

Introduction: Ways of Life

What was it like to live in the eighteenth century? How did our predecessors perceive and experience their physical and sociocultural environment? How did they understand and explain what was going on around them? How did they think, feel, and communicate? And in more concrete terms: How did the food taste, the music sound, the streets and backyards smell, the heat and cold feel on their skin? How did they perceive the towns, the landscape, and themselves? These are some of the most intriguing questions for the historian of any epoch. This volume of *Sjuttuhundratal* deals with various ways of life during the eighteenth century. The articles show in different respects what life could be like in a seemingly isolated part of Europe; how new ideas and information found new receivers through missionaries, schools, and journals; how travel through Europe was a means of obtaining new ideas about trade and technology and becoming acquainted with how other people lived and worked. The volume is also about life in art and science, and the life in the courts and cities.

The European way of life had many faces, from the central states of the Continent to the outposts in the North Atlantic. ANNA AGNARSDÓTTIR (Reykjavík) explores Iceland's relationship with Europe during the eighteenth century. The late eighteenth century was a period when expeditions from Denmark, France, and England gave up-to-date accounts of Iceland in many languages, thereby changing the perception of the island in the rest of Europe. The geographically isolated rural society of Iceland, with no formal urban centres and lacking both a bourgeoisie and a European style nobility, was nevertheless in most respects an integral part of Europe, its history more or less mirroring that of Western Europe.

RANDI SKJELMO (Tromsø) provides an example of the intimate bonds between mission and education in early modern Europe. When the Danish *Collegium de cursu Evangelii promovendo* (Missionary Collegium) laid its eyes on northern Norway in the early eighteenth century, its primary aim was to convert the Finnish- and

Sami-speaking populations by means of education. Thomas von Westen, a pious priest with a firm command of the Sami language, was given the post of *lector* at the Cathedral School in Trondheim. From this platform he embarked on several missionary tours around northern Norway, teaching, preaching, and distributing Sami Bibles. He also launched two 'Sami seminars' devoted to educating Danish-Norwegian priests and Samis alike. These seminars, although modest with regard to the number of pupils, came to have a profound influence on the spiritual life of the Samis for generations.

By moving through the geography, the traveller encountered new and different ways of tackling the eternal human challenges of sustaining and facilitating material life. In the 1720s the Swedish traveller Henrik Kalmeter witnessed new ways of organizing trade and labour, as well as different and elaborate forms of craftsmanship that improved commercial economy. The British method of manufacturing pins particularly attracted the Swedish traveller and employee of the Board of Mines. It could be argued that a wider view of this socio-economic setting is needed in order to fully understand the state of the Enlightenment at the time of Diderot's and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*. By studying Swedish travellers in Britain and central Europe, GÖRAN RYDÉN (Uppsala) unearths the role of the mechanical arts in the Enlightenment, including the significance of the political economy, the division of labour, and technological changes, and explores how the idea of progress became a central feature of the eighteenth century.

Travel, especially the Grand Tour, provided a means of exploring other countries with their different cultures and ways of life. MARKKU KEKÄLÄINEN (Helsinki) studies how the Scottish author James Boswell experienced and described life in German princely courts during his Grand Tour in 1764. Boswell also tackled the subjects of courtly sociability, splendour, theatricality, magnificence, and luxury in many writings composed after this trip. Kekäläinen argues that Boswell's attitudes towards the courtly milieu were affirmative and enthusiastic, and shows that Boswell was fascinated by the courtly sociability and spectacle he encountered at German courts. He constantly observed the differences and similarities between courtly life in Germany and other European countries. The splendour of courts had on Boswell exactly the impact the rulers wished to make: he was bedazzled.

