

Harald Gustafsson

Specialists, generalists, historians?

On the role of historians and the dangers of spontaneous specialization

Swedish historians normally occupy posts where there is no specialization within the subject. This freedom, however, involves the risk of unintentional specialization. The expression this takes is not the predominance of a particular school or a specific orientation, but rather chronological specialization. In practice, history before about 1870 has found itself in a threatened position. The same is true of teaching, where research students are also becoming increasingly specialized in a narrowly defined dissertation topic, mostly in modern history.

If one sees the nucleus of history as extracting, preserving, and communicating knowledge about the past in a broad sense, then this is a menacing trend. The universities ought to be producing broadly accessible accounts of the past, as well as educated teachers, researchers, administrators of culture, or other people with a certain breadth and general interest in history (and with the critical tools to cultivate this interest). It is doubtful whether historians with today's spontaneous specialization are fitted for this. We need not only a change of attitude but also a change in the structure of academic posts which will guarantee a certain minimum chronological breadth of competence in every department of history.

Translated by Alan Crozier

Klas Åmark

Specialization and the identity of history as a discipline

At the conference on history organized by the Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in October 1990 I was asked to plead for the benefits of specialization in the debate about "Specialization and the identity of history as a discipline". I am in favour of specialization, but only because it is a means which suits other goals. If, like me, one wants to develop historical research in the direction of theory and the social sciences, this makes demands of the organization of research, teaching, seminars, examination courses, research information, and so on. Specialization here is often an efficient tool. My paper deals with three areas where specialization is particularly important: research, postgraduate studies, and research information.

As regards the organization of research, the ideal form for me is small projects collaborating with each other in large networks. An example of this is the historical research into working life, which functioned roughly this way in the 1980s.

The concept of network refers to a loose coordination of researchers within the same specialist field — such as women's history, working life, medieval studies — who regularly meet at conferences, symposia, seminars, and courses, and who carry on a dialogue with each other about current scholarly problems. Good networks also require some form of shared agenda, perhaps even a joint programme. Networks can often felicitously combine coordination with individual freedom.

However, I am not advocating that individual researchers should stick to a single speciality for a long time. Ten to fifteen years seems to me to be the optimum length of time for a specialization, after which one should switch to a new research field. For this reason I am not in favour of specialized posts.

As for postgraduate studies, there is no doubt that specialization makes the writing of a doctor's thesis go faster. This is an important goal, to achieve which we ought to be prepared to sacrifice other values. The time it takes to get a doctorate today is far too long.

A well-known method for specialization in teaching is the special seminar, where small groups of research students assemble to discuss shared themes. Important advantages of this are that the supervisor becomes more expert and the research students have a better chance of helping each other.

For research information, too, there are advantages in specialization. This applies, for example, to acquiring contacts among journalists and other groups outside the universities who can help scholars to convey their findings to a wider audience. This kind of activity is easier if one is recognized as a specialist.

Translated by Alan Crozier

Sigurd Kroon

**Grooms, bishops, kings, churches of St Lawrence
Lund 990—1145**

The latest official date for the birth of Lund — AD 990 — has recently been obtained by dendrochronological analysis of an excavated piece of worked wood, perhaps a fragment of a coffin. The local authority seized on this dating as a reason for the millennial celebrations of 1990.

Shortly before the press announcements at the start of February 1990 about the newly discovered date of 990, my essay “Canute the Holy’s Lost Deed of Gift of May 21, 1085: An Antedated Twelfth Century Document” (*Scandia* 55 (1989), pp. 203—243) had appeared. This revised date provides an as yet unexplored perspective on the history of the two episcopal churches with St Lawrence as their patron. The later of these two — the present cathedral of Lund — was Denmark’s ancient archiepiscopal church, the building which overshadowed in importance all the other churches in the medieval Danish empire. The church retained this position throughout the Middle Ages, or for about four centuries, from its dedication in 1145.

From this it follows that the years 990 and 1145 set the limits to a completely new period in the history not only of Lund but also of Scania, and that the content of these years has yet to be filled in. The new perspective on the history of two churches of St Lawrence affects the latter part of this period. The earlier phase also presents unsolved problems, such as what led to the birth of Lund, what stage of population development provided the conditions for locating the Scanian bishop’s see in Lund, what had driven development up to this stage, where in this course of development we are to place the royal churches of St Lawrence, and finally the special question — which kings initiated the churches in the capacity of *fundatores*.

