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och Mathias Strandberg

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Märta Hedlund (1913–1944): An Early Scholar in Swedish Ethnology

By Pia Karlsson Minganti and Ingvar Svanberg

Abstract

In the first half of the twentieth century, only a limited number of women were involved in Swedish ethnological research at an advanced academic level. One of them was Märta Hedlund (1913–1944), who was part of the academic circle around the prominent professor of regional ethnology, Sigurd Erixon, at the University College of Stockholm. Sadly, she died young, before she was able to complete her work. This article recalls Hedlund as a pioneer in the study of peasant trade and modes of enculturation within the rural families of such traders. We argue that Hedlund, with her orientation towards American social anthropology and economic history, managed to introduce topics and perspectives that would come into vogue only decades later. Furthermore, a rereading is offered of her scant biographical data and professional output through the lens of intersectional gender theory, to provide a complementary view of why, for so long, her work was forgotten.

Keywords: Swedish ethnology, enculturation, peasant economy, local culture, field work, gender.

During the first half of the twentieth century, only a limited number of women were involved in Swedish ethnological research at an advanced academic level. One of the few was Märta Hedlund (1913–1944), who was part of the academic circle around the prominent professor of regional ethnology, Sigurd Erixon (1888–1968), at the University College of Stockholm (Stockholms högskola, which was granted university status in 1960).

This article aims to evoke a picture of Hedlund as a pioneer in the study of peasant trade and modes of enculturation within the rural families of such traders. With her preference for American social anthropology and economic history, over the then dominant German ethnology (which emphasised cultural diffusion), she introduced topics and perspectives that came into vogue only decades later. Sadly, Hedlund passed away far too young, before she was able to complete her work. She left behind, in several archives and museums, recorded oral materials and photographs covering topics as diverse as child-rearing, fishing (e.g. Nordic Museum: EU 34 239), folk medicine (EU 34 297), local dog-keeping (EU 34 262), summer pastures and textile production (EU 34 272; EU 34 277), along with three published articles in Swedish, based on chapters of the doctoral dissertation she never



Märta Hedlund. (Photo reproduced from Schotte Lindsten 1993, p. 271.)

finished. Two were published posthumously by Professor Sigurd Erixon. Young and a woman, Märta Hedlund was soon forgotten; with this paper we hope to bring her work to light again.¹

Why should one choose to focus on an unnoticed researcher, rather than on one who is academically renowned? The very first generation of female folklife researchers in Sweden, among them Ella Odstedt (1892–1967), Louise Hagberg (1868–1944), and the two sisters Anna Levin (1868–1973) and Carolina Lovisa (Visen) Levin (1861–1946), were active in museums. Only recently have they and their work been brought to light in academic publications (Klein 2013; Klintberg 2004; Lilja 1999; Meurling 2007; Skarinn Frykman 2010). Little has been written about female informants, with the exception of Marianne Liliequist's exhaustive analysis of the marginalisation of Lisa Johansson (1894–1982) in comparison with her male counterparts Levi Johansson and Nils Eriksson (Liliequist 1994, pp. 46–65). Lisa Johansson is also dealt with in Kujawska & Svanberg 2014. Likewise neglected in academic documents are the assisting wives of male pioneer folklife researchers; we could mention as an example the talented Anna Arwidsson (1874–1936), who collected fishing tools and recorded folk traditions during her husband Ivar's ichthyological and ethnological fieldwork (Klein 1937).

Two early women ethnologists did indeed become professors: Anna Birgitta Rooth (Uppsala, 1973–84) and Phebe Fjellström (Umeå, 1982–90)

¹ Pia Karlsson Minganti presented an earlier version of this text in the workshop 'Imaginative women: Theoretical and methodological contributions of founding grandmothers of European anthropology', at the 11th EASA Biennial Conference, Maynooth, Ireland. The research was made possible by financial support from the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research, the Wenner-Gren Foundation and the EASA. All quotations from Swedish-language sources have been translated by the authors.

(Andræ 2000; Klein 2001; Svanberg 2007). Other female colleagues have also been acknowledged, even though they did not reach the level of full professorship, among them Mai Fossenius, Anna-Maja Nylén, Gertrud Grenander-Nyberg and Ann-Sofie Schotte-Lindsten (Hellspong 1993; Lundgren 1996; Ågren 1992). Brita Egardt's dissertation (1962) has recently been acknowledged as an ethnological 'classic'. In her thoroughgoing analysis of Egardt's theoretical and methodological contribution, Barbro Blehr concludes that her dissertation has a 'timeless quality' and is a 'model for subsequent research' (Blehr 2006, p. 204; see also Bringéus 1990). So far, however, Märta Hedlund's work has not been dealt with in any study, and we have made it our task to fill this gap.

