

a radical filmic practice grounded in other discursive techniques), but nonetheless her study constitutes a most valuable contribution to Bergman studies. Although self-admittedly lacking an "övergripande mening" (overriding thesis) [which to be sure can certainly be problematic], this analysis consistently poses sensitive and appropriate questions to Bergman's production, questions that touch on, even if they do not directly address, critical and theoretical issues at the heart of the contemporary debate about the confluence of aesthetic practice and ideology.

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■ Catharina Raudvere. *Föreställningar om maran i nordisk folktro*. Lund Studies in History of Religions 1. Lund: Novapress, 1993. Pp. 1-328. SEK 280.

Most students of Scandinavian folklore will be familiar with the figure of the Nightmare, *mara* in Swedish, a supernatural being that is at once one of the most ubiquitous and yet enigmatic supernatural beings in the world of Nordic folk belief. The Nightmare visits farms at night, riding animals or men, with varying effects on its victim ranging from lethargy to death. In this comprehensive volume, Raudvere details the often contradictory beliefs concerning the Nightmare in Nordic traditions, and provides an admirably thorough overview of its manifestations. As such, her work goes far beyond Tillhagen's (1960) introductory essay, "The conception of the Nightmare in Sweden," an obvious source of inspiration for the present study. Yet Raudvere provides much more than a systematic overview of the beliefs concerning Nightmares, as she successfully engages the analytic as well. Not only does she address the "what" of tradition, but she also strives to reveal the "why." Basing her interpretations on a thorough grounding in historical and anthropological research coupled to a firm grasp of folklore theory and the study of comparative religion, Raudvere offers analyses which link the expressions to the conditions of life in rural, pre-industrial Scandinavia.

One of Raudvere's stated goals is to examine the continuity of the Nightmare tradition in the Nordic lands from the pre-Christian times up to the pre-industrial period at the turn of the twentieth century. After a brief introductory section detailing the methods and materials for the study, Raudvere turns the clock back to medieval times and excavates examples of the Nightmare in both the Eddic poems and the saga literature. She discovers similarities between the Nightmare and the *túnriða*, the *myrkriða*, and the more ubiquitous *kveldriða*. Although she relates the Nightmare to the complex of *seið*, Raudvere deftly sidesteps the issue of an equivalence between the Nightmare and the shaman. This resistance comes as a welcome relief of the eager categorization of all shape-shifters as shamans. While

Raudvere only touches briefly on the record of Nightmares in ballads, catechisms and other church literature, her examination of laws and the punishment of people identified as Nightmares offers an intriguing view into concrete actions based on folk beliefs.

The next section of the book moves forward in time to the archival records from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although she makes due reference to the folklore archives in Denmark, Norway, and Finland, the majority of her material is culled from the archives in Sweden. Nevertheless, the material presented here provides a much needed systematization of the non-narrative materials concerning the Nightmare. Folk belief is often self-contradictory, and there is no single answer to the question, "what is a Nightmare." Rather, as Raudvere observes, "Maran var en bild för egen ångest och andras ondska i det skandinaviska agrarsamhället" (105) [The Nightmare was a reflection of one's own fears and others' malice in the Scandinavian agrarian society]. A photograph of an owl nailed to a barn is perhaps one of the most memorable prophylactics against the Nightmare (147), and it also illustrates the scope of Raudvere's study. She does not limit herself to any one type of source material, but rather includes everything from law texts to representations of material culture in her desire to fully document the scope of beliefs concerning the Nightmare.

The final section of Raudvere's book is perhaps the most successful. Here she considers the legend tradition concerning the Nightmare and offers a tenable categorization of the three major types of the Nightmare legends. Her interpretive model, which couples a structural analysis with a contextual analysis, proves eminently suited to her study and could be used for the interpretation of legend in general. She suggests a four part structure reminiscent of Labov's (1972) and Nicolaisen's (1987) schemes. Also her three part contextualization of the accounts, namely spatial, ritual, and social, has not been as clearly presented before. Her analyses of legends are noteworthy because she emphasizes the concept of agency. When the victim is attacked, he is an object. But through the course of the legend, he becomes a subject. Through this acquisition of agency, he is able to repel the attack of the Nightmare.

One of Raudvere's most cogent points concerns the presentation of women in these legends. Women are presented as frightening beings intent on causing harm, deliberately undermining the economic and social organization of the community. However, the Nightmare is often dealt with harshly, with the punishments frequently bordering on the misogynistic. Regretfully, by limiting herself primarily to the Swedish archives, Raudvere is unable to provide any quantitative analysis of informant gender. Here, an examination of Evald Tang Kristensen's legend collections may have helped

her already strong argument that these legends serve as a form of narrative violence carried out by men against women. Raudvere's final theoretical advance, the identification of what she calls the "fictive ritual," rituals which exist only in the narratives but closely mimic the form of rituals performed in the community, provides a link between the narrative tradition and the praxis of folk belief.

Thus, Raudvere presents a remarkably complete analysis of the folk belief concerning the Nightmare in Scandinavia. Her inclusion of the tradition participants, particularly their social, economic and religious milieu, add an interpretive dimension to the study which helps answer the question of "why" beliefs concerning the Nightmare existed. Although the book lacks an index, the detailed table of contents makes quick referencing possible, a likely use of the book given its wealth of information. Comprehensive and well researched, Raudvere's book stands as a model for the study of folk belief complexes such as the Nightmare.

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■ Roger Holmström. *Hagar Olsson och den öppna horisonten: Liv och diktning 1920–1945*. Helsinki: Schildts, 1993. Pp. 402.

Roger Holmström already has a firmly established reputation both as a specialist in the history of Fenno-Swedish literary criticism and an authority on Hagar Olsson. In this study he finds a natural combination of the two specialties. And a thorough job he has made of it, too. In addition to a vast array of printed material, he has had access to the large collection of Hagar Olsson letters and notes now stored in Åbo Akademi as well as to other manuscripts relevant to her, for instance Toya Dahlgren's diaries and the hundred or so letters which Hagar Olsson wrote to her. The book is thus based on a wealth of documentation and betokens an impressive skill in meticulously weighing and organizing a variety of source material. One problem the author has had to address is the fact that whereas Hagar Olsson herself apparently kept large numbers of the letters she received, many of those she wrote—for instance to Honorine Hermelin—have not survived, and so a fair amount of the material in the book depends on what can be gleaned from Hagar Olsson's correspondents rather than from her own accounts. Nevertheless, the study maintains a careful balance, and is particularly to be praised for its honest presentation of the material available and for the author's willingness to eschew useless speculation.

Hagar Olsson stands as one of the most influential representatives of modernism in Finland, most famous, perhaps, for her friendship with and championship of Edith Södergran. Apart from a couple of novels such as