

## Summaries

### **Rich Peasants and Poor. The Swedish Province Hälsingland in the 16th century.**

*Börje Harnesk*

TRADITIONALLY, HISTORIANS HAVE assumed that the Swedish peasantry in the course of the 16th century went through a process of increasing social and economic differentiation. Recent studies have shown, however, that this may not have been the case. By taking the possession of live-stock as a measure of wealth, a study has come to the conclusion that no visible changes in economic stratification occurred, and that differences between rich and poor may even have diminished in the northern half of the country.

Explanations for this, in a European context rather unique, situation have so far been less convincing. The article argues that demographic growth, which has been suggested as a cause, cannot explain the levelling tendencies in northern Sweden, since these tendencies took place in regions with demographic growth as well as in regions with declining or stagnant populations.

The article suggests, tentatively, that the Crown's demand for more and more taxes to finance the incessant wars hit the wealthy peasants as hard as the poor and less well-to-do. If this was the case, a reevaluation of the relationship between the Crown and the peasant elite presents itself as necessary. The traditional concept of an alliance between the two may have to be reconsidered.

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**Manufactures and Improvement Policy.****New Production Methods in the Processing of Woollens in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Iceland.***Hrefna Róbertsdóttir*

THE SUBJECT OF THIS ARTICLE is reforms in the production of woollens and the state's manufacturing policy in 18<sup>th</sup> century Iceland. What was the essence of this policy? What were the objectives of the changes and of the establishment of textile manufactures in Iceland? At the time Iceland was one of the North-Atlantic regions of the Danish monarchy and Copenhagen was the seat of central power. The development of the authorities' policy in Iceland was, in many ways, in line with the economic policy in the monarchy as a whole, but was transplanted into an Icelandic reality which was in many respects different from the Danish one. After 1735 and until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, great emphasis was put on developing manufactures alongside other economic activity in the whole state. Textile manufactures in Iceland were run by an Icelandic joint stock company, the *Privileged Icelandic Company* (Privilegerte Islandske Interessentskab) in the later half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with its centre in Reykjavik. Its various enterprises were supported by the authorities, and are examples of how the manufacturing policy was implemented and conducted in one of the remote regions of the Danish monarchy.

The state's **policy of manufacturing** changed during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The state had vested interests in Icelandic trade, which in turn influenced the manufacturing policy. The establishment of wool manufactures was proposed to the central authorities in the beginning of the century and onwards. Such proposals concerning the economic revival of Iceland were often rejected, either because they were considered unrealistic or because they were regarded as potentially harmful to the state's trade interests in Iceland. In the beginning of the 1750's the support was considerable; two textile manufactures were established with royal support. One of them was based on the craft of *worsted* fabrics and the other one on the production of fabrics generally called *cloth*. The manufactures were run by the Privileged Icelandic Company and were one of its diverse projects, all aiming at economic reform. This meant an attempt at a radical resurrection of the Icelandic economy. The most important role of the new textile manufactures was intended to be that of centres of knowledge about new methods of production that, in turn, were supposed to make the national woollens production more effective. After 20 years, the drive was severely reduced and a change in policy occurred; smaller *farm manufactures* in rural areas should be supported, instead of only building up specialized manufactures in Reykjavik. The idea of a large-scale resurrection of the country's economy was thereby rejected, but it was still hoped that the two textile manufactures in Reykjavik could serve their original goals as centres for the wool

production in the country, both the farm manufactures and the domestic production. Another change occurred toward the end of the 1780's. Support for manufactures in general was rejected and it became official policy that the realistic form for production of woollens consisted of *small units of domestic production*. State support for the manufactures was no longer topical and the rural industry should stand on its own feet.

The overall objective of the reforms that started in the 1750's was **improvement of the Icelandic economy**. The procession of wool was an important part of it. The didactic idea was central behind the establishment and running of the textile manufactures; new methods of production were to be introduced. This idea comes across in differing ways. As it was developed in conjunction with the first textile manufacture (producing worsted fabrics) in 1751, great emphasis was put on simple production and co-operation with farms in rural areas. When the second textile manufacture (produced cloth fabrics) was established and the big plans won through in 1752, the ideas became grander. The course was taken towards a more specialized handicraft and centralized production in a growing manufacturing centre. These ideas were dominant between ca. 1752 and 1770. After 1770 another attempt was made to establish contact between the manufactures and the people in the rural areas and to influence their wool processing. The manufactures were to be run as centres for specialized knowledge in the textile handicrafts in Reykjavik and, at the same time, service the rest of the country. The plan was to spread knowledge of new production methods through people who moved to the rural areas, having gained knowledge through working in the manufactures and, later, by founding small farm manufactures that would co-operate with the central manufactures in Reykjavik. This was mainly successful in spreading knowledge about methods in spinning, although it took longer than anticipated. Craftsmen in weaving who wanted to establish their own small manufactures before 1770, were not supported by the authorities and met resistance from the directors of the Privileged Icelandic Company as well. A small number of farm manufactures were established in the 1760's and 1770's by shareholders of the company that co-operated with the manufactures in Reykjavik. The development of farm manufactures after 1770 requires closer study.