Early Stockholm ethnology

Märta Hedlund was born on 6 October 1913 in Östersund, a major town in the northern Swedish province of Jämtland. She spent her childhood at Häste farm in the rural parish of Rödön, located on a peninsula in the Lake Storsjön region. As the daughter of the county agronomist and Member of Parliament Paulus Samuel Hedlund (1878–1941) and his wife Elisabet (Elise) Eriksson Persdotter (1887–1970), she brought with her a certain economic, social and cultural capital when she registered as a student of ethnology at the University College of Stockholm in the late 1930s.

At the time, the academic discipline of 'ethnology' was referred to as *Nordisk och jämförande folklivsforskning* ('Nordic and comparative folklife research').² A chair had been established at the Nordic Museum in Stockholm in 1919, thanks to a donation by Count Walther von Hallwyl (1839–1921) and his wife Countess Wilhelmina Hallwyl (1844–1930). It was in fact Wilhelmina Hallwyl who was the driving force behind the professorship and the appointment of Nils Lithberg (1883–1934) as its first holder (Rehnberg 1993, p. 12). For a decade, he had served as curator for her two core interests: the family's castle, Schloss Hallwyl in Switzerland, and her private collection of arts and crafts, which would later become the Hallwyl Museum. Within the framework of this study, it is worth noting Wilhelmina Hallwyl's appreciation of Lithberg's recognition of her as an intellectual subject:

² Ethnology was known under various names in Sweden, 'folklife research' being just one of them. Between 1912 and 1944, the discipline was called 'folk memory research' (*folkminnesforskning*) at Lund University. Lund's first professorship in this field, in 1946, was a chair of Nordic and comparative folklife research (*nordisk och jämförande folklivsforskning*). One year later, Uppsala established a department with the same name. In 1972, the term European ethnology (*etnologi, särskilt europeisk*) was adopted at all Swedish universities (Klein 2006, pp. 61, 75).

With what feelings of amazement did I not stand and listen, for a whole new world opened up before me. I, who had never before come into contact with a scholar who found it consistent with his great dignity to condescend to explain something to, or engage in a discussion with, a woman, much less with an old lady of 66 years [...]. From that point on, without my having to ask for them, I was given daily lectures [...] on archaeology and many other learned topics. I was thus able to follow the excavations, and every little object that appeared from the ground became meaningful (quoted in Rehnberg 1993, p. 15).

Countess Hallwyl's affection and support came at a price for Lithberg and Swedish ethnology at large. A condition for the couple's endowment of the chair was his devotion of 20 hours a week (more or less half his working hours) to Schloss Hallwyl and the collection. This task put the emphasis above all on his training in archaeology and cultural history, leaving him less scope to pursue ethnological research and teaching.

When Lithberg suddenly died in 1934, he was succeeded by Sigurd Erixon, who in turn became known for expanding ethnology. Like Lithberg's research, Erixon's too was guided by a concern for transcultural diffusion, with the aim of 'establishing diffusion conditions, finding cultural boundaries, tracing relics and reconstructing the routes of cultural elements' (Hellspong 1993, p. 58). This definitely shows in Erixon's grandiose research project, the *Atlas of Swedish Folk Culture*. However, Erixon and his followers also studied British social anthropology, North American cultural anthropology, and sociology. Sociology in particular, a new discipline in 1930s Sweden, had a strong impact on Erixon and his students (Larsson 2001, pp. 66, 115; Klein 2006).

In 1939, Erixon managed to acquire a building in which to host the Institute of Folklife Research, just across the street from the Nordic Museum. There he kept a sizeable staff at work on the *Atlas* and other intensive projects, made up of scientifically trained assistants, clerks, archivists and foreign researchers. It was during the Erixon era that the Institute was internationalised. Besides guest students, researchers came as refugees from Germany, Norway and, in particular, the Baltic countries. Further ties were established with foreign colleagues and the research undertaken was introduced to a wide international audience, mainly in German translation (Hellspong 1993, pp. 54–57). As Orvar Löfgren has pointed out, it was the 'mapping' projects of this period, especially, that made possible cooperation at the Nordic, European and global levels. At what was perceived as the turning point between pre-industrial and modern society, ethnologists were united in a belief in

the urgency of rescuing the disappearing peasant culture, measuring dilapidated barns before they collapsed, studying villages before the last open fields were enclosed, collecting forgotten artefacts hiding in attics and outhouses. Every field had to be covered, especially when it came to the material culture of peasant society (Löfgren 2008, p. 122).