In Sweden, the duchess Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotte, sister-in-law to Gustavus III, maintained the authority of the Gustavian court in the 1790s through her daily presence in the urban life of Stockholm, as MY HELLSING (Örebro) argues in her article. By walking in public gardens, travelling in a horse-drawn carriage through the streets of the capital, randomly distributing charity to impoverished subordinates, visiting fashionable theatres, and attending splendid balls, the du-

chess was seen and admired, and the social and cultural life of the court made its presence felt in the urban landscape. This everyday urban sociability and social practice that Hellsing analyses became a staging of politics, a means of consolidating dangerous liaisons and manifesting the social exclusivity of the royal power.

Intellectual life during the Enlightenment is often described as a battleground between old and new ways of thinking about society. For instance, several thinkers have challenged the old triad King-Church-State. MERETHE ROOS (Halden/Oslo) reminds us that although many deep-rooted ways of life became questioned, it was hardly the case that every innovative thinker supported secularism. Nikolai Lorenz Fallesen's *Journal for Teachers of Religion*, published in 1793–1808, illustrates this. Edited by a priest wishing to introduce Denmark-Norway's clergymen to theological impulses from abroad, the journal was permeated by a firm belief in each reader's capacity to judge for himself between right and wrong on points of controversy. Fallesen hoped that the priests of his country, through this confrontation with divergent ways of dealing with faith, would in turn inspire the populace to be more receptive towards new intellectual impulses. That this would only improve and strengthen their faith appears to have been an implicit rationale behind Fallesen's *Journal*.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, art came to be considered larger and more important than reality. Reality was something dealt with by scientists and economists. This division between art and science formed the reception of the work of many artists – including artists who had been active in the eighteenth century – and made it difficult to discover and investigate the connection between art and science. As the connection was considered nonexistent, no one looked for it. In her article on the Danish painter Jens Juel, ANNE-CHRISTINE LØVENTOFT-JESSEN (Copenhagen) argues that there is such a connection in Juel's depictions of natural phenomena, and shows that what many researchers on Juel have described as a 'superficial' depiction of nature, is in reality a depiction of the essence of scientific knowledge in his time.

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This volume of *Sjuttonbunderatal* is the first complete Nordic volume. For the 2013 volume, Denmark (Dansk Selskab for 1700-talsstudier) and Iceland (Félag um átjándu aldar fræði) have joined the enterprise. Now all five Nordic eighteenth-century societies collaborate in building a professional publication channel for eighteenth-century scholars in the Nordic countries, across the national and dis-

ciplinary boundaries. The current volume is launched in conjunction with *The Eighteenth Century in Practice*, a Nordic conference on eighteenth-century studies held at the beautiful premises of the Lysebu Conference Centre outside Oslo between 28 and 31 August 2013. As editors, we see many parallels between our yearbook and the conference. It is our firm belief that book reviews, communications, and scholarly articles from a given country are likely to reach a wider readership than otherwise when collected in a yearbook that is delivered directly to the mailboxes of individuals of various nationalities and belonging to diverse research disciplines. We hope that *Sjuttonbundratal*, through its distribution to members of all the Nordic societies for eighteenth-century studies, will over time play a part in forming a sense of community between scholars with diverse backgrounds and affiliations.

In the twenty-first century, however, the printed publication also has its limitations. While some journals have chosen to quit publishing in the printed format altogether, deeming the PDF on the web a more efficient and cost-effective means of distribution, *Sjuttonbundratal* has chosen a combination of the old and new systems. In collaboration with staff at the University Library of Tromsø, the back catalogue of *Sjuttonbundratal* is now being processed and published on the website of Septentrio Academic Publishing, an open-access, strictly non-profit publisher (<http://septentrio.uit.no/index.php/1700>). By the time the printed version of the 2013 volume is published, the 2010 and 2011 editions will be available for free download online. We intend to expand the back catalogue in the coming years and hope this will contribute to giving *Sjuttonbundratal* an even wider readership than it already has. By breathing some life into collaborative Nordic academic publication in the twenty-first century, we hope that this endeavour will also lead to the recovery of some lost aspects of eighteenth-century ways of life, and give glimpses of what it was like to live in that distant, but vibrant and vivid century.

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