

Summaries

Brita Malmer

Numismatics, Olof Skötkonung, and the battle at Svolder

Since 1979 there has been a chair of numismatics and monetary history at the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSFR), Stockholm. Swedish public museums, especially the Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm, house important and extensive research material in this field, that is, the coin finds, especially from the Viking Age (c. 220,000 Arabic, German and English coins from c. 2000 finds), and from the Middle Ages. Modern numismatic research belongs as much to the social sciences as to the humanities, with computerized statistical data as an important element.

Unfortunately, the findings of modern numismatics, its methods and its material, do not seem to be very well known. Sture Bolin once introduced numismatics to historians in his *Fynden av romerska mynt i det fria Germanien* (1926) and other works. Henrik Klackenbergs doctor's thesis, *Moneta nostra. Monetarisering i medeltidens Sverige* (1992) is a new successful example of the use of numismatics in a wider context.

Nevertheless, there is still much to be done in order to spread information about numismatics. An example of the need is seen in an article by Eric Gamby, "Olof Skötkonung, Sven Forkbeard and Ethelred the Unready", published in *Scandia* 1990:1. Gamby claimed that the Viking chieftain Olof mentioned in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 991 and 994 is identical with the Swedish Olof Skötkonung and not, as has previously been generally assumed, Olav Tryggvason of Norway. Gamby refers to the Scandinavian coinage of the 990s, which, according to Gamby, started as a common undertaking by Sven Forkbeard and Olof Skötkonung "somewhere in Denmark", after the battle at Svolder. Unfortunately, Gamby's numismatic arguments are inconsistent with the findings of modern numismatics. Coins bearing the names of Sven of Denmark, Olav of Norway, and Olof of Sweden/Sigtuna are very different, technically and otherwise. They were certainly not minted at the same place. Furthermore, according to Gamby, die combination 13.51 (cf. the die-chain pictured in the article above) belongs to this early coinage somewhere in Denmark. But combination 13.51 has a central position in the Sigtuna coinage of the 990s. It is impossible to detach combination 13.51 and place it in Denmark. Then the entire Sigtuna coinage (with inscriptions like "rex Svevorum", "rex Situn", "monetarius on Situn" etc.) would have to follow.

Mistakes like Gamby's demonstrate that it is high time for numismatics to break its isolation and to intensify its inter-disciplinary contacts. Especially for periods where the written sources are rare, as in Scandinavia up to the thirteenth century, numismatics provides rich supplementary material for our knowledge about society and economy.

Fabian Persson

A Helping Hand: Principles of Patronage in Relation to Nepotism and Meritocracy in the Age of Greatness

The article examines three principles for promotion: patronage, nepotism, and commerce. Yet patronage, nepotism, and the purchase of offices are far from being an uncomplicated trinity; the three make up a trinity of which the component parts are indissolubly united without being blended. If coexistence was the normal thing, there was nevertheless fluctuation in the importance of the different components. This coexistence in fact contained such conflicting forces that the different parts threatened to undermine each other.

Patronage is sometimes equated with corruption, incompetence, and general decay. Patron—client relations, however, are much more complicated than this, constituting a specific form of “corruption”. Clientship is based on the principle of *grace*. Although it is mingled with commerce, this idea is something special and distinctive. It creates other ties, loyalties, and attitudes than commerce. In reality the principle of grace was undermined by a far-reaching commercialism. Nepotism or commercialism are based on partly different principles from pure Patronage has thus been claimed to counteract competence. In reality, however, patronage could open the way for talent. The article discusses a number of causes for this, of which a basic one is that patronage does not limit the selection in the same way as nepotism. It is paradoxical, however, that an abundant flow of clients can result in many prospective clients dropping out and never being included in the “client short list”.

Another significant difference between patronage and nepotism is the possibility of weeding out the unwanted. Patrons could reject their clients but not their children. This is of extreme importance for the path of promotion. This sifting, however, did not necessarily function in a meritocratic way, since even competent clients could be weeded out.