Seminars and subjects

The core activity of Stockholm's ethnology students at this time was seminars. Sigurd Erixon was known as a weak lecturer, but a brilliant seminar leader (Talve 2005). These seminars involved all participants, regardless of rank, and offered the students an opportunity to debate essays and field-work, review new literature and listen to various guest speakers. In the autumn of 1939, they included an estimated twenty students and an average audience of fifteen people. During the war years, the total number decreased, leaving female students in a clear majority (Hellspong 1993, p. 66).

The seminars were documented in minutes, with responsibility for keeping them shared among the students. In 1938 the minutes were taken by Märta Hedlund, while the following year they were kept by her fellow student Mats Rehnberg, who later became the professor of the Institute of Folk-life Research (Hellspong 1993, p. 63). Other male peers were Anders Nyman (1907–1995), later superintendent at the Nordic Museum, Dag Trotzig (1914–1944), who became docent of Nordic ethnology at the universities of Riga and Stockholm, and Sture Lagercrantz (1910–2001), who in 1962 was appointed professor of general and comparative ethnography at Uppsala University. Among the women were two Nordic guest students, Rigmor Frimannslund Holmsen (1911–2006) from Norway and Toini-Inkeri Kaukonen (née Niemimaa) (1913–1994) from Finland (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, pp. 272–274). Both had been awarded a Swedish state scholarship and eventually received recognition as prominent ethnologists.

Two of Märta Hedlund's closest friends were Maj Florin (1912–1940) and Ann-Sofi Schotte-Lindsten (1911–2009). The latter managed to remain active as an ethnologist, although she was never encouraged by Erixon to go on to do a doctoral dissertation (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, pp. 269–272). Following the general pattern among women students, she was registered for a licentiate thesis (requiring four to seven years of study after the bachelor's degree) and remained loyal to her husband's career and their children (Schotte-Lindsten 1993; Lundgren 1996). In 1990 her academic efforts were rewarded when she received an honorary doctorate in local history from Uppsala University.

As for Maj Florin, she and Märta Hedlund were reported as standing out at the seminars (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, p. 271). They had personally chosen the topics of their dissertations, which was an exception among Erixon's students, since he followed the then common practice of professors deciding their students' subjects, usually within the framework of their own ongoing projects. The two young women's topics focused on what was termed 'peasant trade' in the southern parts of Norrland (northern Sweden) during the nineteenth century. The choice of subject brought them into close cooperation. Florin concentrated on the provinces of Dalarna (Dalecarlia) and Hälsingland, while Hedlund studied Härjedalen and her home province of Jämtland.

Although the young women chose their academic subjects independently, they had Erixon's support. He wrote letters of recommendation to secure funding for their fieldwork and archive studies. In a letter dated 30 December 1937, he stressed their innovative focus on peasant trade: 'Although one of the most important levers for the people's economic and general way of life, popular trade has as yet hardly been the subject of a more thoroughgoing and exhaustive scholarly treatment in our country' (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, p. 272). Florin in particular received recognition for her innovative methods, using a frequency map analysis inspired by her brother, the archaeologist Sten Florin (1905–1987). An important theme in Hedlund's work was the strong economic base of the peasant traders, which permitted large-scale trade and long-distance journeys, for instance to Norway. The Lake Storsjön region in Jämtland also formed the basis for her original study of enculturation in extended peasant families.

By a quirk of fate, both Hedlund and Florin died before completing their doctoral dissertations. Florin published one article in *Rig* in 1935. Hedlund left behind documentation in several museums and archives, along with three articles published in Swedish in 1941 (Bondehandel i Jämtland under 1800-talet, 'Peasant trade in Jämtland in the nineteenth century'), 1943 (Barnets uppfostran och utbildning i en storfamilj, 'Child-rearing and education in an extended family') and 1946 (Jämtlandshandeln och den jämtska folkulturen, 'The trade and folk culture of Jämtland'), all in *Folk-Liv: Acta ethnologica et folkloristica Europaea*, an international journal written in the Nordic languages, English, German and French, with Sigurd Erixon as founder and editor. Märta Hedlund died at the age of only 31, while still a young PhD student. However, the few scholarly reports she published are definitely important and she deserves attention as a pioneer who much later was to influence other scholars.