Comparison with the **manufacturing policy in Denmark** shows that the prevailing view in Danish research is that the most important objective of the manufacturing policy in Denmark proper was to achieve a *positive balance of trade* and to establish *new working places* for vagrants and the poor. It is possible to discern aspects of these roles in connection with the Icelandic manufactures too, especially the central ones in Reykjavik. The authorities emphasized that the production of the manufactures should be according to need within the country and use should be made of Icelandic raw materials as far as possible. The idea behind the running of the so-called workhouses in Denmark can also be traced in the dis-

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cussions. The general public was supposed to learn to work effectively both in their own interest, as well as that of the state. However, the political discussion also shows that the central idea was that the processing of woollens throughout the country should change and become more effective with the help of the textile manufactures. The manufactures surely contributed to *training in handicraft* within the textile industry, but their main importance was to be as instruments for *supporting domestic production* in the rural areas. This aim was important when the worsted manufacture was established in 1751 and became even more so after 1770. On the whole, one can postulate that this last objective was the single most important one in the Icelandic context. The manufacturing policy in the state was, generally speaking, adapted to the different needs of the regions and the overall goal was the economic growth of the state.

## Why the Secession of Norway in 1905 did not Lead to War

*Evert Vedung*

SECESSION IS THE ACTION OF formally withdrawing from membership in an organization, association, or alliance. More specifically it is a separation of a part of a state territory or a withdrawal of a member state from an association of states. With this concept definition, the union dissolution between Sweden and Norway in 1905 is a secession of the later, weaker kind. The union was an association of two states from which the member state Norway withdrew. Very often, secessions lead to war. Yet, the Swedish-Norwegian union was dismantled peacefully. Why was this the case?

Among the factors militating for peace was: the peacefulness of the common royal family, no menacing great power intervention, the Confederation's lack of historical legitimacy, no borderline disputes, no locked-in minorities, little economic interconnectedness, Norwegian unity and Swedish disunity, and political wisdom and boldness of such leaders as Christian Michelsen, Christan Lundeborg, and Karl Staaff.

## Friends to be trusted? American registration of opinion during the Second World War.

*Gunmar Richardson*

IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN Washington, D C, (or more exactly: In Maryland) there is a document to be found entitled Persons Friendly to the Allies in Sweden. It contains a register of 205 more or less well-known Swedes. They are divided into 13 different categories, e.g. editors, professors, government officials, authors, clergymen, officers and Jews.

Among other things, the information about the individual persons refers to age, occupation, political views and attitudes towards democracy, Nazism and the Allies. The political opinion is thus accounted for 80% of the persons by means of the following percentages distribution: Social Democrats 58%, Liberals 20%, Communists 12% and Conservatives 8%. The dominance of the political Left is obvious as well as the few representatives of the Right, and the total absence of members from the Farmers' Union. For many of the persons on the list there are special notes concerning their attitudes towards the fighting parties in the Second World War, (e.g. "anti-Nazi", "against the Nazis", "active in anti-Nazi propaganda", "pro-Allied", "for the Allies") or democracy (e.g. "pro-democrat" or "democrat"). The attitude to democracy is the prime concern.

For two of the Swedish Cabinet Ministers there are sensational notes. According to the text in the Prime Minister, Per Albin Hansson, is "an anti-Nazi and supposedly for the Allies, but his activities during the present war have been predicated upon the conviction that the Axis had won the war already". The information about the Minister of Defence, Per Edvin Sköld, has the following wording: "He is for the Allies and Anti-Nazi; but he has been so busy supporting the neutrality policy that he is no longer regarded as a reliable friend of western democracy".

These statements are so amazing that there is reason for asking if they are to be taken in earnest. According to my opinion, however, they are. Firstly, they are parts of a serious document devoid of any propagandic or provocative purposes; they have not been used in public context. Secondly, it should be observed that the statements consist of judgements made by the staff of the American Embassy; They cannot, of course, be used to find out the two ministers real opinions.

