

TOPICS, NOTES AND COMMENTS

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“Instant Tradition”: The Introduction of the Swedish Easter Tree

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Abstract

Customs are by their nature ever changing, being transformed by each new generation. In these times of rapid and significant change in Sweden, tradition (or what is perceived as tradition) can provide society with a sense of security. This can lead to a reawakening of dormant traditions or even to the invention of new ones, as seen, for instance in the emergence and successful diffusion of the Easter tree in Sweden over the past decade or so. [1]

Introduction

Is there such a thing as “instant tradition”? While such a concept is a contradiction in terms, tradition has to respond to changes in everyday life if it is to remain meaningful and viable in a rapidly changing world. Older methods and traditions may suddenly be perceived as unsuitable in a society in flux, and new forms, or those perceived as new, are devised to satisfy the needs of such a society. The introduction of the Swedish Easter tree is a good example of this kind of development. But what exactly is it that makes this new form of celebration linked to Easter so acceptable and successful that it is almost instantly referred to as a “tradition”?

The answer apparently lies in a combination of circumstances. First of all, because it resembles, to some extent, existing traditions, such as that of the Easter twigs, the Christmas tree and the Maypole, the Easter tree is perceived as having traditional roots, even though it is *promoted* by competitive economic interests. In this way, it meets society’s need for *stability*. The Easter tree also represents a new way of celebrating an older festival, thus meeting society’s simultaneous, somewhat contradictory, need for *change*. Finally, the Easter tree, and the arrangements surrounding it, are both festive and accessible, thus supplying the element of *entertainment*, which is also central to festival celebration.

The theoretical line of thought informing this article, especially in relation to the concepts of stability and change, derives from Anthony Giddens’s theories of modernity. In these, the rate of change is regarded as being greater than ever before, and terms like “historicity” and “institutional reflexivity” are used to describe how “history is used to create new history,” and how new information is continuously added to the body of knowledge that programmes the way both

individuals and society act, thus changing previously existing patterns of action (Giddens 1997, 30–1, 226–9 and 274).

The Emergence of the Swedish Easter Tree

In most Swedish homes during the Easter holiday, *Påskris*—“Easter twigs,” commonly made of birch twigs but sometimes also of willow, and decorated with coloured feathers and small ornaments—are to be found. In attempting to trace the origin of these Easter twigs, the work of the seventeenth-century Swedish antiquarian Petter Dijkman provides a *terminus ante quem* for the use of twigs during Easter week. In his work entitled *Antiquitates Ecclesiasticae* (a manuscript completed in 1678 and published in 1703), an “old custom” performed on Good Friday, is mentioned as follows:

An old custom here in Sweden was that on this morning, parents and masters struck their children and domestic servants, while they were still in their beds, with twigs, to thoroughly impress upon them our Lord Jesus Christ’s difficult suffering. And this is called *påskskräckia* [“Easter fright”], that they might be terrified to their soul of the sin that forced the Almighty’s son to such a severe death on the cross (Dijkman 1703, 117; translated by Marlene Hugoson).

Thus, the whipping with twigs was considered to serve religious purposes. But it also had educational and social functions, as a good whipping on the morning of Good Friday was thought to make the receiver obedient for the rest of the year (Hagberg 1920, 90). Both Hagberg and Nilsson have suggested that the custom may be pre-Christian in origin and linked to the idea of the transfer of the power of growth and life from the twigs to the recipient, thus affording him or her health and protection from evil (Hagberg 1920, 93; Nilsson 1936, 45–7).

There is also a parallel to be made to the Palm Sunday custom of bringing twigs into the house as symbols of the palm leaves strewn before Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem (Dijkman 1703, 114). Before the Council of Örebro (1529) banned the Catholic rituals (i.e. the beginning of the Reformation in Sweden), these “palm leaves” were consecrated in church and were thought to hold miraculous powers of healing (Hagberg 1920, 14). According to Louise Hagberg, this custom was still practised in Sweden (despite the Reformation), at the beginning of the twentieth century. As it was predominantly willow twigs that were used on Palm Sunday, these may have served as an inspiration for the decorations later used on the Easter twigs—since the willow bears both leaf and catkin, it might be thought to resemble, and thus to have inspired, the feathers and dangling ornaments.