Researching the peasant personality

In the years before World War II, Jämtland was still a rather traditional province in the north of Sweden. There was a long tradition of peasant trade between Jämtland and Norway, but also with other regions of Sweden as far south as the capital Stockholm. These journeys, made by horse and sleigh, had been of great economic importance for the villages around Lake Storsjön for centuries, and were still a thriving activity in the 1870s. The peasants traded locally produced game, skins, dog furs, various handicrafts and dairy produce for horses, fish, salt and other commodities in Norway.³ Nor-

³ Dog fur was an important traded commodity in Jämtland in the late nineteenth century. A local Spitz-type breed was bred by the local peasants specifically to produce furs, which were sold all over northern Sweden, as well as in Norway (see Lindin & Svanberg 1997).



Barn with oven and cattle in Ope village, Brunflo parish in Jämtland. (Photo: Märta Hedlund, Nordiska museet.)

wegian products were also brought in to be sold in other parts of Sweden (Hedlund 1941).

In Hedlund's study, with the help of maps as the most important methodological tool, there emerges a fascinating market system, which offers an insight not only into the trade undertaken, but also into patterns of consumption and distribution of commodities. Hedlund was indeed an ethnological pioneer in the research field of peasant trade, and it was not until 1982 that the economic historian Kersti Ullenhag published a study of this particular trading system (Ullenhag 1982).

The peasant trade studied by Hedlund developed a special local culture different from the peasant cultures of the neighbouring provinces. As part of her investigation, she studied how the socialisation pattern within these trading families contributed to the continuity and conservatism of their lifestyles. Material was mainly collected through interviews with elderly people in the parishes around Lake Storsjön. Between 1936 and 1940, she gathered material during month-long trips to all the parishes within her re-

search area (Lindblom 1938, p. 266; 1939, p. 295; 1940, p. 214; 1941, pp. 269–207).

Märta Hedlund became an experienced fieldworker and, like most students of Swedish ethnology, she spent her summers interviewing informants in the countryside. Originating from such peasant families on her mother's side, she had the advantage of knowing the local dialects and being familiar from childhood with the cultural patterns in these villages.

Hedlund's publications are mainly based on field research material (interviews, questionnaires), with just a few references to other literature. Her use of maps in her economic studies was certainly inspired by Erixon and Florin. However, her interest in enculturation in her 1943 article is a little unexpected, although at that time American anthropologists such as Ruth Benedict, Edward Sapir and Margaret Mead, prominent students of Franz Boas, were investigating the relationship between cultural systems and personality (Handler 1986). Culture and personality became a major research interest among these highly influential anthropologists of the 1930s. Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* was published in 1934 and was widely read by intellectuals all over the world at that time, although it was not translated into Swedish until 1949.

Hedlund regarded the 'conservatism' among peasant traders in Jämtland as a personality pattern. Like her American colleagues, she became interested in the psychological aspects of bringing up children in this environment (cf. Gilkeson 2010, pp. 128–129). As a student of Erixon's, Hedlund was of course interested in the material aspects of the children's upbringing: the traditional dress worn by boys and girls is described in detail, and she discusses various skills and handicrafts that the children had to master. However, most of her article discusses methods of child-rearing and enculturation. The importance of the older generation in parenting, the prevailing cultural norms relating to the long period of breastfeeding (which continued until the next child was born) and weaning, the absence of spanking or other forms of corporal punishment, are all discussed. These remain important questions in American anthropological studies on child-rearing and have influenced the general discussion on elementary socialisation (Benedict 1948; Maher 1991; Froerer 2009).

Märta Hedlund was interested, moreover, in embodied knowledge, suggesting that 'tradition that has been transmitted tacitly or taught very early is perceived as instinct' (Hedlund 1943, p. 86). She quotes informants who denied being explicitly taught the given norms: 'You just sense those things'; 'You just know from birth'. Claiming that such unconscious transmission particularly pertains to prohibitions, transgression of which evokes strong emotional reactions from the community, Hedlund introduces the research on the incest taboo undertaken by the renowned Finnish anthropologist Edvard Westermarck (1862–1939):

Westermarck related the incest taboo to the general observation that erotic and sexual feelings are rarely aroused between young people who have grown up together. In Jämtland this instinct was sometimes reinforced by the telling of lurid stories (Hedlund 1943, p. 86).

