to frame a museum and its activities. In contrast to this, the heritagelore of the museums we have studied had a much stronger structuring effect upon the types of stories that were selected to be shared and as those stories were told, the heritagelore of the museum or institution was itself further reinforced as a given “truth”. As the case of Skokloster revealed, heritagelore is not immutable. Our aim, however, was to better understand how heritagelore affects the “realm of possibilities” in how a museum and its collections can be imagined by museum staff, as well as by visitors and other stakeholders in the museum.

At the same time, heritage museums find themselves working in a context of neoliberal expectations regarding measurable growth and social impact: it is not enough to simply tell the same story time and time again, year after year. All of the museums we studied are constantly under pressure to increase visitor attendance, attract new groups to their museums, and make sure that past patrons have a reason to return. The use of temporary exhibitions is one of the ways in which museums are trying to bolster their economies and attendance numbers.⁷ At times these exhibitions seem to be thematically tangential to the museums’ core messages. Staff and leadership were hard pressed at first to explain what costumes drawn from films based on Jane Austen

⁶ Information on the effects the Jane Austen exhibition has had on how the staff at the museum view it and its collection is based upon e-mail correspondences with the museum curator, and the project manager of exhibitions on March 11, 2021.

⁷ There are many other ways in which museums are striving to do this. We do not have the space to discuss these in depth here. For further discussions of these processes, see Gradén & O’Dell (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020).

novels had to do with a seventeenth century baroque castle. However, once they began reframing the castle as having a history that included the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, they began to see new possibilities.

Concluding Reflections

In 2006 Barbro Klein warned:

In a liberal market economy a symbiosis has developed between cultural preservation, entertainment, and money-making, a symbiosis that builds on processes began [sic] long ago by such museum founders as Artur Hazelius and takes these processes to ends of which he and his contemporaries could not have dreamed. (2006: 67)

Klein touched on this concern about the commodification of heritage only briefly, in connection with the effects that tourism had upon heritage (see Bendix 2009; Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998). She noted how countries and regions spotlighted forth the heritage within their borders in an attempt to attract tourists (and tourist revenue) from a global market. On the whole, however, Klein, like the majority of anthropologists, ethnologists, and folklorists writing about heritage in the 1990s and first years of the new millennium, was more interested in the cultural, political and social aspects of heritage than economic ones. Issues such as identity politics remain a significant and problematic arena in which museums work, yet in the museums we have been working with and studying, they are increasingly understood as secondary. Museums reflect on socio-cultural and political factors only after they have considered questions related to the economy and management of the heritage under their auspices, as well as the numbers they must report annually to their stakeholders. We see a need for cultural theorists such as ethnologists and folklorists to more seriously consider the manner in which economic issues and budgetary considerations affect heritage and how museums (strategically) choose to work with heritage. Klein identified a symbiotic relationship between liberal market forces and the heritage industry. There is a need to more stringently scrutinize this relationship and reflect upon the degree to which it is symbiotic (or not), and what this symbiosis means.

The contributions to this special issue show the complexity of constructions and re-constructions of cultural diversity that take place among individuals and groups as well as in museums and other cultural institutions, in response to societal change. Below follows a short summary of the six contributions we present in this issue of *Ethnologia Europaea*, all inspired by the work of Barbro Klein.

Contributions to this Issue

In his contribution to this thematic issue, James P. Leary revisits the themes coming out of Barbro Klein's work in northern Maine's New Sweden. Klein called for resisting binary understandings of ethnic identity that are all too often framed as a minority group in relation to a larger majority group – in the case of New Sweden as an Anglo–Nordic dichotomy. She argued that this way of thinking about ethnicity overlooked the diversity and “regional cultural blends” in which most ethnic groups emerged (Siikala, Klein & Mathisen 2004: 258). Leary uses this insight as a point of departure for his analysis of the ballad of “The Swede from North Dakota,” a satirical folksong that was sung and performed, in many shifting iterations, in the Upper Midwest from the early twentieth century and onward (Leary 2021). His discussion illuminates the manner in which a humorous song, often performed as a form of comic relief, can speak of the difficulties and complex ethnic relations that people such as the Swedes of the Upper Midwest faced upon migration to the region in the late nineteenth century. As Leary points out, the folk ballad plays upon old but still existing stereotypes while speaking to the realities and ethnic tensions facing working–class immigrants at the time.