The custom of the Easter fright was still practised in Sweden at the beginning of the twentieth century, but by then it had lost its religious and educational purposes. Instead, it was performed in jest, and those who were first awake on Good Friday morning mischievously used birch twigs to whip those who still slept. This was done without regard to the performer’s station in life, and became quite popular. It was the only time during the year that children would dare to show disrespect to their parents, or that domestic servants would venture to raise their hand to a master or mistress (Bringéus 1976, 137–8; Ejdestam 1971, 82–4; Eskeröd 1953, 44; Hagberg 1920, 91; Nilsson 1936, 46; Schön 1998, 34).

References to decorated Lenten twigs began to appear in Swedish records in the nineteenth century. These kinds of twigs originated on the continent and over time underwent a process of merging with the undecorated Swedish Easter twigs—to become the now familiar decorated ones—to such an extent that the two are seldom differentiated in Sweden nowadays (Eskeröd 1953, 42–5; Ejdestam 1971, 84).

The whipping custom is now obsolete, and the decorated Easter twigs, safely arranged in vases in Swedish homes, constitute a festival decoration only. Still, it is these decorative Easter twigs that apparently provided the inspiration for the Swedish Easter tree. As far back as the 1930s, decorated Lenten twigs which were sold in the market-place in Sweden made a colourful public splash during early spring, before fresh green growth had enlivened the still gloomy urban environment (Nilsson 1936, 45). After the undecorated Easter twigs had merged with their decorative counterparts, these public and more commercial twigs were used as décor by merchants to assist them in selling their wares. The size of the twigs used for this purpose gradually increased, and in most Swedish cities nowadays large Easter twigs—often consisting of very young birch trees—decorated with feathers are to be found outside shops and in the market-place. Their presence sometimes also signals that the individual merchants support Lions Clubs International (the largest voluntary organisation worldwide), as in some places the decorated young birch trees are sold by this voluntary group in order to raise money for different charities (ULMA 39183, 144–51). One way or another, it is these large public Easter twigs that have now evolved into a new phenomenon—the Swedish Easter tree.

The Guinness Book of Records

It seems that the first Swedish Easter trees—those set up in Vimmerby in 1997 and in Mjölby in 1998—were the result of a series of attempts to get into *The Guinness Book of Records* by erecting the world's largest decorated Easter twigs (<http://www.aftonbladet.se>; SOFI, 9 March 2005, Johansson [2]). Usually these “Easter twigs” consisted of a felled and decorated full-size birch tree that had been erected in the market-place. But there were also exceptions to this rule. In Karlskoga, for example, an old, still-standing elm tree was decorated, first in 2001, then again in 2002 and 2003, in an effort to be included in *The Guinness Book of Records*. All these attempts were unsuccessful on the grounds that decorated Easter trees were not universally interesting, regardless of their size or the number of feathers attached to them (SOFI, Björklund). Both standing and felled trees can thus be used as Easter trees and they do not necessarily have to be birch, although this is the most common species of tree used.

Despite the fact that the Easter-tree custom is also to be found on the continent, it is important to note that the Swedish Easter tree is not an import, but rather a home-grown creation, in relation to its size and context. The *public* Christmas tree has served as its model; like the public Christmas tree, the Easter tree is “matter out of size,” as it consists of a full-grown tree, erected in a public place, and often in the very same hole in the ground in which the public Christmas tree is placed each year, thus showing the elements of continuity as well as of change in the cities' festival decorations and customs (ULMA 39183, 2–161 and 271–84). This is also the case with the previously mentioned Karlskoga elm tree, which acts as the

Easter tree in spring but is decorated with lights in order to function as a Christmas tree in December (SOFI, Björklund). Like the public Christmas tree, the Easter tree, too, has its origin, as already stated, in previously existing traditions.