There were thus different selection principles for patronage, nepotism, and commerce. There were also different ranges of candidates to choose from, and this laid the foundation for different futures. Nepotism may have strengthened bonds between people, but they were often bonds that already existed and could not be dissolved. Commerce scarcely created any bonds or dependencies of the same kind; once the transaction was concluded, the relation did not need to persist. Patronage which developed well for both parties, on the other hand, could forge or strengthen bonds and dependencies. Unlike the two other forms, then, patronage can create something which is both durable and which would not have existed without patronage — a lasting tie between two people.

Patronage gives an opportunity to promote talents and simultaneously tie them to oneself. But it depends on how the patron himself selects and then treats his clients. It was by no means certain that all patrons would go to any great trouble for the sake of their clients. On the contrary, a patron could let nepotism or bribes get the upper hand so that deserving clients failed or sought a different patron. It could also be the case that a patron really did help his own clients, but that the clients who received help were sycophantic or incompetent. If so, the patron was acting against his own interests — assuming that he wanted competent and trustworthy supporters — but this is by no means unique.

It is not meaningful to assert as a general thesis that clients were always competent (or incompetent). Such a claim would be patently absurd. Nor was patronage an idyllic sys-

tem with only virtuous, benevolent patrons; on the contrary, insecurity and dependence were a highly significant part of a client's life. Patronage was quite simply a system based on other principles than nepotism and commerce. Through these principles there was a possibility that patronage could have a strong element of meritocracy, in the sense of promotion according to competence. Whether this possibility was exploited, however, ultimately depended on the patron.

Although I have discussed the principles that distinguished patronage, nepotism, and commerce, there were often in reality no clear boundaries between these phenomena. Many relations were on the borderline between patronage and nepotism. The same relation could show the interaction of the two. Pure patronage regulated by grace was probably more often exceptional. Alongside patrons there were no doubt also sponsors who could work on the basis of a mixture of grace and commerce. Moreover, it is often difficult to distinguish patronage from relations of friendship. This complicated fabric of relations makes it even more important, in my opinion, to specify the fundamental differences. Perhaps one should first clarify and consider these differences in order to achieve a better understanding of the way they were mixed in reality.

Gösta Johanson

**After the King's Speech to the Farmers' Demonstration
New Plans for a Coup**

The constitutional crisis that was the consequence of *borggårdstalet*, King Gustaf V's speech in the palace courtyard to the farmers' demonstration on 6 February 1914, can be seen as a culmination of a decade of struggle for political and social power between the radical and conservative parties in Sweden. After a protracted dispute over the conditions for franchise to the lower house, which was resolved by compromise at the 1907–1909 sessions of parliament, the struggle in domestic affairs after the 1911 election was over the issues of parliamentarism and defence.

The king in his speech took up a stand against parliamentarism and the government of Staaff, which was replaced by the so-called king's ministry under Hammarskjöld. The authors of the speech, the explorer Sven Hedin and the then lieutenant Carl Benedich, by no means ceased to be constitutional advisors to the king and queen after the speech. On the basis of the source material used in this article, I have been able to chart and analyse their continued political activity, their plans, motives, and network of contacts.

In two letters to Gustaf V on the 6th and 11th of November 1913, Hedin tried to get the king to force the resignation of the Staaff government, to announce a general election, and to issue a "proclamation" to the people of Sweden. In the draft text of the proclamation which Hedin gave to the king, there were open demands for a return to a "kingdom by the grace of God". The most interesting thing about Hedin's letter to Gustaf V is that he here put forward the embryo of the royal intervention that was implemented with the king's speech on 6 February 1914.

There is also remarkable agreement between Hedin's advice to the king and the memos drawn up by Benedich and Axel O. Rappe before their contacts with Hedin. These similarities cannot be explained as chance. They clearly show that ideas and plans of this kind were common among the officers.