Hedlund offers examples and stresses that the ‘demonstrative silence’ that arose in connection with such storytelling must have made a deep impact on the children: ‘A phenomenon that was rarely mentioned and then with repulsion, or was passed over in dismissive, horror-filled silence, must be deeply forbidden’ (Hedlund 1943, p. 86). The silence surrounding incest did not apply to ‘sexual questions in general’, Hedlund concludes as she delves into the issues of premarital sexual relations and pregnancy.

According to Hedlund, the very mild style of parenting typical in the households she studied differed greatly from the pattern known among the peasantry in other areas of Sweden (cf. Liliequist 1994). There, even toddlers could be punished and the self-will of a child was to be broken. The result was obvious: highly submissive individuals, in stark contrast to the proud and self-assured peasants of central Jämtland.

In fact, in her article Hedlund stresses how the peasant traders’ modes of parenting created a typical personality: ‘distant, with a friendly courtesy and an aristocratic dignity’ (Hedlund 1943, p. 77). These results can be compared with Margaret Mead’s and Ruth Benedict’s research on the relationship between child-rearing and personality development. Hedlund’s article is full of ethnographical details; it is really a thick description of socialisation among these peasant families. It is obvious that she wants to demonstrate how the method of upbringing had a profound influence on the local cultural pattern. Though she made no explicit reference to the American anthropologists, she was nevertheless clearly influenced by the new directions among scholars such as Benedict or Sapir. The seminars at the Institute gave the participants ample opportunity to discuss new literature. Erixon is described as a professor who was particularly open to new theoretical trends, which were often raised as central topics at the seminars, along with new books reviewed by the participating students (Weibust 1993).

Gender and marginalisation in academia

For a long time, Märta Hedlund’s work was met with silence. One good reason for this was of course her premature death. Yet, rereading her scarce biographical data and professional output through the lenses of gender theory provides a complementary explanation for her falling into oblivion. The concept of gender as a social construction was introduced in Sweden by the historian Yvonne Hirdman (1988). Her definition of the gender system as constituted by two central principles – *dichotomy* and *hierarchy* – is interesting for an analysis of the conditions shaping Hedlund’s position within

academia. The principle of dichotomy means that the notions of ‘male’ and ‘female’, ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ are categorised and kept carefully apart by various practices. The principle of hierarchy means that the male is enforced as the norm. Hence, male superiority and hegemony may be legitimised, while women and what they produce may be disrespected and obscured.

Swedish ethnology has always attracted women and has generally shown little evidence of gender antagonism. However, a methodical gender analysis of women’s participation reveals a pyramidal pattern within the discipline that lasted well into the 2000s. While the majority of the students and assistant curators (*amanuenses*) at the museums were women, the principle of gender hierarchy led to men being appointed to positions of leadership. For instance, from the first public defence of a doctoral thesis at the Stockholm Institute of Folklife Research in 1935 until the 1980s, sixteen men gained doctorates and only two women (Anna-Maja Nylén in 1947 and Gertrud Grenander-Nyberg in 1974). The posts of professors and directors of Swedish archives and museums were held by men. In a historical review of the situation, Barbro Klein (2013) demonstrates how reformist middle-class women were essential for the formation of Swedish folklife research, and yet were marginalised in a ‘masculinization process’ from around 1910, when efforts to professionalise museums and create a ‘truly scientific discipline’ began; ‘men were hired as the superiors of women who continued working as they had before’ (Klein 2013, p. 120).

One practical reason behind such statistics is the double burden of women, who simultaneously have to manage their academic work and their roles as mothers and wives. As for Hedlund, she died unmarried, and there is no biographical evidence left to allow us to comment on her possible involvement in care work within her family or elsewhere. What we can offer instead is an illustration of gender-separating practices and forms of discrimination against women in their immediate academic environment.

At the time of Märta Hedlund’s studies at the Institute of Folklife Research, the principle of gender differentiation was practised, for example, in the tradition of writing seminar minutes. Mats Rehnberg, who succeeded Hedlund as the secretary in the autumn of 1939, claims to have broken with the habit of organising the minutes in two columns – one for ‘ladies’ and one for ‘gentlemen’ (Hellspong 1993, p. 64).