The Easter tree also bears important similarities to the Maypole, which, besides being more or less the same size as the Easter tree, is also decorated prior to being erected by those present and intending to participate in the Midsummer celebrations. Occasionally, dancing takes place around the Easter tree, just as with the Maypole and the smaller Christmas trees found in schools and private homes. No such activity, however, takes place around the public Christmas tree (ULMA 39183, 2–161).

Furthermore the giant size of the “Easter twigs” has led to the introduction of giant-sized decorations, in the shape, for example, of witches and eggs, that have been crafted by the schoolchildren and their teachers. The Easter trees are thus decorated with a mix of traditional-sized and modern giant-sized decorations (ULMA 39183, Thörn; *Upsala Nya Tidning* [3]). One might also observe here that using “matter out of size” is a popular way of promoting various places in Sweden—and not only during the Easter period. [4]

Creating a Public Event

One of the side-effects of the unsuccessful attempts by a number of places to be included in *The Guinness Book of Records* was that the organisers of city events and local trade associations, of different cities, towns and villages, introduced the Easter trees as an “event.” The first known Easter tree in this setting was erected in the village of Lenhovda, in the province of Småland in southern Sweden, in 1998. This was a relatively small event, but when the city of Västerås set up its first Easter tree in 2001, on the initiative of city-event organiser Bengt Jansson, the size of the occasion had grown, as a much larger birch tree was used and several hundred participants attended as they wanted to see the giant “Easter twigs” and to help to decorate it. When Bengt Jansson moved to Södertälje in 2002, bringing the idea with him, the Easter tree event came into being there also (ULMA 39183, Gullmander; ULMA 39183, Jansson).

The custom also developed in Sundsvall, in the following way. The city merchants had used decorated young birch trees outside their shops for a couple of years, but in 2002 they decided to erect a full-size decorated tree instead. When Lisa Thörn, the city-event organiser who initiated the Easter-tree project in Sundsvall, moved to Uppsala, she brought the idea with her, and, thus, in 2004, Uppsala saw the setting up of its first Easter tree (see Figure 1). When Lisa shared the idea with her colleagues at a meeting for organisers of city events from all over Sweden, the idea was also picked up by other places who saw it as a means of self-promotion, thus leading to a fairly quick and widespread diffusion of the Easter-tree “custom” throughout Sweden (ULMA 39183, Thörn).

As the Easter-tree event is costly to run, both Bengt Jansson and Lisa Thörn seek sponsors to defray the expense of arranging it each year, and invite schoolchildren and kindergarten children to help with the decorating of their local tree (see Figure 2). As there are some ten to fifteen thousand feathers to be fastened to the tree, a few extra hands are always needed. Passers-by happily join in and, during their interviews, both Bengt and Lisa commented on the fact that immigrants had also helped to decorate the trees (ULMA 39183, Thörn; ULMA 39183, Jansson).

Although no specific research has been undertaken to determine why the Easter tree is apparently appealing to immigrants, it may be that its accessibility, both physically and psychologically, is an important factor in this regard. It is an urban, middle-of-the-week phenomenon—unlike the primarily rural and weekend Midsummer celebrations involving the Maypole. It is possible, therefore, that the Easter tree observance, which is at once both colourful and joyful, is perceived as being accessible, in terms of space, time and mentality, to the mainly urban-based immigrant community.

Development and Consolidation: Easter Tree and Easter Parade

In both Sundsvall and Uppsala, Lisa Thörn developed the Easter tree idea further by combining the dressing of the Easter tree with an Easter parade and the provision of entertainment for the children. She thus picked up on the growing popularity of Easter parades, and on the existing Easter custom of *påskkärringar*, which entails children dressing up as “Easter hags” (i.e. Easter witches) on



Figure 1. The Easter Tree in Uppsala, Sweden, 2004. Photograph: Marlene Hugoson. © SOFI, published with permission.

