THE NATIONALIZATION OF CULTURE:
CONSTRUCTING SWEDISHNESS

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Although the anthropological study of ethnicity is a traditional and well-established field, the comparative analysis of the formation of national identities and cultures is still rather underdeveloped.Although nationalism is an example of a cultural force which in many cases has overruled other traditional identities and loyalities in nineteenth century society, the study of nationalism has been dominated by political scientists and historiens of ideas,while relatively little has been done in the way of cultural analysis of everyday praxis.As a result, the ideology and politics of nationalism are far better understood than the creation of Englishness or Swedishness. My paper will discuss some of the problems that have to do with the everyday praxis of national identity and its different cultural registers: from symbols, national myths and folklore to tacit understandings and structures of feeling. My material will be drawn from an ongoing historical anthropology project on class and culture in 19th and 20th century Sweden.

The gradual emergence of the interdisciplinary field often labelled "historical anthropology" has created some fruitful exchanges between disciplines like history, anthropology, European ethnology and sociology. Looking back at the patterns of colonization of this no man's land between humanities and the social sciences, it is interesting to note which paths have been cleared and which dialogues have flourished (of the discussion in Löfgren 1987).

One succesful exampleof this kind of exchange is found in the rapid expansion of family and household studies in the 1970's, an arena where anthropological kinship and household analysis were cross-fertilized with both demographic history and the study of "mentalités".

There are, however, other dialogues which are still poorly developed. One of them concerns the historical and comparative study of the construction of national identities and cultures.

Although there are some recent attempts at cross-disciplinary exchanges, we still live with a fairly conventional division of labour, in which historians concentrate on nationalism as political and ideological phenomenon, whereas anthropologists have mainly worked within the conceptual framework of ethnicity, mostly with an emphasis on synchronic perspectives. This traditional division is, however, slowly disintegrating, as historians become more interested in the question of the natiolization of culture and anthropologists have begun to interest themselves in the cultural politics of nation-building. In this paper I will argue for an intensified dialogue between the different approaches in oreder to create comparative, historical anthropology of the formation of national identities and cultures.

Revisiting the national project

Nationalism is perhaps of specific interes of that branch of anthropology within which I work: European ethnology, a discipline born in the nineteenth century as a child of nationalism and Herder's *Volksgeist*. European ethnology and folklore developed with the more or less explicit goal of salvaging and assembling "national" folk cultures. The strongly ideologically charged project also included ideas about folk mentalities or national character.

Later generations of ethnologists faced the task of critically deconstructing these pioneer attempts at creating a national folk heritage, and it is only after such a purge that it has become possible to return to the question of national identity and culture with new theoretical perspectives.

My own interest in national identity stems from a research project on class formation and culture-building in nineteenth and twentieth-century Sweden, where one of our main tasks was to scrutinize ideas about a modern and homogeneous Swedish national culture and to look at the extent to which clishés and notions of national homogeneity concealed a cultural differentiation based upon factors like class, gender and generations (see Löfgren 1986).

This work of deconstruction then led to an interest both in the ways in which *national rhetoric* had been used as an argument in hegemonic conflicts between competing interests and classes in Swedish society during the last century (Do some Swedes claim to be more Swedish than others?), but also in the question of how behind this ideological facade of national unity, an **actual** nationalization of shared cultural understandings and knowledge had been established. To what extent, for example, do Swedes of today share a common frame of reference compared with the situation fifty or hundred years ago?

In order to get some perspective on the Swedish national experience a comparative project was developed, together with Hungarian ethnologists, contrasting two very different national histories and identities. (An earlier version of this paper was presented at the first workshop of this project: "National culture as process: Hungarian and Swedish experiences", in Budapest, May 1-3 1988.)

Up till a few years ago research on national identity was to a great extent focused on the ideology and politics of nationalism, often within a framework of exposing nationalism as a type of false consciousness. There were so many myths of national

culture, so much ideological rhetoric waiting to be scrutinized and exposed. (A fairly typical example of this genre is Ernest Gellner's book *Nations and Nationalism* from 1893.) This was a necessary phase of research which now enables us to look in a more detached way at nationalism as a cultural phenomenon and as a historical process. We now have a number of studies dealing with the construction of national identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see, for example, Anderson 1983; Braudel 1986; and Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983).

In spite of this expanding literature we still live with an underdeveloped and ambigous analytucal framework, as Philip Schlesinger has pointed out in his critical survey of current research (1987); concepts like national identity, culture, mentality or heritage are still vaguely defined.

