
OBITUARY

Andreas Backa (1978-2022)

To our great sorrow, Doctoral Researcher, folklore scholar Andreas Backa suddenly passed away in the end of 2022. Backa commenced his studies in Nordic folkloristics at Åbo Akademi University in 2006. Before this he achieved a degree in IT-engineering. In 2011 he became a Master of Philosophy and his master's thesis was awarded the Ragna and Olov Ahlbäck-price from the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS).

In his licentiate thesis *Att beskriva det finlandssvenska. Kultursemiotiska analyser* (2017), Backa makes a cultural semiotic analysis of the 2011 parlia-



mentary elections with a focus on the Swedish People's Party of Finland and their manifesto. The thesis analyses ideals, values, and ideological motives presented in election material.

Backa's work with a doctoral thesis took another direction and became an ethnographic study of self-sustainability in contemporary Finland. The focus being on the people living according to principles of self-sufficiency and self-sustainability, and especially how affect and corporality cooperate, visualise, and communicate in different empiric materials. This work had come a long way and Backa's end-seminar was planned to be held in spring 2023 with a possibility to defend the finalised thesis in autumn 2023.

Backa held the position as secretary for the Committee for Ethnology and Folkloristics at The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS) for two different periods ending in spring 2022. He had also been a salaried researcher in the project "Bitar av samma pussel" (Pieces in the same puzzle) 2010–2013 and worked in the Cultura Archive at Åbo Akademi University with a special engagement in digitalisation and databases.

As a folklore scholar Backa was actively engaging in the academic society, presenting his research in multiple conferences and articles as well as being part of the editorial teams of *Elore* and *Ethnologia Fennica*. At *Ethnologia Fennica* Andreas was always there when needed and did meticulous editorial work.

Andreas' work on self-sustainability inspired many fellow PhD students and postdoctoral researchers interested in the search of knowledge of sustainable practices of everyday life and search for a better future. The interest in self-sustainability and sustainable foodways was not kept only on a theoretical level but practiced together with his wife Sofie Strandén-Backa at the small-scale farm Sudda lantbruk. Andreas will be truly missed by his colleagues; he was thoughtful and well-advised.

Blanka Henriksson

Lena Marander-Eklund

Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto

Tytti Steel