Maundy Thursday, to go mumming in their neighbourhood (ULMA 39183, Thörn).

An advertisement in the local paper in Uppsala during Easter 2005, which invited children to participate in the decoration of the tree and to join the Easter parade, stated: “Follow us to Blåkulla! [i.e. where the witches assemble at Easter]. Put on your headscarf, get on the broom and join the Easter witches’ parade!” (*Uppsala Nya Tidning*, [5]). In Sundsvall, the young Easter witches were also given a note informing them that they could collect their gift of an Easter egg after the parade, at such-and-such a store. In this way, the costumed children could be seen and appreciated by many more people in many parts of the city (ULMA 39183, Thörn).

It is apparent that the merger with the already-existing Easter parade and the mumming event is serving to consolidate the Easter tree “custom” by association.

The organisers of the city event in Södertälje ask in their publicity literature if their Easter tree can be regarded as the world’s largest “Easter twigs.” This reflects traces of the Easter tree’s origin, and, more importantly, stirs up competition with other cities (SOFI, Jansson; ULMA 39183, 33); Easter trees are erected in some fourteen places in Sweden today, and the number is steadily growing as new cities, towns, and villages adopt the idea as a means of gaining publicity for themselves (ULMA 39183, 2–33 and 62–161).

As to Easter parades, approximately thirty cities, towns, and villages in Sweden organise such parades each year, and in some of these “Easter-parade cities”—Linköping, Sundsvall, Trelleborg and Uppsala, for example—Easter trees are also erected. Most of these Easter parades were initiated in the second half of the 1990s,



Figure 2. Nursery School Children Dressing the Easter Tree in Uppsala, Sweden, 2005. Photograph: Per-Anders Östling. © SOFI, published with permission.

but some are older—those of Åmål and Karlstad, for example, date from the 1950s (ULMA 39183, 34–61 and 162–270; SOFI, Jarnryd; SOFI, Forsudd).

Besides dressing up and walking in procession, the Easter-parade event incorporates other activities such as music, singing, egg and spoon races, and clown performances (ULMA 39183, 34–61 and 162–270; SOFI, Jarnryd; SOFI, Forsudd). The more established parades—for example, that of Vänersborg, which is fifteen years old—also try for inclusion in *The Guinness Book of Records* on the basis of their having the highest number of costumed participants attending an Easter parade (SOFI, Goding). Ecclesiastical processions are, of course, uncommon in Sweden since the population is mainly of the Protestant faith. [6]

Changes in the Easter Mumming

In recent years there has been a radical change in the organisation of mumming events during the Easter celebrations due largely to changes in the structure of society. Normally engaged in by children—who dress up as Easter witches and borrow aprons, head-scarves, make-up, coffee pots [7] and brooms for this purpose, prior to knocking on doors and asking for treats or money—the traditional Easter mumming in the larger cities has declined. There are, no doubt, many and varied reasons for this, including the fact that, generally speaking, cities, more so than rural areas, are more sensitive to changing international trends. Thus, the relatively recently introduced Hallowe'en celebration is probably considered more modern and exciting than the traditional Easter mumming event—which is also, perhaps, perceived as being somewhat old-fashioned nowadays. Commercial aspects have also to be borne in mind, as the costumes and festive arrangements surrounding Hallowe'en generate more money than the Easter mumming event, for which all that is needed, besides candy, can be borrowed from home. The stores thus vigorously promote their Hallowe'en wares, and we are reminded once again of how commercial interests can influence the successful introduction of a celebratory event into Sweden.