Being national?

When entering the Nordic museum, a nineteenth-century child of Swedish nationalism, you first encounter the imposing statue of the Swedish king Gustav Vasa, often seen as the sixteenth-century founder of the Swedish nation state. Under his stern gaze is a carved motto directed to the visitor: *Be Ye Swedish!* (**Warer Swenske!**)

This early twentieth-century version of a royal command may illustrate the first analytic problem, that of working with concepts which cannot easily be moved around in history. An adjective like national or Swedish has totally different connotations for different epochs and different social groups. The twentieth-century message of the importance of being Swedish would have made very little sense to Gustav Vasa's peasant subjects. Swedishness is a quality which can hardly be used transhistorically, ta least not without a discussion of how this elusive trait is defined or redefined in different historical settings.

In the same way we have an extensive debate on the concept of nationalism. Should it be reserved for the ideological and political movements from the late eighteenth century onwards, as a product of the intellectual climate of the American and French revolutions? Is it possible or meaningful to talk about nationalism in medieval England or sixteenth-century Sweden? It seems to me reasonable to make an analytical distinction between the concepts of **patriotism** and **nationalism** in this comparative context. The wider concept of patriotism is based upon the love of God, King and Country by **subjects** of the state, whereas the idea of nationalism is based upon ideas about a *Volksgemeinschaft,* a shared history and culture, a common destiny, an idea of equality and fellowship, which means that nationalism contains political dynamite and can thus be used both to mask class interests or to fight them.

In the following I will concentrate on the period of nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the grand centuries of nationalist ideology and nation-states as opposed to the earlier era of the absolute monarchies. I will mainly focus on the problem of the making and constant remaking of national identity and culture, as an arena of contesation between different interests.

Do-it-yourself nationalism?

The National Flag, the National Anthem and the National Emblem are the three symbols through which an independent country proclaims its identity and sovereignty and, as such, they command instantaneous respect and loyalty. In themselves they reflect the entire background, thought and culture of a nation. (after Firth 1973: 314)

This quote from a pamphlet published by the Indian Government in the 1960s illustrates the ways in which a common symbolic language of nationhood is taken for granted today.

The interesting paradox in the emrgence of nationalism is that it is an international ideology which is imporetd for national ends. Looking back at the pioneer era of Western national culture-building we may view this ideology of nationalism as gigantic do-it-yourself kit. gradually a set of ideas is developed as to what elements make up a proper nation, the national cultures with a shared symbolic capital. The experiences and strategies of creating national languages, heritages and symbolic estates, etc. are circulated among intellectual activists in different corners of the world and the eventual result is a kind of check-list: every nation should have not only a common language, a common past and destiny, but also a national folk culture, a national character or mentality, national values, perhaps even some national tastes and a national landscape (often enshrined in the form of national parks), a gallery of national myths and heroes (and villains), a set of symbols, including flag and anthem, sacred texts and images, etc. This national inventory is produced mainly during the nineteenth century, but elaborated during the twentieth. (For example the discussion in Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983 and Agulhon 1981.)

The process in which national projects are made transnational and recycled in different settings and at different times is still with us, as new nations continue to be born within the same basic nineteenth-century paradigm. It is thus an irony that the liberating force of nationalism in developing countries can be seen in a way as the ultimate victory of solonial hegemony, as the nation-building is often carried out along truly Western lines.

The late-comers to this process of nation-building also have to live with the ironic comments of the pioneers. For the latter their own national identity has had time to be transformed from an ideological construction to a given, natural fact, and in their ridiculing of late-comers' attempts to create national symbols (mainly in the Third World) the *old* nations fail to see the parallels to their own past. Ernest Gellner has touched on this problem which is sometimes boiled down to the derogative maxim *I am a patriot, he is a nationalist and they are tribalists* (Gellner 1983: 87).

Constructing national identity

Gellner's quote underlines the fact that some national ideologies have been naturalized so early that they are rarely questioned today. Norbert Elias has pointed at the same problem in his comparison of French and German self-representations:

The questions What is really French? What is really English? *have long since ceased to be a matter of much discussion for the French and English. But for centuries* What is really German? *has not been laid to rest.* (Elias 1939/ 1978: 6)

· If there is a certain chameolonic vagueness about the concept of nationalism, it is still usually contained within the field of meanings denoting ideology, doctrine or political movement. The use of the concept of national identity is however, more ambivalent, and it is probably in the development of this concept that ethnicity theory can make its most fruitful contribution, namely in the focus on identity as a dynamic process of construction and reproduction over time, in direct relation or opposition to specific other groups and interests: it is the dynamic and dialectical approach to identity management that is important here (cf. Schlesinger 1987).