The conventional distinction was maintained at the department, for example in Professor Erixon’s way of describing field-trip participants: ‘1 professor, 9 students and 4 ladies’ (Hellspong 1993, p. 64). The label ‘ladies’ referred of course to the women students. Likewise, assistant curators were referred to as ‘museum ladies’ (Lundgren 1996; Meurling 2007).

Gender separation was also practised in physical space. Rigmor Frimannslund Holmsen reported her dislike of the recurring lunches at Högloftet (a res-

restaurant at the Skansen open-air museum, connected with the Nordic Museum and the Institute of Folklife Research), which were strictly divided into ‘ladies’ tables’ and ‘gentlemen’s tables’. In retrospect, she commented on this form of gender division as ‘stemming from a time when scientists were men and the rest were women’ (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, p. 274).

The important ‘post-seminar’ gatherings during the Erixon era were held at Strands Bakficka (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, p. 268). We have not found any comments on the consequences for women, but it could be considered that taverns like this were still basically monogendered spaces where single women visitors would most likely be stigmatised with a bad reputation (Wiklund & Damberg 2015). Being in the company of colleagues would perhaps reduce any such stigma, but even in the twenty-first century men’s unofficial networking in places tabooed to women, such as men’s clubs or saunas, remains a serious issue in debates about gender equality and career progression for women.

Intersectional power structures

During the first half of the 1900s, ethnology departments were institutions led by male professors: Sigurd Erixon in Stockholm, Carl Wilhelm von Sydow (1878–1952) in Lund, and Dag Strömbäck (1900–1978) and Åke Campbell (1891–1957) in Uppsala (Bringéus 2006; Almqvist 2010; Bringéus 2008). Erixon, and his successor John Granlund (1901–1982), actually lived at the Institute of Folklife Research (Hellspång 2010). This very fact added to the feeling among the students of being part of an extended patriarchal family. There are records of conviviality, as the patriarchs combined their demands with personal concern. Ann-Sofi Schotte-Lindsten recalls an episode when she developed lumbago from lifting her sick mother and Erixon consequently offered her the services of his private maid (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, p. 269). Besides such examples of caring, patriarchal guardianship was manifested in the professors’ undisputed position of leadership and the frequent lack of critical opposition (Hellspång 1993, p. 69; Talve 2005, p. 104).

A critical power perspective on the patriarchal institution reveals various social structuring principles as important factors in positioning academics and conditioning their agency. In the case of Märta Hedlund, being positioned as ‘racially’/ethnically Swedish privileged her over those positioned as ethnic minority members and immigrants. As Barbro Klein points out in her study of women who actively helped to shape the Swedish folklife sphere at the turn of the twentieth century, Roma and Sámi women were not formally hired by employers such as the Nordic Museum and Skansen, while the peasant women referred to as *dalkullor* or *kullor*, from the region of Dalecarlia, would at least be employed as low-paid servants (Klein 2013, pp. 130–131, 146 n. 25).

Male colleagues of Hedlund's also expressed negative experiences of embodying notions of ethnic difference. Ilmar Talve (1919–2007) for example, a refugee from Estonia who would later be professor of ethnology at the University of Turku, acquired Swedish citizenship, but nevertheless recalls his disappointment at the then implicit policy of the Nordic Museum not to employ foreigners: 'The Nordic Museum was a Swedish museum, which meant that the officials had to be Swedish' (Talve 2005, p. 107). Such experiences of loss of prestige and academic capital among Baltic colleagues in exile are confirmed by Klein (2017).

Class affiliation also seems to have had a positive impact on Hedlund's career, at least as far as we can judge from the sparse personal data available for analysis. Her family background provided her with monetary and cultural capital. She may possibly have stood out as exotic with her roots in the remote rural province of Jämtland, but it seems plausible that, combined with her father's grand position as county agronomist and MP and her own university education, those roots would have represented a valuable asset in the ethnological study of peasant culture. Erixon (1944) explicitly praised her 'deep familiarity with the conditions' of the landed farmers in the region, including their local dialect and lifestyle patterns. It was, rather, Hedlund's age and gender that may have limited her agency in the patriarchal order of the institute.