After Hedin had failed to provoke a constitutional conflict over the "Falun Affair", he made "desperate attempts" to get King Gustaf to take action against the government in the defence issue. These attempts were unsuccessful as well. Failure was turned into success when Frykberg started organizing the farmers' demonstration. Through his early contacts with Frykberg, Hedin was able to stage-manage the political part of the palace courtyard event. The farmers' "demands" of the king were drawn up by Hedin in collaboration with Benedich. Hedin was thus able, with the aid of the queen, to press the king into replying with a speech that was sufficiently provocative to lead to the desired constitutional conflict.

The outcome of the ensuing general election did not fulfil the hopes of the defence agitators. It soon became clear to them that they could not expect a conservative majority. This insight caused unease and desperation among the defence agitators, which is reflected in the source material presented here.

In the letters exchanged between Hedin and Benedich, they discuss the crux of how to get the king to act once again. In late May and early June, Benedich nourished plans for a *coup d'état* in the style of Gustav III. The problem was both to get the king to take part and to obtain the support of the general staff for this bold plan of action. The sup-

port of the general staff unconditionally required the king's participation. Hedin and Bennedich agreed that the best way to ensure the king's participation was via the queen. It was therefore a serious setback to Hedin when the prime minister, Hammarskjöld, intervened to control and prevent his unconstitutional advisory activities. Gustaf V's freedom of action with Hammarskjöld as prime minister was more circumscribed than in Staaff's time.

With the outbreak of the Great War, interest in resolving the defence issue immediately switched to plans for Swedish participation in the war as quickly as possible. The sources unambiguously show that the so-called defence agitators were not primarily seeking to defend Swedish territory but to create a strong military power — an army and a navy — in order to pursue an aggressive policy of expansion in alliance with the highly admired German Empire. Sweden would take over the leadership of Scandinavia and force the Nordic neighbours into a loose union. If Denmark and Norway did not accept this, then Sweden, with German support, would ensure control of Öresund by occupying Själland; in the event of Norwegian resistance, northern Norway as far as Narvik would be occupied. Finland would be "liberated", and in conjunction with this, large areas of Russia would be incorporated in Sweden. This plan to conquer Far Karelia was adopted in Finnish military and political circles after Finland joined World War II on the side of Nazi Germany.

These expansionist plans are clearly seen in the letters of Hedin and Bennedich, in Mittag-Leffler's notes of conversations with Douglas, the Marshal of the Realm, who said that the Swedish general staff made these demands for Swedish participation in the war, and in the proposition of Rappe the Elder to King Gustaf at the turn of the year 1915—16.

Another important motive behind the defence agitation and the farmers' demonstration concerned domestic policies. Here there was a clear link with the activists. A German victory, which people in conservative circles generally believed in, would strengthen conservative forces in Sweden. For Frykberg the activist, Swedish participation in the war was necessary for reasons of domestic politics. The power of the king had to be reinforced as a counter to the assaults of parliamentarism, democratization, and socialism. The officers moreover saw a stronger monarchy as a guarantee of their autonomy. Even when Sweden was on the threshold of democracy, at the start of 1918, the aspirations for democracy were still being combated by Uno Nyberg and other leaders of the farmers' demonstration.

The real motives behind the defence agitation and the farmers' demonstration — activism, anti-parliamentarism, anti-democracy, and anti-constitutionalism — were not shown openly. The reality behind these movements was quite different from the later mythologizing. But it was not possible to achieve the hidden aims; they were too anachronistic for that.

P. G. Edebalk

The Accident Insurance Act (1916)

The development of the Swedish social insurance system received its first impetus from the reforms in Germany in the early 1880s. An enquiry was set up in 1884 but the results were meagre. As late as 1910, all that existed in Sweden was the 1901 act on compulsory compensation for accidents and a weakly developed movement with voluntary health insurance funds.