There is also the rise of the so-called *curlingföräldrar* (“curling parents”) to consider. These are parents who over-protect and facilitate their aptly named *service children* as if sweeping the playing field of obstacles in preparation for a game of curling. [8] In the interest of sheltering their children from perceived danger, these parents may no longer consider it safe to allow them to traverse the neighbourhood knocking on the doors of strangers and asking for treats. This is not only a result of social change at community level, but also arises from American reports of adulterated Hallowe'en candy that every now and then reach Sweden and that, regardless of their veracity, scare parents. Thus, the *service children* who are allowed to go mumming are chaperoned by their parents. Alternatively, the events are organised by a third party, and the introduction of processions instead of knocking on doors can be interpreted as a movement from creative play for a specific age group into an activity organised and planned on a larger scale by adults, mainly for child-security purposes.

There has also been a great change in the dressing-up aspect of mumming. The gaudy Swedish Easter witch has been joined by one of the Hallowe'en variety, with sombre black robes and a pointed hat—reflecting international Hallowe'en influences—and some of the young boys who do not fancy dressing up as Easter

witches with female head-scarves decide to appear as old Easter men instead. In places that have previously had male Easter hags, this suggests that gender is now defined at a younger age. Some children also dress up as chickens, eggs, and so on, just as for an ordinary fancy-dress party. This is an example of the so-called Hallowe'en effect, as children sometimes recycle their Hallowe'en costumes for use during the Easter mumming events. They may, thus, appear dressed up to represent a scary monster or their favourite book character—which usually have no Easter connections whatever. Also, the sometimes perceived inappropriateness of young boys dressing as female Easter hags, can be avoided if they go mumming as a monster or a fictional hero (ULMA 39183, 34–61 and 162–270).

The Need for New Traditions

The Easter tree event caters for society's perceived need for new traditions that are thought to respond in a more meaningful way to the requirements of modern everyday life. For "curling parents," for example, who may be reluctant to allow their children to go mumming unaccompanied by an adult, the perceived safer Easter tree celebration is the ready-made solution, especially when merged with an Easter parade. The public Easter tree also provides Swedes, especially those who suffer from allergies, with an alternative to the use of Easter twigs in the home.

In discussing the public display of the celebration of Easter that the Easter tree represents, another seasonal trend—that of decorating bushes and trees in private gardens with the kinds of feathers and small ornaments originally associated with the Easter twigs—should also be noted. This development is probably related to and influenced by the Christmas lights that illuminate private gardens in winter. The Easter decorations can serve as an example of how tradition is used to lend a sense of security to society in times of change. The extension of the Christmas decorations into the garden can be seen to reinforce the Christmas tradition, thus contesting the element of change while at the same time constituting a part of it. These elements of reinforcement and of simultaneous change are also evident in the Easter tree celebration (ULMA 39183, 154).

The Easter tree is often referred to as a "tradition," despite the fact that this new phenomenon is a mere nine years old. Bengt Jansson, mentioned earlier, states that he has continued to try to establish the Easter tree as "a tradition," in Södertälje, by organising a more elaborate celebration each year (ULMA 39183, Jansson). Kerstin Gullmander, chairperson of the Lenhovda Trade Association, says that, "People enjoy the Easter tree, it is tradition" (ULMA 39183, Gullmander, 15 March, 2005). Harriet Pettersson, the city-event organiser in Västerås states: "It has become tradition. I recognise several of the children that show up from one year to the next. Parents tell me that their children remind them that Easter will soon be here and that they can then go to the market-place and put feathers on the Easter twigs [i.e. Easter tree]" (SOFI, Pettersson, 4 March 2005).

It is apparent that the city-event organisers "sell" the Easter tree by referring to it as a "tradition," but what is arguably more interesting is the fact that the Easter tree has apparently been instantly accepted by the general public. The explanation for this unexpected development may be that the Easter tree can be interpreted as a "familiar unknown"; that is, the mere need for new "traditions" is not enough to explain its popularity and success, but rather that it is perceived as being new and

old simultaneously. As seen above, the Easter tree is often referred to as “Easter twigs,” despite the fact that a whole tree is used and not just a few twigs. The Easter tree can, therefore, probably be perceived as an extension of the existing tradition of decorating Easter twigs, rather than as a change to a completely new one. As already mentioned, the merger with an existing tradition can be seen to lend additional authenticity to the Easter tree by association. Furthermore, the festive nature of a giant “Easter twig” creates a playful setting—even more so when an Easter parade is also involved.