During the last decade ethnicity studies have stressed the ways in which ethnic boundaries may change over time, how ethnic markers and symbols are created and communicated and how different criteria of identity can be selected in different situations. (There is, of course, the risj that this focus on the strategic aspects of ethnicity management overstates the fluidity, malleability and manipulatory aspects of ethnic identity.)

National identity can thus be seen as a specific form of collective identity. Like ethnic identity, it can be both latent and manifest: activated in special situations, confrontations or settings, dormant in others.

In what ways are national identities different from ethnic ones, and not only a specific variation on the ethnicity theme? It is evident that a force like nationalism often uses ethnicity as a basis for constructing national cultures, but it can also be argued (in some cases) that an ethnic identity can be a by-product of national-building. National identity can also be superimposed on traditional ethnic cleavages, turning Finns and Americans out of a mosaic of immigrants. We need to devote more attention to the ways in which national identity in a gradual process comes to transcend and subordinate other loyalties, be they regional, ethnic, or based upon class, gender or religion. How is it that national identity often works so well as an **inclusive** symbol?

Unlike ethnic identities national ones are always directly linked to problems of state formation and state discourse. They are produced and reproduced within a very special institutional framework, which sets them apart from other types of identity constructs.

Benedict Anderson has discussed nationa identity in terms of *imagined communities* of national fellowship. His by now almost classic definition of the nation runs:

It is an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.

It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (Anderson 1983: 15)

In a critical discussion of Anderson's thesis Michael Harbsmeier has argued that his use of the anthropologist Victor Turner's **communitas** concept is too broad, it does not help us to understand the very specific nature of the *national community,* as opposed to **communitas** of religious groups or empires. He develops Anderson's framework by arguing that national identity is, unlike many other forms of social identity, totally dependent upon the imagined or real approval of this identity as a national otherness by others, i. e. other nations (Harbsmeier 1986: 52).

The fact that national identity is alweys defined as a contrast or a complement to other nations, is illustrated by the nineteenth-century Scandinavian national movements. Norwegian nationalism was born, not in Norway, but among Norwegian students and intelectuals in Copenhagen towards the end of the eighteenth century. The Norwegian national identity came to be profiled against the centuries of Danish rule and the enforced union with Sweden from 1814. It is no coincidence that it was the historical period of up to 1300, before the union with Denmark, that came into focus in the creation of a Norwegian cultural heritage: Norwegians were above all Vikings (cf Österud 1987). In the Finnish national movement, folklore became even more important. The search for a Finnish folk literature and the emphasis on Finnisih as a national language was a counter to the former Swedish domination and the new Russian rule after 1809. This construction of a national Finnish folk was a task mainly carried out by the Swedish-speaking intellectual elite, who in this process had to become even more Finnish than the peasantry itself (cf. Honko 1980).

In nineteenth-century Denmark the construction of a national heritage and a national identity was above all profiled against the arch-enemy in the south, Germany, while Swedish nationalism of this era really lacked an arch-enemy or rather the threat of a dominating neighbour. Against this background it is hardly surprising that the cult of **Scandinavianism** became a Swedish speciality, or even a kind of substitute nationalism. The national anthem talks about the mountainous North and the national folk museum was named the Nordic Museum.

Without analysing this national culture building as a contrasting project we cannot explaine the different strategic uses made, for example, of folk culture in the nineteenth-century Scandinavian context. It is no coincidence that the authentic Norwegian peasant was to be found in the remote mountain valleys of Telemark and his Swedish counterpart in Dalecarlia, or that true Finnish folk culture survived in the forests of Karelia.

For Hungary Tamas Hofer has analysed a similar process of stereotyping. The Hungarian peasant of the plains was created as a national contrast to the Austrian mountain peasant (Hofer 1988). He has also discussed the ways in which a national peasant folk culture was used by different groups for hegemonic ends at different points in Hungarian history - for example, the elaborate use of folk culture as national symbolism during the Stalinist era of the 1950s. (Cf. the discussion of folklore and nation-building in Herzfeld's study of Greece, Herzfeld 1982.)