The present essay seeks to fill in some of the details for the period 990—1145. This done with an eye for what belongs to “the role of the self-evident in history” (Anders Nygren), with a necessary restriction to such things as combine with evidence from extant sources to form coherent, logical wholes. The self-evident elements include the church and the monarchy, which collaborated, using the obvious implements for this end which were available at the time, to change Danish Viking Age society into one based on Christian values.

The problems are examined in the order just stated.

In the tenth century both bishops and kings of Denmark separately built up territories in Scania using the institution of the episcopal and royal itineraries; the bishops used the right of visitation long enjoyed by the Western church. Judging by the sources, the episcopal visitations engendered Lund out of a stopping place that was suitable for horses and wagons, a horseman’s bivouac.

The anonymous place where someone in 990 had worked the piece of wood that later revealed its age in its tree-rings, developed into a *civitas*, the sort of built-up settlement which was the basis for a bishop’s see throughout Christian Western Europe. This development must in turn be ascribed to the transformation of the bivouac into a base camp which was built by bishops and kings together to support the episcopal and royal itineraries in Scania. The base camp thus acquired a royal church dedicated to St Lawrence, that is, a type of ecclesiastical foundation which, since the Battle of the Lechfeld on St

Lawrence's Day in 955 and for a long time to come, could be undertaken by the Holy Roman Emperor and the princes who represented him at various levels. A king's court and a royal mint was also built in the base camp. The *civitas* existed in fact around 1060, when King Sven Estridsen established the episcopal see in Lund. It was not previously known that this development proceeded so quickly, since the connection between the settlement of Lund and the episcopal see has not been emphasized until this study. Nor has attention been paid to the role of the St Lawrence church, the king's court, and the royal mint as dynamic elements in the expansion of the base camp, and hence as factors in the rapid expansion of Lund into a *civitas* and a bishop's see.

These additional details shed new light not only on the change of Viking Age Denmark from a society based on kindred and ruled by chieftains, to a Christian society ruled by bishops and kings. The change was going on at the same time as the Viking kings, among them Sven Estridsen, "went ashore" (Erik Lönnroth), turning away from the North Sea part of their empire. As a consequence of this, King Sven had to search on "dry land" to the east — in the Baltic part of the empire — for compensation for the taxation revenues which he had lost "at sea" to the west. It was in this context that Sven Estridsen established the first bishop of Lund around 1060. His choice was Henrik, who had served Sven's uncle, Canute the Great, in the North Sea part of his empire. Here Henrik had worked both peripherally, as bishop and empire builder, and centrally, in his capacity of treasurer. His transfer to the Baltic part of the empire thus testifies to the fact that many of the details now filled in for the period 990—1145 are elements in the shift from west to east of the economic fulcrum of the Danish Viking Age empire; hitherto these elements have either attracted little attention or have not been recognized for what they are.

As for the churches of St Lawrence, the new findings attribute the two episcopal churches to other kings than has been the case until now. Let us first look at the attributions that have been accepted hitherto. These appear to be linked to an inexplicable ambition to ensure a sort of "master builder" role for Canute in founding St Lawrence's. "Canute founded this church", "Canute . . . founder of the church", "Canute . . . the builder", and most recently (1990) "St Canute's . . . building" and "the church Saint Canute may have built". Initially Canute's role was associated with "the old church" that preceded the present cathedral — the *vetus monasterium* of the sources. The support adduced for this was the fact that contemporary written sources characterize the first two archbishops of Lund as the *fundatores* of the present cathedral, yet King Canute is described as being the first founder (*primus fundavit*), combined with the fact that sections of the walls of "the old church" are incorporated in "the new church" that was finished long after Canute's time. The mention of "Canute . . . primus fundavit" in conjunction with the reference to "Canuto . . . ecclesiam . . . nondum perfectam" in Canute's deed of gift to St Lawrence's church in Lund was thought to ensure the correctness of identifying Canute (1080—1086) as the builder of "the old church", the one referred to in previous scholarship as "St Canute's church".