Finally, the Easter tree also exhibits important similarities with two current traditions—the Christmas tree and the Maypole, already touched on above.

All of this contributes to the sense of familiarity the Swedes feel towards the Easter tree, even though they may never have seen one before. The media sense the familiarity as well, and, thus, the Easter tree was referred to as “a new tradition” in a local Uppsala newspaper during the very week in which it was first erected [9].

Conclusion

The Easter tree has been promoted by economic interests in cities, towns, and villages as a means of self-promotion. Yet, it also appears to fulfil important—and sometimes opposing—functions, such as stability as well as change. Furthermore, the Easter tree idea has also been well received by the public and the media.

The introduction of the Easter tree, the growing popularity of the Easter parade, and the reorganisation of the Easter mumming, all seem to be part of a general revitalisation and reconstitution of the celebration of Easter in Sweden. These changes appear to have been brought about both by the desire for new traditions that respond more effectively to the perceived needs of everyday life and by the requirement to reinforce existing traditions that serve to stabilise that same life. These two requirements are effectively in opposition, but here they are in cooperation, and, as a result, they are inadvertently accelerating the pace of change.

Although the Easter tree is already referred to as a “tradition,” only time will tell whether or not the phenomenon will turn into a true tradition. Nevertheless, I would like to propose that the Easter tree is here to stay and that it will become a common sight in Sweden in the years to come. It is a new custom that has been presented and accepted as a “tradition” from virtually the moment of its introduction, something that has been facilitated by its accessibility and the perceived familiarity of the custom itself. It is, quite simply, an “instant tradition.”

Notes

- [1] The study of the Swedish Easter tree is part of the project entitled “Förändring av sedvänjor” (“Changing Customs”), initiated by the Folklore Department at the Institute for Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research in Uppsala in 2003. Led by Research Archivist Marlene Hugoson, and supervised by Bodil Nildin-Wall, Head of the Folklore Department, the project has focused on documenting the more constant among the Swedish folk customs, such as annual festivals and lifecycle celebrations.
- [2] There is mention of an Easter tree in Säfte from the 1980s and onward, but this information has not been confirmed. Cathrine Gustafsson at the Tourist Information Office in Säfte states that Säfte only have Easter twigs in their Easter celebration and continues “To my knowledge there

are no decorated trees in Säfte. Have no information of this from other parts of the municipality either and if it goes as far back as the 1980s I would have heard about it" (SOFI, Gustafsson, March 2005).