Even the American immigrant nation developed a search for its own folk culture at the beginning of the twentieth century, when collectors and scholars roamed by the Appalachian mountains in search of an *Elizabethan culture* whose bearers spoke like Shakespeare and plaited baskets while singing medivial ballads. This traditional culture had to be salvaged and reproduced in order to stem the disintegrating forces both from the modern world and the new waves of proletarian immigrants (Whisnant 1983).

We find a similar contrasting process in the creation of national stereotypes: the typical Swede or Hungarian is usually profiled (consciously or unconsciously) against a counterpart and it is interesting to note that the stereotype tends to change with the

object of comparison. In relation to the happy-go-lucky nations of the Mediterranean, Swedes define themselves as grey and boring, obsessed with order, punctuality and the control of emotions, characterized by a total lack of spontaneity and **esprit-de-vie**. If the comparison is made in relation to Finns or Russians, other qualities are stressed, because these Northern neighbours are often stereotyped as even greyer and more boring: they even make the Swedes look a little bohemian. On the whole there is an interesting metaphor of North and South in national self-representation: one's own identity is contrasted with those who are more Southern and easy-going (but less dependable) and those who are Northerners and less easy-going than one's fellow countrymen. There seems to be a tendency in many settings to produce an image which is based upon an idea of the golden mean. *We English are not as warm and hot-tempered as the French or the Spaniards, but more dependable and efficiant; on the other hand we are not as rigid or controlled as the Germans or the Scandinavians.* Ideas about emotinal control or lack of it seem very central in these kinds of stereotypes, which incidentally have a marked gender bias. Although **das Vaterland** is usually symbolized by a national mother - Britannia, Marianne, Mother Denmark and Mother Svea (of Sweden) - the typical Swede, Dane or German is usually a man.

To conclude, one may argue that the construction of national identity is a task which calls for internal and external communication. In order to create a symbolic community, identity markers have to be created **within** the national arena in order to achieve a sense of belonging and loyalty to the national project, but this identity also has to be marketed to the outside world. Such projects of self-presentation and self-definition can be analysed in many cultural arenas during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. (An example of the latter is the big world exhibitions from 1851 and onwards, where nations have peddled their selfimages; cf. the discussion in Benedict 1983, Rydell 1984 and Smeds 1983.)

National culture

National identity and national culture are often used as interchangeable concepts. Here I would like to argue for the need to keep them apart, reserving the concept of national culture for that kind of collective sharing which exists on a national level or within a national cultural space. Rather little research in this field has studied <u>what</u> is actually shared on a national level and <u>how</u> it is shared.

It is quite clear that the communication is a crucial problem here: how are these imagined communities shaped and held together over time, how is the social and political space of the nation also transformed into a **cultural** space: a common culture? This sharing is done in different ways and on different levels.

Let us think about the various ingredients which may be contained in the vague concept of national culture. First of all I think we have to distinguish between *The National Culture* and an everyday national sharing of memories, symbols and knowledge. *The National Culture* which the French historian Maurice Agulhon (1987) has also termed The national school culture (or **la Grande Culture**) is a normative cultural capital: What Every Frenchman Should Know. This is the kind of knowledge which is dished out in school, carrying the authorized seal of the official public culture.

The making of this kind of normative cultural heritage is an interesting study in itself. The boundaries between ideas about every Swede <u>ought</u> to know and what all Swedes **actually** share tend, however, to become rather blurred.

An interesting example of this confusion of a descriptive and normative approach to national culture is found in the recent study *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (Hirsch 1987). Hirsch starts out by trying to delineate what actually is shared on a national level, using the USA as his case:

Suppose we think of American public culture as existing in three segments. At one end is our **civil religion,** *which is laden with definitive value traditions. Here we have absolute commitments to freedom, patriotism, equality, selfgovernment, and so on. At the other end of the spectrum is the* **vocabulary** *of our national discourse, by no means empty of content but nonetheless value-neutral in the sense that it is used to support all the conflicting values that arise in public discourse... Between these two extremes lies the vast middle domain of culture proper. Here are the concrete politics, customs, technologies, and legends that define and determine our current attitudes and actions and our institutions. Here we find constant change, growth, conflict. This realm determines the texture of our national life.* (1987: 102)

Hirsch's categorization can be questioned, but his aim is to look at the domain of vocabulary, or rather what he terms the **cultural literacy** of a given nation: *the whole system of widely shared information and associations* (p. 103), the kind of cultural competence needed to be able to take part in public discourse. Where he goes wrong is in his insistence that this national cultural capital belongs to a general mainstream culture which stands above class interests and power relations. The problem of hegemony and constatation is brushed away and his ultimate aim thus becomes rather futile, namely a list of 4, 500 dates, places, people, events, books, phrases and sayings that make up the American common culture.