The next point at issue in the analysis touches the question how to explain the statements. As a background to the valuation of Mr. Sköld it is natural to notice his assertion about the war in March 1941. Then he declared that Sweden had no interest in a victory for any of the belligerent states, that it should be best with "an agreement without anybodies' submission" – en clair a compromise with Hitler still in power.

Concerning the statement that Sweden had acted as if The Axis would already

have won the war, it is necessary to look at some ingredients in the Swedish foreign policy 1940–42, not so much the policy of appeasement in the form of the Swedish transit traffic concessions to Germany, which had been forced upon Sweden, but a voluntary benevolent attitude towards Nazi-Germany. This attitude was demonstrated.

- in the total lack of criticism towards the Nazi-regime and the German war policy – the war was regarded as a controversy between the great powers and not as an ideological struggle between democracy and dictatorship.
- in the extensive voluntary contacts between Sweden and Nazi-Germany, among others many study tours to various military establishments and other contacts in the cultural and athletic areas.
- in the Swedish proposal for a settlement for peace between Germany and Great Britain in the summer of 1940. It is impossible to understand this initiative as a hope or a desire to make Great Britain continue the war in order to defeat the nazi-regime. The Swedish government wanted peace – even at the price of the defeat of democracy in Europe. It acted as if Germany had won the war – just as it was noted about the Prime Minister, Per Albin Hansson.

There is still a task to be carried out for historical research, namely to penetrate and explain why the Second World War, during the first years, was merely regarded by Swedish politicians as a conflict between the great powers and not an ideological life-and-death struggle for democracy and for a life characterized by humanistic values.

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**The Road from Auschwitz. Representations of the Holocaust and the possible connections between then and now.***Ulf Zander*

IN NIGHT AND FOG, ONE of the first documentaries on the Holocaust, the director Alan Resnais and the scriptwriter Jean Cayrol, tried to capture the horrors of the Holocaust. In "The Road from Auschwitz", this film is the starting point for an analysis of the representations of the Holocaust. Of special interest besides *Night and Fog* are pictures and symbolic images of the Holocaust and the paradigmatic influence from the early British and American photographs and films taken 1945 in newly liberated concentration camps in Germany. People could with their own eyes see the consequences of the nazi racial policy. These films and photos set the standard for how newspaper photographers have described modern human catastrophes in for example former Yugoslavia.

The article deals with the reluctance to remember the Holocaust that prevailed in Europe and USA until the 1970's. An illuminating example is the German effort to try to banish *Night and Fog* from the Cannes film festival in 1955. A couple of years later the same film was censored in Sweden after a joint decision from the Production Company and the Swedish censorship. The main reason was a concern for the audience. It should preferably be spared from scenes like those from the concentration camps. The documentary remained cut until it became part of the Swedish information campaign Living History (Levande historia) and its movie package "Bilderna av Förintelsen" thirty years later.

Serious documentaries and movies as well as literature and other artistic representations can contribute to a better understanding of what happened 1941–45. On the other hand pictures and images from the concentration and extermination camps can result in an out distance from the Holocaust. It becomes too hard for the audience to deal with it. Another dilemma is that some pictures appear so often that they get overexploited. But despite these risks it is most important that we learn to analyse and discuss both authentic and fictional representations of the Holocaust.

Another aspect that is dealt with is the increasing political interest for the Holocaust and the so-called transfer effect. An implicit starting-point is often that we could learn from the past, so that the Holocaust will not be repeated in the future. This is however a position that is very problematic. Numerous scholars have for example claimed that the Holocaust is unique because it is without references to contemporary or present situations. An investigation of some of the different kinds of material from the Living History-project shows an unwillingness to deal with this complex problem.



## **A new oldfashioned Weibull-Myth** *Rolf Torstendahl*

IN THIS ARTICLE THE AUTHOR reviews a book, *Kritiska undersökningar i Weibull-myrens historia*, by Rolf Arvidsson and Hans Aarsleff. It is argued that the book's main thesis, that there is an influence from Joseph Bédier to Lauritz Weibull, may be true, but in all main substance it has been advanced earlier by Arvidsson. In part (as regards the importance of 'construction' in Weibull's concept of historical 'Wissenschaft') it is mistaken and the polemic against earlier research is thus not at all convincing. The article further shows that it would have been worthwhile to deepen out the problem to the issue of professional reorientation.