The issue of ethnic tension is a theme that can also be found in Charlotte Hyltén-Cavallius' and Lotta Fernstål's contribution to this volume. Their article continues the discussion begun by Barbro Klein's writings on minority groups in Sweden. Hyltén-Cavallius and Fernstål base their article on an interview (a sound recording) carried out in 1951 by a Swedish dialect collector and farmer named Arvid Andersson in his meeting with a Roma family in the village of Reftele in the province of Småland, Sweden (Hyltén-Cavallius & Fernstål 2021). They begin by providing an outline of what life in Sweden was like for the Roma in the mid-twentieth century. They move from there to how Andersson, and the members of the Roma family all worked to continuously position themselves in relation to one another over the course of the short interview. While it was the foreignness of the Roma that the interviewing team seemed to be focused on, the Roma family continually countered this perspective by asserting the ways in which they saw themselves as belonging to Sweden.

In her contribution to this issue, Elo-Hanna Seljamaa also approaches the tensions that can occur in representations of the encounters between minority and majority groups in a society. In her article she focuses on the Estonian National Museum (ENM) and how it has striven to address and represent cultural diversity in Estonia (Seljamaa 2021). Her work draws inspiration from Klein's work on diversity and multiculturalism, as well as Klein's call for scholars to better understand how processes of silence and exclusion are made manifest and nurtured in the public sphere and in institutional heritage contexts. Seljamaa provides the reader with a close reading and analysis of the

Encounters exhibition at ENM, an exhibition spanning 11,000 years from the Stone Age to the twentieth century. While she acknowledges the impossibility of condensing 11,000 years of history into a single permanent exhibition, she also strives to understand how silences are created and understandings of cultural identity inadvertently reified.

Rather than focusing on the processes behind silences in history, JoAnn Conrad confronts what she refers to as the process of gender “erasure” that “undergirds the history and discipline of Swedish folklore and folklife” (Conrad 2021: 100). Her article in this issue builds upon and further develops the work done by Klein to challenge and change this gender bias. Conrad does this by highlighting the work of such women as Eva Wigström, Lilli Zickerman, Ottilia Adelborg and Stina Quint who were engaged in different ways with the transformation and incorporation of Swedish folklore into the project of Swedish modernity at the turn of the twentieth century. This was work that has been vastly overlooked since it was done in conjunction with women’s associations, and in the spaces of women’s and children’s magazines and books. Such areas of Swedish daily life were not (and perhaps are still not) valued very highly by scholars and elites. An important factor facilitating the work of these women, Conrad points out, was not just their ability to act as individuals, but more importantly, their ability to form networks and support one another’s work.

John Lindow’s text in this thematic volume also examines the issue of gender, but his contribution is inspired by Barbro Klein’s “The Testimony of the Button” from 1971. Klein’s article analyzed the legend surrounding a coat button (which was flattened and filled with lead) that was found in the Swedish province of Halland in 1924 and was claimed to have been the object used to shoot King Charles XII in the head, killing him in 1718. This article has been considered by many folklorists to be a classic text that placed the legend and the debates it spurred in their historical context of the 1930s and 40s, underscoring the ways in which legends invoke the past to fit the needs of the present. John Lindow uses this text as an inspirational point of departure for his analysis of the legends surrounding the Danish queen Margrethe, who lived from 1353 to 1412 (Lindow 2021). Lindow’s article situates the legends of Margrethe in the context of other German and Scandinavian legend-telling traditions. In doing this, Lindow demonstrates how these legends both echo and challenge the gender structures of German and Scandinavian legend traditions.

Finally, in closing this issue, Frog focuses upon Klein’s concept of the “folk cultural sphere” and demonstrates how it can be fruitfully applied and developed in a wide array of different cases. He connects Klein’s idea to the concept of semiotic ideology to demonstrate how this pairing of concepts can bring into view discrepancies between practices and ideologies in the folk cultural sphere (Frog 2021). His text works with five

empirical examples: Snorri Sturluson's *Edda* from the twelfth century; seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writings about the Sámi; a nineteenth-century example of how living Sámi were put on display in England, Ireland and Scotland by William Bullock in the 1820s; Rotenese and Tetun traditions from Indonesia; and an ethnographic example from an Indonesian tourist village. In working with these different cases, Frog demonstrates how different agencies come into play in the construction of the folk cultural sphere, and how they are affected by the different types of media to which they are connected.

The articles included in *Western Folklore*⁸ and *Ethnologia Europaea* can be read separately or together. When read together they clearly embody hallmarks of Barbro Klein's approach: the rigorous investigation of the many voices – great and perhaps especially, small – that make up our complex society, and the ideas about identity, heritage, and belonging that signify such complex worlds. Barbro Klein always seemed one step ahead in scholarship, and the trails she blazed have become well-trodden paths. Barbro's outlook echoes throughout the various articles in this volume, especially her attention to women and ethnic minorities in both scholarship and in everyday life, in venues ranging from geographic places to narratives, to art and national museums.

⁸ More information about the special issue of *Western Folklore* can be found at: <http://www.westernfolklore.org/WFVol79No4.html>.

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