This attempt at standardization mirrors a given social position, reflecting the perspective of a middle-class, middle-aged WASP. The whole project again illustrates the difficulty of separating normative and descriptive approaches to what constitutes a national culture or shared knowledge.

Let me be illustrate this dilemma further by quoting a couple of less ambitious attempts at defining national sharing. First T. S. Eliot's classical list of English institutions:

Derby-day, the Henly regatta, Cowes, August the 12th, a cup final, the greyhound races, the Fortuna game, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, cabbage boiled in cloves, pickled beetroots, churches in nineteenth-century Gothic and Elgar's music. (Eliot 1949: 30)

Here is a Swedish version from 1985:

To be Swedish is to have experienced the Swedish summer in all its glory, it is Christmas morning, it is the high school gradiation. It is to have been dressed up for the last day of school and to have seen the sun set over the edge of the forest, it is to have lit the advent candles and to have read Elsa Beskow and seen the king. It is to have walked across a barrack square and to have stood by a grave. (Nordstedt 1985)

Both these examples are insider's list of cultural traits, made for other insiders. They are lists of key symbols or key events which probably have a rich field of cultural connotations and evoke shared memories of similar situations. They both claim to have captured the **essence** or spirit of Englishness or Swedishness, but they reflect **one** version of or perspective on what constitutes the typical or essential in the national culture. This is England and Sweden described through the cultural lenses of two (male) intellectuals.

If ask other persons to make up lists like these, we will get a wide range of variations with some common focus, but above all there is a tendency for people to pick very visible national traits: public rituals, family feasts, favourite dishes, key symbols and images. It is the *Sunday Best* version of the national culture which is often described, and it is interesting to reflect upon how such symbolic compressions of national culture are created and changed over time. You will hardly get the same list in 1920 as in 1988. Eliot's use of Elgar can be taken as one example of this gradual selection. In 1972 another fellow countryman states that *Elgar is loved by the English people as one of the greatest English composers and also for his unique expression of the deep intangible feelings of England* (quoted after Crump 1986: 164).

But as Jeremy Crump has shown in his analysis of the reception of Elgar, his music gradually became defined as typically English through being performed on ceremonial occasions and also by being put to patriotic use during the First World War.

The selection of items for such Top Ten lists of national symbols will often include small details or seemingly trivial elements, which are symbolic representations or distillations of central ideas or patterns of behaviour. They have, as Billy Ehn has put it, *a high specific cultural weight.* He points out that images of Swedishness can be evoked in memories of the tastes and smells emanating from the traditional midsummer meal of pickled herring, new potoatoes and cold aquavit: *a phenomenon which mirrors a whole cultural universe, images of summer, festivity, pleasure and nationhood* (Ehn 1983: 14).

The impact of such events depends not only on their being very visible rituals, but also on their sensual or emotional quality. The common national memories and understandings are sometimes more strongly articulated in non-verbal forms, in shared smells, sounds, tastes and visions. Raymond Williams has coined the concept **structure of feelings** for such elusive cultural phenomena, which cannot be described in terms of ideology or worldview (Williams 1977). In this sense some feelings are more national than others, i. e. they have a stronger symbolic charge.

I would, however, argue that the most important aspects of this national sharing are anchored in the trivialities of everyday life, in the ways in which we can talk about Swedish routines and habits. These traits are so obvious to us that we do not even consider them as typically Swedish. They are easier for an outsider to observe. Concepts like Swedishness and Englishness, for example, imply that there is a certain cultural praxis as well as style that is contained within the national boundaries.

It is interesting to think about what people actually mean when they talk about a person behaving in a *very Swedish* way or looking *very British*. People often find it

difficult to actually verbalize these traits: they will say vaguely that there is something very Swedish about the way he carries his body, eats his meal, expresses certain feelings or laughs at a joke. Intangible traits like this make up one elusive part of a national cultural capital, or rather - to continue with Bordieu's terminology - a national habitus or a set of dispositions. When people talk abot Swedishness, they talk about this kind of imponderabilia, rather than about *cultural heritage* or **la Grande Culture**. Swedishness then denotes not so much what people talk about their way of talking: the styles in which a problem is addressed, an argument is carried on or a conflict resolved (or suppressed).