Since my previous essay mentioned above makes it clear that the deed refers to "the new church", E. Cinthio (in the journal *Ale* 1990) has found compensation for the loss of Canute's role as builder of the old church. This relocalization in time and place of Canute's building activities also of necessity affects the statement that Canute "primus fundavit", since in Cinthio's doctor's thesis from 1957 this was taken as confirmation that it was Canute who built the old church, "St Canute's church". As archaeological support for a relocalization, Cinthio adduces a demolished "first" phase in the building of the new

church; according to him, it is this ruin which was immortalized three-quarters of a century later in the words “Kanute . . . primus fundavit.”

As is evident, all this rests on the misconception that the word *fundator* in the written sources is synonymous with “builder”. In fact these sources tell us nothing about who built the churches or the phases in the building which have been associated with them. What the sources do give us are the names of the churches’ *fundatores*, “endowers”. The archaeological sources — the churches themselves — tell us of the different phases in the construction, but tell us nothing about any builder or endower. In this respect the two types of sources talk at cross-purposes. The epithet *fundator* in the written sources thus shows the purpose for which Canute donated the funds in 1085, but it says nothing about when this purpose was realized.

The statement about “Kanute regis et martiris qui primus fundavit hanc ecclesiam” in one of the written sources contemporary with the dedication in 1145 of the present cathedral, “the new church”, therefore means only that Canute’s donation in the antedated deed of 1085 brought him in as founder before any other *fundatores*, including Lund’s first two archbishops, the first of whom was consecrated in 1103. The present cathedral thus has St Canute as its founder but not as its builder. According to the sources, Sven Estridsen, Canute’s father, played the same role with respect to the predecessor of the new church, in other words, Lund’s first bishop’s church, *Sven Estridsen’s church*. Since there is no evidence for Canute’s role as builder, the donation described in his antedated deed of 1085 is clearly a combined building fund and operating capital for the *future* construction of a new bishop’s church, *St Canute’s church*. On the other hand, nothing speaks in favour of Cinthio’s view that the work of building St Canute’s church, with Canute himself as the builder, began during his reign (1080–1086).

There is confirmation in the antedated deed from 1145, produced in the scriptorium of the new church, that the reference really is to Canute and this church, not to Canute and the old church. The confirmation comes from combining, according to the principle of the *lectio facilior*, the “Cnuto . . . ecclesiam” in the deed of 1145 and the written references to Canute and “hanc ecclesiam” from around 1145 in some of the liturgical books in the new church. This *lectio facilior* thus proves the conclusion which I documented in my 1989 essay, namely, that the deed is an antedated product of the twelfth century that legally confirms St Canute’s gift to St Lawrence in 1085.

Translated by Alan Crozier

Eva Österberg

Criminality and control in Sweden from the Middle Ages until now. Tendencies and interpretations

Scandinavian historiography in the field of criminality and social control is changing and expanding quickly at the moment. My intention is to present a preliminary synthesis. What does the available Swedish material, supplemented for some points with Norwegian and Finnish evidence, say about the major tendencies through time as regards crimes like violence and theft? What does it say about new categories of crime, about the criminalization of behaviour which, unlike homicide, has not been so self-evidently tabooed from earliest times? How can the broad changes be explained: did people really change their values and behaviour, or is it rather the system of social control and the role of the courts in this system that changed? One may also ask what happened to the courts when the early modern state emerged as a centralized and bureaucratic system of power. Did they become transformed from a social arena to a theatre of power, within the framework of a new discourse between the state and the citizens — a development implied in works by *Habermas*, *Foucault* and *Natalie Davis*, for instance.

The relevant crime statistics are presented in tables 1–3. Table 1 contains figures about murder and manslaughter calculated as mean values per year per 1000 inhabitants, table 2 concerns minor crimes of violence calculated in the same way, and table 3, finally, thefts.

The thesis of the transition “de la violence au vol” has played a major role in international research. The Scandinavian evidence suggests that the thesis has some validity if we look at the changes in a long-term perspective. It is at least evident that the rate of violent crime has consistently been lower from the late nineteenth century until the present day than it was in the fifteenth century. There is a clear decline in violence in the seventeenth century, and in some regions possibly already before that. However, the development is not altogether linear. Southern Ostrobothnia in Finland and some Swedish towns show a distinct increase in violent crime at the start of the nineteenth century.

Also as regards thefts, the beginning of the nineteenth century shows rather high frequencies. However, in general, thefts do not appear to have become stabilized at a really high level until after the Second World War.