The 1901 Accident Compensation Act covered workers in industry and closely related areas. Compensation was paid at a standard rate without regard to the amount of lost earnings. Sickness benefit amounted to one krona a day, starting from the 61st day. If the accident led to complete invalidity, an annuity of 300 kronor was paid. With the long qualifying period of 60 days, only 5 per cent of the accidents caused such long invalidity that they qualified for sickness benefits. The amount of the benefits was small. The annuity of 300 kronor can be compared with the average annual wage of an adult male industrial worker, which was 943 kronor around that time. Swedish accident insurance must have been the worst among all the comparable countries at the time.

A few years after the turn of the century, all the political parties in Sweden advocated reform. The rapid industrialization, the emergence of the working class, and the introduction of adult male suffrage in 1909 were the most important conditions for the interest in reform. In 1913 a large majority in parliament resolved to introduce a general pension insurance system. It was to encompass all the people, which made it the first national insurance system in the world.

The 1901 Accident Compensation Act was replaced by the Accident Insurance Act of 1916. The new act was based on the employers' obligation to insure their employees, and it encompassed in principle *all* people in gainful employment. Compensation in the form of sickness benefit or annuity amounted to two-thirds of the injured person's income. The principle was thus to compensate for lost income. A few questions were provisionally solved while awaiting the expected introduction of a system of compulsory health insurance. This was expected to take care of short-term injuries due to accidents. In the meantime, the qualifying period was 35 days, during which time the employer was obliged to pay benefit. The 1916 Accident Insurance Act was the most modern accident insurance system of the time.

There was great political unity about the desirability of an accident insurance system. However, the right-wing and left-wing parties differed on points of detail. The same was true of the parties on the labour market. The trade union movement had protested against the 1901 act, after which they had tried to negotiate with the employers to arrive at an agreement on accident insurance. There was a rapid expansion here, which led in turn to the employers becoming increasingly in favour of a state system. This would cost the large companies very little, since the private agreements could be abrogated. The employers also sought to transfer some of the costs to the state and/or the insured themselves. They therefore advocated the long-term solution of coordinating accident insurance with health insurance, which would reduce the employers' insurance costs.

The health insurance funds were also an important interested party. Before 1910 the funds were opposed to compulsory health insurance. With the decision on pensions in

1913 and the victory of the idea of national insurance, conditions changed. Health insurance was envisioned as taking care of the short-term cases before invalidity pension. It was also considered important for the health insurance funds to watch their own interests as regards accident insurance. If voluntary insurance was retained, short-term injuries would also be covered by the accident insurance.

A government inquiry produced its report in 1919, which proposed compulsory health insurance. This would cover all the working population over the age of 16. Sickness benefit was to be paid according to the principle of compensation for lost income, at a rate of two-thirds of the daily earnings, and the amount was adjusted to the accident insurance. There was thus to be coordination. It was suggested that the health insurance funds should take over the cases of sickness proper and the minor injuries.

The 1916 Accident Insurance Act helped to pave the way for the broadly supported 1919 proposal on general health insurance. Before the government was able to draft a bill, however, the deflation crisis of the early 1920s put a stop to the reform.

The new social policies that were emerging in the 1910s contained a whole new view of social rights. Social policies were to be aimed at all citizens. It is thus not true that general social policies began in the 1930s or 1940s, as is usually claimed, and in the development of a welfare state, Sweden was taking the lead as early as the 1910s.

The 1916 Accident Insurance Act meant the introduction of the lost-income principle. An important reason was that the insurance was supposed to cover all employees, including the more prosperous groups of white-collar workers. Swedish writers on social policies generally think that the lost-income principle had its breakthrough in the 1950s, but this is wrong. The principle was introduced in 1916, and the 1919 proposal on general health insurance shows that the principle was generally accepted at the time. The lost-income principle was connected to the coordination of health insurance and accident insurance. This coordination did not come about until 1955, but it can be directly traced back to ideas that were well established in the 1910s.