To conclude: a concept like national culture is an acute need of deconstruction: what kinds of knowledge or shared understandnings is this national cultural capital made up of, which parts of this capital are highly visible, which forms are less articulated or tangible? Are we talking about what all Swedes know or what they ought to know? It seems important to distinguish between, on the one hand, the symbolic capital that is defined as national and patriotic and, on the other hand, the knowledge and experience which happen to be contained within national boundaries: the insade jokes, associations, references and memories which Swedes understand nad Norwegians don't. In short, how can we categorize these different forms of sharing into domains, registers or levels of a *national culture*?

How wide is nation-wide?

The problem of sharing raises the question of communication and the creation of national arenas of interaction. The making of a nation is thus a problem very much linked to the project of **integration** and **standardization**. Language is a good example of this. One of the early aims of nationalists was to create a national language, often in settings where to spoken or written word did not respect nationa boundaries. For nineteenth-century Norwegian nationalists the creation of a truly Norwegian standard language meant that old influences from written Danish had to be contested, but also that the border between Norway and Sweden had to be made into a linguistic boundary as well, in spite of the fact that people on both sides of that border shared a common dialect. The task of the linguists was to create a standard Norwegian language and the job of the school system was to make sure all Norwegians learned to spek it (cf. Österud 1986: 13). All over Europe we can study the same process, which also led to the creation of specific academic disciplines and school subjects, like *Swedish*, *Danish* or *English*. (See the discussion of the Scandinavian case in Teleman 1986 and for Britain, Colls & Dodd 1986.)

If language became an important medium for national cohesion and belonging (in most, but far from all nations), the nationalization of culture was very much linked to the creation of **a public sphere** by the rising bourgeoisie, who created new arenas and media of debate and information. We need to study the ways in which this kind of public discourse was turned into a **national** discourse.

Benedict Anderson has argued for the importance of what he calls print capitalism in producing a national community. He focuses on the role of the new media newspapers in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and their role in supplying intellectualls with

a forum for national exchanges. In Sweden it is evident that the creation of a multitude of local newspapers had this cohesive effect, in spite of the fact that there was no *national* paper in the nineteenth century (although there were some magazines). There was a constant borrowing and recycling of material between papers and a debate which made the local doctor or bureaucrat out in the provinces feel that he was taking part in a national discourse and had a knowledge of what was happening in the national capital.

Another new mass medium was the national school book. In Sweden the standard reader for the elementary school (**Folkskolans läsebok**) was used in all Swedish schools from 1868 up to around 1900. Several generations of Swedes thus grew up reading the same texts and looking at the same pictures (Furuland 1987).

Media like these not only created national communities of communication but also produced gape or communicative barriers, between for example, Swedes and Danes. Cultural sharing in a sense became less regional and more national but also less international during the nineteenth century. The Swedish elite talked and read more Swedish less French and Latin, while the peasants were drawn into a national framwork of thought and action.

During the twentieth century the mass media have often been seen as the symbol (or scapegoat) of the **internationalization** of national cultures, but even in the age of satellite television and rock videos I would argue for a more differentiated analysis television, have played a crucial role in a further nationalization of culture. Many of the nineteenth-century media still remained class based media, and truly national public discourse was not created until the twentieth century: I would tentatively argue for the periof of c. 1950-1970 as the era of strongest nationalizing influences in the media in Sweden. This was a time when (almost) all Swedes listened to the same radio programmes or the same TV shows in one-channel system.

But even today, with a much more pluralistic media world, we must look at the ways in which international influences are nationalized into a local context as they cross the border. Dallas, Disney and Dynasty have different meanings and play different roles in different national settings. Sweden is, for example, often presented as the most Americanized country in Europe, but this Americanization has been carried out is an extremely Swedish manner. For a visitor from The US it is often hard to recgonize this American influence in the Swedish way of life: there is what Robert Redfield once termed an interesting process of **parochialization** going on in Stockholm as well as in Budapest. Ulf Hannerz has developed the concept of **creolization** for this local transformation of cultural flows within the world system in a discussion of American culture (Hannerz 1987).

A good example of the effect of national cultural barriers is found in the international world of advertising, where it is often demonstrated that an American or French advertisment cannot simply be transplanted into a Swedish magazine - it needs to be reworked by a local agency.