If we look at the total number of cases brought before the Swedish courts, we see an interesting gradual shift. In the sixteenth century the courts were still to a large extent occupied with purely criminal cases. Gradually, however, disputes over property and debts came to dominate. This unequivocal trend can be observed in most regions in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Starting from a discussion of the interpretations concerning crime and social control proposed by researchers such as *Norbert Elias*, *Heikki Ylikangas* and *John Braithwaite*, I present my own model. It is an interpretation which tries to combine data on criminality with evidence about varying systems of control and other important societal processes:

The Middle Ages and most of the sixteenth century. What is dealt with in the courts is above all crimes against the person: violence, defamation, slander, etc. The courts are thus largely an instrument for resolving conflicts between individuals. The difference between private and public is still hardly developed in society. My hypothesis is that the

courts thereby had responsibility for many matters which were later referred to the sphere of informal control. As *Johan Asplund* has formulated it, the courts in former times were an expression of “social responsiveness”. Trials were the public face of society — everything and everyone was there. This explains why so much petty violence between roughly equal men was brought to court in the first place. It makes it understandable that the penalties were often reduced to much lower fines than the law stipulated, at the same time as occasional habitual criminals were mercilessly expelled. I have argued that the penalties that were meted out were a combination of cruelty and realistic lenience. The combination is due to the fact that the courts could, on the one hand, stigmatize and expel those who were really seen as a threat to the collective and to the inbuilt “communitarianism” of society. On the other hand, they could apply reintegrative shaming to restore peace in society, to rehabilitate the trouble-maker, and to restore the honour of the man who had received the blow.

The period from the latter half of the sixteenth century until the mid-eighteenth century. The courts continue to function as an arena where people resolve personal conflicts. But more and more, they also come to serve the interests of the early modern state, which is reflected in increases in prosecutions of illegal trading, smuggling goods into the towns, using false measures and the like. An interesting question here is whether the loyalty of ordinary men to the courts — their feeling that the local courts were their own social arena — declined as the state increasingly tried to use the courts. Some crimes of disobedience may be interpreted as a sign of this.

In this period the courts also collaborate to a large extent as a formal control system with the church as a semiformal control system to prosecute illicit sexual liaisons and to combat violence. Both structures of control can be said to communicate reintegrative as well as stigmatizing shame.

The latter half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. There is a sharp rise in the unpropertied groups, and cultural conflicts in society are heightened. The boundary between public and private becomes increasingly distinct. The semiformal system of social control (the church, now joined by the school) still plays a large role and has assumed some of the responsibilities that formerly rested with the secular courts. As a consequence of the socio-economic and cultural polarization there is an increase in crime in the first half of the nineteenth century, at the same time as landed peasants and the people governing the towns have an interest in using the courts to control “the lower classes”. The number of criminal cases brought to court in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is lower than the number of economic disputes and cases of debts.

The latter part of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. Until the time when cases of theft increase after the Second World War, the period is generally characterized by a lower rate of recorded serious crime against both person and property. There was, on the other hand, sometimes an increase in behaviour such as vagrancy, drunkenness, and prostitution, for instance in the 1870s. There is a great distance between private and public and also between informal control and the bureaucratic system of the judiciary. The courts are less concerned with chastising people and thereby communicating reintegrative shame. Instead they are increasingly occupied with confirming economic settlements and ruling on economic matters. When decisions concerning criminal law have to be made they follow more professional procedures. The semiformal control systems are extensive and ramified: schools, child welfare committees, reformatories, and so on. New groups create their own instruments for self-improvement and discipline, through such phenomena as labour movements and educational associations.

In this perspective the notion of a shift “from a violent society to a thieving society” is too simple a model for the description of changes in criminality in Scandinavia. “From social arena to theatre of power” is an equally simplified picture of the way the courts have functioned through time. Both of these descriptions admittedly agree with many crucial observations in the evidence. But we require interpretations which combine both perspectives, interpretations that are open for a dialectic relationship between the use of justice and actual behaviour. This has been an attempt.