- [3] Hedlund, Kjell. "Påskbjörk kan bli ny tradition" ("The Easter Tree can become New Tradition"). *Uppsala Nya Tidning*, 4 April 2004.
- [4] One example of "matter out of size" is the giant Christmas goat erected in the city of Gävle, Sweden. It is thirteen metres high, seven metres long, and weighs three tons. It is made out of straw and meets the same unfortunate end almost every year, when different unknown arsonists decide to put a match to it—something that is now considered a "tradition" in its own right (http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julbocken_i_Gävle). Another example is the giant *Dalahäst* (carved and painted wooden horse from the province of Dalarna in central Sweden) erected at the entrance to the town of Avesta. It is thirteen metres high, 12.8 metres long, of steel construction, and weighs 66.7 tons (http://www.avesta.se/index_02.asp?http://www.avesta.se/main.asp?kat=22&page=22&upage=36).
- [5] "Uppsalas häftigaste påskris" ("Uppsala's Coolest Easter Twigs"). An advertisement inviting children to help with the decoration of the Easter tree and to join the Easter parade, placed by "Vi I Stan" ("We in Town") and Kvarnen ("The Mill," a shopping mall and main sponsor) (*Uppsala Nya Tidning* 3 April 2004).
- [6] Processions are held in churches in Sweden only on certain occasions, such as during confirmation ceremonies or during the St Lucia celebration, or in churches where the priest is influenced by the Roman Catholic tradition. Pilgrimages, although unusual, can also be found—on the island of Gotland, for example, pilgrimages in honour of St Olof are made throughout the year, starting at the ruins of the monastery of Solberga in Visby and ending at St Olof's chapel on the eastern side of the island, having passed by a total of seven churches (http://www.visbydomkyrkoforsamling.nu/sokdok/pa_gang/pilgrimsleden.shtm). There are also non-religious processions—for example, on the occasion of graduation.
- [7] The popular image of a witch is that of an elderly woman. The Swedish Easter hags are also thus depictions of elderly women, who are defined not only by their rosy cheeks and the wearing of aprons and head scarves, but also by the perception of them as inveterate coffee drinkers. Coffee became something of a women's beverage in Sweden during the nineteenth century—hence the coffee pots as emblems of elderly Swedish women. This image of the Easter hag has also been promoted by well-known Swedish illustrators such as Jenny Nyström (1854–1946). On a deeper level, the drinking of coffee can also signify a transgression, like witchcraft, as coffee-drinking was prohibited, because the high consumption of this expensive import contributed significantly to a deficit arising in the state's balance of payments, at various times during the later part of the eighteenth century (Swahn 1982, 9–11).
- [8] Danish child psychologist Bent Hougaard published his book entitled *Curling-forældre & Servicebørn: Debat om vort nye børnesyn* ("Curling [a winter sport played on ice] Parents and Service Children: Debate about Our New View on Children") in 2000. The book initiated a still-ongoing discussion about the problem with today's non-authoritarian parents (http://www.svd.se/dynamiskt/idag/did_6753516.asp; <http://www.bent-hougaard.dk/>).
- [9] See note [3].

Abbreviations

SOFI *Språk- och folkminnesinstitutet* (The Institute for Dialectology, Onomastics and Folklore Research, Uppsala, Sweden). The "Archival Sources" SOFI listed below refer to SOFI's

ULMA *ämbetsarkiv* (the SOFI agency public records) in Uppsala.
Uppsala landsmålsarkiv (The Uppsala Archive of Dialectology,
Uppsala, Sweden; formerly a separate archive, but now
incorporated to SOFI). The “Archival Sources” *ULMA* listed
below refer to material from the SOFI research archive

References Cited

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The material from the SOFI research archive (coded ULMA) and the SOFI agency public records in Uppsala (coded SOFI) used in this paper, has been collected by the author for the project entitled “*Förändring av sedvänjor*” (“Changing Customs”), and is published with permission.

ULMA: Interviews by the Author (from The SOFI Research Archive, Uppsala: ULMA accession number 39183).

Gullmander, Kerstin. Chairman of *Företagarföreningen* (“The Trade Association”) in Lenhovda. Interviewed on 1 and 15 March 2005.

Jansson, Bengt ‘Spider’. Project leader of *Spiderevent* (“Spider-event”) and *Södertälje Centrumförening* (“The Södertälje City Center Association”). Interviewed on 3 March 2005.

Thörn (formerly Andersson), Lisa. Project leader of *Vi i Stan* (“We in Town”) in Uppsala. Interviewed on 2 March 2005.

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- SOFI, Schmidt, Rita. Cultural secretary in Tomelilla. E-mail dated 17 March 2005.
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Google search engine for "Påskbjörk", "Påskträd", "Påskris", "Easter tree", "Easter birch", and "Påskparad", March 2004–May 2005. The material collected is too extensive to be presented as a whole, but can be found in the SOFI research archive (ULMA, accession number 39183). Presented below are the Internet sources directly cited in the text.

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