For her young male peers, it was more than anything a question of their age in comparison to senior researchers and the professor. This manifested itself not only in their hesitation in getting involved in criticism of their superiors, but also in the anonymisation of their work. In 1938 and 1939, Märta Hedlund, together with Ola Bannbers, compiled two questionnaires for the Nordic Museum, on Swedish flatbread (*tunnbröd*) and old baking methods. Like many other professors at the time, Erixon was often the named author of works which had in fact been written by several experts, including younger students and assistant curators. The extent of his authorship is understandable only in the light of such assistance from others, who selected material and wrote sections either in line with his instructions or independently (Hellspong 1993, p. 58; Talve 2005).

The young male and female students thus shared an inferior position at the department because of their age, but the women were also subject to the gender hierarchy. An example of the immediate marginalisation of women in the seminar milieu of Märta Hedlund is given in a letter from Frimannslund Holmsen. In it, she describes how a planned seminar presentation of hers proved a disappointment: a male peer took up all of the time jointly allotted to them. Only at the post-seminar get-together was she offered a short moment to perform, in her words 'as an anticlimax' (Schotte-Lindsten 1993, pp. 272–273).

Such denial of voice should also be understood at the more discursive level of meaning. The practices of predominantly naming, honouring and reviewing men clearly resulted in a long-term marginalisation of women scholars. The disciplinary history of Swedish ethnology was for a long time a study of forefathers based on studies by forefathers (e.g. Lilja 2000; Lundgren 1996; Meurling 2007).

Consequently, as Lundgren emphasises, outstanding women are often recognised late in life (for example, with a *Festschrift* or an honorary doctorate), or even after they pass away (Lundgren 1996, p. 51). A typical example is Brita Egardt from Lund, who was promoted in the canonised descriptions of the subject of ethnology only after her death, in an obituary by Nils-Arvid Bringéus (1990) and in the above-mentioned article by Barbro Blehr (2006). Studies of gendered descriptions in obituaries show that even women who reach the level of a professorship are finally brought back into the hegemonic gendered order by an emphasis on their perceived female virtues. They are described as presentable, well-educated and good hostesses, and thus associated with family, home, food and dinners, in contrast to the public professionalism of academics (Lilja 2000, 2006; Meurling 2007, p. 29). As Barbro Klein astutely puts it: ‘In two respects there was no difference between the Swedish women and their intellectually daring North American sisters: in terms of pay and titles. Ruth Benedict was not appointed full professor until 1948, that is, shortly before she died’ (Klein 2013, p. 136).

Afterword

From an intersectional power analysis of Märta Hedlund’s academic context, it seems plausible that her agency was constrained by her gender and age. At the same time, we have noted the well-documented support provided, not least, by her professor, Sigurd Erixon. The overall picture of Hedlund’s career holds a number of ambiguities: she was indisputably able to produce and disseminate significant research, and yet her work remained unquoted long after her death, and it is understudied in academic research to date.

Hedlund left behind a rich body of documentation in museums and archives. Her records in the archives and her findings about conservative peasant families were quoted by her academic contemporaries in their dissertations (Björkqvist 1941, p. 45; Trotzig 1943, p. 72). She was also briefly mentioned in a review of ethnological research in northern Sweden (Berggren & Nyman 1961). However, an indication of her enduring anonymity is her absence from *Norrländsk uppslagsbok*, a comprehensive encyclopedia in four volumes published in the 1990s in collaboration with Umeå University.

Märta Hedlund was most likely one of the anonymous assistants behind Erixon's publications. However, she was officially acknowledged in a prestigious anthology he edited, which presented several topical authors of the Stockholm Institute of Folklife Research at the time (Erixon 1943). The anthology was reviewed in its entirety, including Hedlund's article, by the Hungarian ethnologist Béla Gunda (1948) in *American Anthropologist*. The very same article on child-rearing, along with two on peasant trade, was published in *Folk-Liv: Acta ethnologia et folkloristica Europaea*, the pan-European ethnological journal of which Erixon was the founder and editor (Hedlund 1941, 1944, 1946).

On Hedlund's death there were no obituaries in *Rig*, *Folk-Liv* or any other important ethnological journal of the time. On the other hand, Erixon did mention her twenty years later in a substantial part of his report from the Sixteenth Scandinavian Folklife and Folklore Research Congress in Røros, Norway (Erixon 1964). Among other things, he emphasised Hedlund's comparisons between peasant traders from Jämtland and Härjedalen:

She proved how much more intensely the peasant traders of Jämtland were involved in large-scale trade and long-distance journeys than those from Härjedalen. In both areas, a lively trade was carried on with Norway, especially with Levanger and Trondheim in the case of Jämtland, and with Røros in the case of Härjedalen. It was actually only the landed farmers in the parishes around Lake Storsjön in Jämtland who could take the economic risks associated with long-distance commercial journeys (Erixon 1964).