In the same way, consumer culture may also be both an internationalizing and a nationalizing force. On of the really strong cohesive national forces of the United States is to be found in consumer patterns and messages (cf. for example Roland Marchand's

study *Advertising the American Dream*, 1985). Consumption in the USA is in a way very American, with brands, styles and habits which keep the 50 states together, but also create barriers to the outside world. These barriers are often demonstrated in the popular jokes about American tourists complaints about the lack of American ways (especially foodways) in foreign countries. The establishment of a number of national chains of shops, motels, restaurants and other commercial institutions has created a standardized pattern which makes the Californian feel at home in both Idaho and South Carolina. (When the waitress approaches him in such distant territories asking what kind of salad dressing he would prefer with his meal, he instantly knows that there are three choices: French, blue cheese or Thousand Islands.)

To conclude: we need to develop a study of nationalizing media, agents, institutions and arenas. How is the nation established as a **nationwide** cultural space, as a horizon or communicative community, and how is the boundary towards other nations maintained? Such an anlysis must focus on everything from schools and national (military) service to TV commercials and fashions, and it must examine the way regional or subcultural worlds are made national and the way international messages are creolized.

The disintegrating nation

Another perspective on this communicative process is found in the discourse on the disintegrating national culture, a discourse which is at least as aold as nationalism itself. Nations have always been seen as falling apart, but the forces (or threats) of disintegration tend to vary through time. Around 1900 socialism was often defined as such an unpatriotic threat, later to be replaced by commercialization or Americanization.

This genre of popular debate is perhaps better analysed as a form of cultural contestation, in which interest different groups accuse other groups (or ideologies) of threatening the national ideal. Why do some Swedes at certain times define themselves as more Swedish or better nationalists than other? Why is that this kind of discourse is more marked in certain historical periods?

It has, for example, sometimes been argued that Swedes are not very chauvinistic, because national slogans or patriotic appeals are less common here than, for eample, in the United States or in Romania. But national arguments of national feelings are mainly used in situations of uncertainty or anxiety. The incessant talk about American morals and values in the United States does not necessarily mean that Americans are more patriotic (or chauvinistic), but rather that the national identity has to be constantly reaffirmed because it is somewhat fragile construction. The ethnic mix and fluidity calls for a constant remaking of America.

In the Sweden of the sixties and seventies flag-waving and patriotic rhetoric were definitely out or even taboo, at least in intellectual circles, but this was a period of national stability. In the political turbulence of the twenties and thirties national rhetoric was a tool of political struggle between the left and the right. The conservatives argued that the social democrats were unpatriotic and out to destroy both traditions and the national heritage. Unlike their counterparts in France and Britain, the Swedish social democrats were, however, very succesful in projecting an image of themselves as working *in the best interests of the whole nation*. In a way they wrested the national

argument from the hands of the conservatives and made it a part of the National Welafare programme. In this process they also tried to redefine the Swedish heritage. In the 1930s Swedish democracy was still a young institution and in shaping a new national history, great emphasis was placed upon the democratic traditions of Sweden (and above all Swedish peasantry). The ethnologists joined in this redefinition. The traditional villages could now be described as the cradles of democracy, as *the moduls in which the Swedish folk mentality had been shaped, the setting in which our people has gained its basic social instincts* (after Johansson 1987: 7). New national heroes were also produced, like the fifteenth-century peasant rebel leader Engelbrekt (who in fact was a German).

In the 1930s we can thus analyse how a new national heritage is constructed with new symbols of common ancestry and identity, and the same type of analysis could be carried out for the end of the nineteenth century, when conservatives and liberals fought over the true national values and genuine heritage. (Cf. also Patrick Wright's discussion of the political struggle over definitions of the national heritage between Labour nad Conservatives in post-war England, 1985.)

The discourse on national disintegration often misses the fact that national culture is constantly redefined. Every new generation produces its own national sharing and frames of reference, selecting items from the symbolic estate of earlier generations. It is usually not the nation that is falling apart but rather an older version of the national ideal. When indignant protests are made about Swedish schoolchildren who (supposedly) call the national anthem the *ice hockey song* because they only hear it at international matches, people forget that only a few generations of Swedes have ever learnt to sing it.

This constatnt redefinition of national symbolic and cultural capital can be analysed by trying to trace what kind of sharing has united different Swedes (say, a clergyman, a farm woman and an industrial worker) in 1880, in 1930 or today. I would maintain that the sharing is greater today than in the past, but different. Maurice Agulhon has, for example, argued that the France today is more **culturally** homogeneous than during the nineteenth century, but that the **national**, symbolic capital (i. e. the patriotic school book culture) has diminished (Algulhon 1987).

