

Hjärtats härdar

Folkliv, folkmuseer och minnesmärken i Skandinavien, 1808–1907

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ABSTRACT

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Title: *Hjärtats bärdar – folkliv, folk museer och minnesmärken i Skandinavien, 1808–1907*

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This thesis deals with the new view of landscapes, buildings and artefacts as significant, memory-bearing structures that emerged in the nineteenth century. It examines the new memory-bearing visibility, i.e., the human-shaped reality as a bearer of memory, and it also analyses the new notion of the people (*folk*) and its ways of seeing; in other words, a living entity, a new subject that creates its own history and society. Finally, it also examines the synthesis of a new kind of knowledge that became institutionalised in historical and ethnographical museums and subsequently in folk museums.

At the beginning of the century, the historical memorial was a new object that was to be researched and appraised from both an artistic and a scientific perspective. The people in its incarnation of folk life represented, in its turn, a new, higher phase of human development, in terms of a historical-idealistic concept of stages, one that made possible the new vision of the artist as well as of the museum curator and the scientist and their studies of the historical memorial. Finally, the folk museum was one of the new institutions where the museum curator synthesised his observations and constructed knowledge of the historical memorial, and also employed this knowledge in folk educational, socio-moral museum activities in order to elevate the fragmented population to this new, harmonious and national-individual folk life.

The thesis consists of three main sections that reflect the above division. The purpose of the first section, *Historical memorials*, is to furnish an overarching description of how different nuances of nineteenth-century memory-bearing visibility arose and were transformed in Denmark, Norway and Sweden; more specifically, the aesthetic, scientific, historical, social and national dimensions of the historical memorial. The relationship that is described and analysed is primarily that between knowledge-acquiring subjects and objects of knowledge. The purpose of the second section, *Folk life*, is to analyse in detail the contemporary epistemological views with respect to memory-bearing visibility of reality, limited, however, to the closest ideational contexts of the folk museum; the relationship under study is thus the one between the knowledge-acquiring subject and notions of knowledge. The purpose of the third section, *Folk museums*, is to describe how the museum curators in actual practice made use of the historical memorial and the new artistic, scientific and economic approaches, in order to synthesise knowledge and apply it in their folk educational activities at the folk museums.

Key words: the Nordic Museum, the Danish Folk Museum, the Norwegian Folk Museum, nineteenth century Scandinavian museum sector, speculative ideal realism, empirical naturalism, ideal-realistic naturalism, historical memorial, folk life, folk museum, museum of cultural history.