We would conclude that Hedlund's comparative approach not only had as its aim a conventional diffusion study, but also an exploration of the cultural basis for the Jämtland peasant trade. Thus, her examination of socialisation/enculturation patterns was not an end in itself but rather, once developed – probably with inspiration from American anthropologists – a body of work that could help to explain the specific personality of the peasant trader community. That personality was seen as the culture itself, (re)produced through their child-rearing patterns. In an obituary for Hedlund in the popular journal *Ditt Land* (Your Country), Erixon makes a striking prediction that her 'thorough investigation of child-rearing in the peasant traders' families of Jämtland [...] will most certainly be increasingly noted and appreciated in the future' (Erixon 1944, p. 11).

In fact, several decades after Märta Hedlund's death, anthropological, sociological and psychological insights into the significance of child-rearing have become increasingly important in a number of studies within ethnology and beyond. As late as 1978, at the Twenty-First Scandinavian Ethnological Congress in Hemse on Gotland, Sweden, a speaker rightly stressed that the 'process of socialization has traditionally been studied by psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists, and there exists today a mountain of literature on the subject [...]. On the other hand, ethnologists and folklorists

have demonstrated less interest in this field of study, with the notable exception of Märta Hedlund (1943)' (Kvideland 1979, p. 37).

However, over time this situation has changed and a growing number of Swedish ethnologists have come to appreciate Hedlund's works and have referred to them in their studies (for instance, Szabó 1971; Egardt 1972; Hellspong & Löfgren 1974; Grenander-Nyberg 1975; Tillhagen 1983, 1989; Weibust 1984; Brembeck 1992; Liliequist 1994; Lindin & Svanberg 1997; Montelius 2001; Halland 2007; Olofsson 2011). Her article on child-rearing was recently used on the course 'Children's Culture and Cultural Heritage' at Mid Sweden University. Quite evidently, Märta Hedlund's research on enculturation and socialisation processes is still highly relevant.

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Sammanfattning

Under förra hälften av 1900-talet var det bara ett litet antal kvinnor som på en mer avancerad nivå ägnade sig åt akademiska studier i folklivsforskning. En av dem var Märta Hedlund (1913–1944), som ingick i kretsen kring professor Sigurd Erixon och hans seminarium vid Stockholms högskola. Märta Hedlund var en framstående fältforskare och etnolog, men tyvärr hann hon aldrig fullfölja sina forskarstudier, eftersom hon gick bort tidigt, blott 31 år gammal. Hon var uppenbarligen en löftesrik forskare, vilket framgår av de få publikationer som hon hann färdigställa. Hennes ämne var bondehandel i Jämtland och den betydelse den hade för hushållen runt Storsjön. En viktig del av studien var att undersöka fostran av barnen i de storhushåll som generade den personlighetstyp som hon menade utmärkte de involverade bönderna. Artikeln argumenterar för att Hedlund influerades av samtida amerikansk socialantropologi och av den framväxande forskningen i ekonomisk historia. På så vis förekom hon, genom sina undersökningar av enkulturationsmönster och handel, forskningsinriktningar som först flera årtionden senare aktualiserades inom etnologiämnet. Artikeln kompletterar också bilden av Hedlund genom att analysera hennes vetenskapliga position och produktion ur ett intersektionellt genusteoretiskt perspektiv. Märta Hedlunds publikationer förtjänar att lyftas fram och läsas på nytt.

Svenska landsmål och svenskt folkliv är en av Sveriges äldsta kulturtidskrifter, grundad 1878 av J. A. Lundell och numera utgiven av Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien för svensk folkkultur i samarbete med Institutet för språk och folkminnen. Tidskriften, som utkommer med ett nummer årligen, publicerar forskningsartiklar, smärre bidrag, recensioner m.m. inom dialektologi, sociolingvistik och annan talspråksforskning samt folkloristik och kulturhistoria. Forskningsartiklar undergår anonymiserad kollegial granskning av minst två experter på området.

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Svenska landsmål och svenskt folkliv
Institutet för språk och folkminnen
Vallgatan 22
411 16 Göteborg

fredrik.skott@sprakochfolkminnen.se
mathias.strandberg@sprakochfolkminnen.se