Ingrid Millbourn

**Cooperativism — an alternative to capitalism
and Social Democracy 1900—1920**

Leading Social Democrats in Sweden have viewed the cooperative movement as the third organization in the labour movement. Its role was to look after trade, while the unions took care of wages and the party was responsible for production and liberation. Non-socialist opponents have seized on this and accused the cooperative movement of being Social Democratic. Yet the cooperationists themselves have constantly asserted their independence of all party politics. I argue that it is not possible to explain these different views of the nature of the cooperative movement without recognizing that it had an independent ideology, known as *cooperativism*. The aim of the present paper is to define and explain this ideology, both through theoretical declarations, mostly from spokesmen of KF (Kooperativa Förbundet, the Cooperative Union and Wholesale Society), and through the economic practice of the organization. Through this I also seek to show that theory and practice are mutually related, together constituting the ideology.

Three Social Democrats, all active cooperationists, convened a conference in September 1899 to form KF. They had first ensured support for the decision in the Social Democratic party executive, with the intention of thereby taking over the leadership of the cooperative movement. However, the conference was a failure for them, since KF was formed as a fully independent central organization.

The goal of the cooperative movement was that all consumers and workers should be organized, and the cooperationists in practice mostly came from the lower classes. The period 1888—1920 saw steep price rises because of customs duties and monopolistic cartels, which ate up the pay rises. One of the workers' strategies was the formation of consumer associations, through which goods could be bought at prices that were 20 per cent lower, thus offsetting the amount by which prices had been raised by the monopolies.

The ultimate goal of the cooperative movement was peace and harmony, which were to be attained by the abolition of private capitalism. The strategy to achieve this goal was based on the work contributed by the members, on competition with private business, and on independence from the state. There was an ambivalence, however, about the forms of production — whether the enterprises should be consumer-owned and run by KF or worker-owned, independent production cooperatives. The cooperatives were seen as ideal models showing that it was possible to produce goods in a wholesome working environment. As a consequence, their products were slightly more expensive than privately manufactured goods, which made them hard to sell. When the production cooperative was expelled from KF in 1914, the reason given was that the movement had the best interests of the consumers at heart, whereas the cooperatives only wanted to make as high a profit as possible. This explanation cannot be accepted, however, since in the years immediately preceding the decision, it had often been maintained that the cooperatives were experiencing difficulty precisely because they were not highly profitable companies and nevertheless sought to carry on production in a good working environment. The decision can instead be explained by the fact that the production for which KF was working, in conflict with private industry, could not be realized through the cooperatives. It required competitive companies which could win through their strength and size. This change was primarily a consequence of the lower classes' need for cheap goods and the price rises

implemented by the cartels and trusts. The conflicts had begun when the private traders, in their newly formed national association, used the threat of boycott to try to prevent some producers from giving wholesale discounts to KF. When the discounts were withdrawn, KF responded by, for example, importing goods and threatening to start production on its own. KF was given its discounts again. In 1911 there was a tough battle between KF and the margarine cartel. KF bought its own factory, the cartel lowered its prices, and all the consumers saved money. The experience was a positive one for KF — showing that it was possible to defeat a cartel — but the difficulties also became obvious. It was clear that if a cartel was to be beaten in the long run, the cooperative company must be even better than it. First, however, there had to be cooperative capital, which was acquired mainly through the profitable retail trade of KF. This capital made it possible for KF to start a number of competitive companies in the 1920s. Yet another condition for achieving this was no doubt the reorganization of 1917. This led to power being centralized in the KF board, which thereafter consisted of the three business managers. From then on the business principles of KF included large-scale production, the need for capital formation through profitable trading, and central management of production. At the same time, this meant a moral dilemma, since one of the most fundamental principles of the cooperative movement was that it should be non-profit-making.

The success of KF attracted attention in parliament and in state inquiries, and cooperation was seen as an efficient counter to the price rises of the cartels. The cooperatives' faith in the significance of the movement for an alternative society was strengthened by the success and the attention. On the eve of the 1920s, the movement was ready to start competing with the cartels on their terms. A margarine factory was started in 1920, and the cartel was attacked for its unreasonably high prices. At the same time, it was suggested that competition from the cooperative movement was good both for the private enterprises and for society as a whole, since it forced the cartels to rationalize and adopt new technology.

This analysis has shown the importance of investigating both theories and economic practice. They mutually determined and changed the cooperative ideology, the goal of which remained the same during the period 1900–1920, whereas the means changed under the influence of, among other things, the prevailing capitalist economy.

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