In the same way national rhetoric tends to change. Arguments or language of earlier periods may sound bombastic, chauvinistic or even racist to our modern ears, but we have at the same time developed new forms of rhetoric about the superiority of our own country, which we do not think of as chauvinistic. In a study of sports and nationalism, Billy Ehn has pointed out that nationalistic arguments and rhetoric which in other settings or arenas would sound bombastic flourish in the sport pages (Ehn 1988).

National culture as rhetoric and practice

During the last two centuries nationalism has evolved as a strong source of cultural and social identity, and so far we have little evidence that is dying, although it may often be dormant. The symbolic community of the nation still produces strong feelings and strong commitments as well as gut reactions of love, hate, pride and agression. Flag-waving is still, in most settings, no laughing matter.

In this paper I have argued for a historical anthropology of national cultures, focusing and processes which develop, reproduce and change national identity and culture. This is a field of study which calls not only for historical but also a comparative approach.

Elusive phenomena like Swedishness or Englishness are best studied in contrast.

The comparative study of the ways in which nations are turned into cultural formations may benefit from separating three levels. First of all there exists what we could call an **international cultutal grammar** of nationhood, with a thesaurus of general ideas about the cultural ingredients needed to form a nation, like the check-list I mentioned earlier. This includes a symbolic estate (flag, anthem, national landscape, sacred texts, etc.), ideas about a national heritage (a national history and literature, a national folk culture, etc.), as well as notions of national character, values and tastes. This international grammar may also contain specific ideas about the institutional framework. During the nineteenth century it was not only a concept of national folk culture that was circulated between (mainly) European nations, but also guidelines for the propper establishment of institutions like national folk museums and archives, to name one example.

The international thesaurus is to transformed into a specific **national lexicon**, local forms of cultural expression, which tend to vary from nation to nation. In this field we can observe how national rhetoric and symbols may be located in different arenas, emphasized in different historical periods or social situations. The third term, **dialect vocabulary**, focuses on the internal divisions within the nation: conflicting groups and interests using national arguments and rhetoric, sometimes also creating different styles of national discourse: accusing each other of *vulgar nationalism, unpatriotic behaviour* or just representing the wrong type of Swedishness. The definition of the Swedish folk heritage of the late nineteenth-century bourgeoisie differed a great deal from that of the social democrats of the 1930s (cf. Löfgren 1985 and Frykman & Löfgren 1987: 57 ff.).

Whereas the concept of nationalism is relatively clearly defined as a political ideology, national culture is a term which often contains a mixture of normative and descriptive elements. I have argued for a focus on the everyday level of cultural sharing, which happens to be contained by national borders: the shared understandings and frames and references of Swedes or Hungarians.

In the study of the ways in which culture is **nationalized** we thus have to distinguish between two processes. One is concerned with the ways in which cultural elements are turned into symbols or national rhetoric - declared to symbolize the essence of the nation or its inhabitants or stated as norms about proper national behaviour and virtues; the other has to do with how cultural flows are contained, organized and transformed within the national borders - how national space becomes cultural space. A study of this process calls for an analysis, not so much of rhetoric but of cultural practice, of the lived national experience.

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NACIONALIZACIJA KULTURE: STVARANJE ŠVEDSKE NACIJE
Sažetak:

Iako je antropološki studij etniciteta tradicionalno i dobro utemeljeno područje,komparativna analiza formiranja nacionalnog identiteta i kultura još je uvijek prilično nerazvijena. Tako se može reći da je nacionalizam primjer kulturne sile koja je u mnogim slučajevima nadvladala mnoge druge tradicionalne identitete i lojalnosti u društvu 19. i 20. stoljeća; politički teoretičari i povjesničari puni ideja dominirali su istraživanjima o nacionalizmu dok je relativno malo učinjeno na području kulturne analize svakodnevne prakse. Ovo je dovelo do toga da je bilo lakše razumijeti ideologiju i politiku nacionalizma nego samo stvaranje engleske ili švedske nacije. Ovaj se rad bavi nekim problemima koji se tiču svakodnevne prakse nacionalnog identiteta i njegovog različitoga kulturnog izražaja od simbola, nacionalnih mitova i folklora do strukture osjećaja.Materijal za ovaj rad uzet je iz povijesno-antropološkog projekta o klasi i kulturi 19. i 20. stoljeća, koji se izrađuje.