

## Summaries



Erik Lönnroth

**”Engelbrektskrönikan”**

Sixty years ago, an intensive polemical discussion was raging concerning the authorship of the first part of the so-called Karls-chronicle, written during the 15th century. Herman Schück has revived this discussion in a newly published study. In accordance with the conservative majority of the participants, Schück insists that the section in dispute is the independent work of a scribe named Johan Fredebern, inspired by admiration for Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, the leader of the Swedish rebellion against King Erik the Pomeranian.

The author of the present article concurs with Schück on the question of authorship, which entails a revision of opinion since the completion of his doctoral dissertation, revision discussed 12 years ago in a review in the Danish *Historisk Tidsskrift*. However, he is quite certain that the ”Engelbrekts-chronicle” is not an independent epic but an introductory part to the Karls-chronicle, initiated by the marshal of the Kingdom, Karl Knutsson, and motivated by his need to demonstrate that King Erik had violated his royal oath and had not taken Karl’s office as a marshal in earnest, and that Karl Knutsson himself had had the popular hero Engelbrekt as instigator of their common rebellion against the monarchy. This contention is supported both by stylistic transition between the section written by Fredebern and subsequent parts of the chronicle, and by the general contents of the chronicle. Schück has himself made a significant contribution to this interpretation of the chronicle, by showing that Fredebern had in the summer of 1437 entered Karl Knutsson’s service as head of his Secretariat, to be succeeded some years later by two scribes who continued on the chronicle that follow the introductory section.

In sum, the primary distinction between Schück and the present author may be reduced to differing outlooks on Fredebern as an epic poet, and on Engelbrekt’s performance as a champion of Swedish national independence. In terms of appreciation of the chronicle as a source of great value to the history of the Swedish rebellion of 1434–1436, the authors do not differ notably in their evaluation.



Dag Lindström

## Women, Violence and Everyday Criminality Themes in German Research into Criminality

The study of criminality has been established for quite a few years as a lively research area among Nordic historians, all the time with close links to the international discussion. It is chiefly British, American, and to some extent French research that has been considered. Little attention has been devoted to German studies of criminality. German research in this field was established relatively late, it is true, but there is now extensive, highly interesting research in this field. The aim of this essay is to introduce this research primarily to a Nordic audience.

It is possible to distinguish two distinct waves in German criminality research. The first began in the 1970s, with the interest chiefly focused on relatively modern history (the late eighteenth century, the nineteenth century, and the early twentieth century). The main centre of interest was robber bands and theft, and the ambition was both to chart this criminality and to explain it. The latter effort involved a deliberate association of crime with social change. The second wave began towards the end of the 1980s, with the interest focused more on the late Middle Ages and the early modern period; it is no longer criminality in itself that is at the centre, but rather norm systems, perceptions of justice, and perceptions of the social order. There is also a distinct scepticism about large-scale quantitative surveys. The emphasis is more on qualitative analysis.

In studies of crimes against property, attention has been devoted to the element of social destitution and protest, and the concept of *social crime* and its applicability has been discussed intensively. German research has thereby undoubtedly helped to qualify the picture of robbers, smugglers, wood thieves, and others. Finer nuances are seen in the element of social protest and the support of the peasant population for such crimes. The individual categories of crime – such as smuggling and theft of wood – also contain actions of very different kinds. German research has also shown that an intensive in-depth analysis of individual types of crime is in many cases a very fruitful approach. This applies not least to the many studies of infanticide, but also, for example, to Regina Schulte's discussion of arson.

Women, female criminality, and women's actions in court have also been considered. There is a great risk that male criminality and male patterns of conflict are unconsciously set up as the norm. Women's conflicts were not as much a matter for the courts. At the same time, there are also studies to show that when women were brought to court they were not just passive victims of the exercise of power by the authorities. On the contrary, deliberate strategies can be observed. It can be seen that women were able to use the courts and the judicial norms for their own purposes.

The great flexibility in the judicial system and the function of the courts as an arena for resolving and regulating conflicts has also attracted considerable attention. An analysis of the actual penal system has also been brought in as an important part of several studies. There were elements of both reintegration and exclusion from the community. There is also emphasis on the important role played by honour in society. It was a fundamental element in conceptions about the organization of society, and honour is of crucial importance for an understanding of norms of action, patterns of conflict, and judicial functions. In connection with violent acts in particular, ideas of honour appear to be central. As a whole, several German historians have deepened the study of violence and conflicts by putting violence into a context of patterns of action and social norm systems.

Several German scholars question whether it is meaningful to try to chart the extent and composition of crime, above all if statistics for recorded crime are assumed to reflect actual criminality. The same scepticism is expressed about large-scale quantitative

comparisons over a long time or between different geographical areas. Instead of studying crime and punishment, most historians appear to be oriented to studying judicial functions and transgressions of norms in general. The concrete studies have often concerned analysis of individual court cases and types of crime, with the aim of deepening our knowledge of the underlying norm systems, patterns of conflict, and social relations. In this connection, it has also become important to study how people have developed particular strategies of action to benefit from or master the judicial system.

Staffan Förhammar

## **Organized Philanthropy in Sweden in the Late Nineteenth Century The Example of Aid to the Handicapped**

In the middle of the nineteenth century a new form of philanthropy was introduced in England which was more geared to results than previous voluntary assistance. The new philanthropy was called scientific charity. Instead of giving with no properly thought-out goals, the principle of helping people to help themselves was established. It was also advocated, partly to avoid wasting resources, that there should be close relations between private and public relief work. Scientific charity also believed in professionalized relief work.

In the article I study some relief associations in the sphere of handicap founded in Stockholm at the end of the nineteenth century, which sought to support the care of the mentally handicapped people with impaired sight, and the physically disabled, as well as chronically ill children. The aim of the limited study is to examine the impact of the new philanthropic ideas in Sweden. The interest is focused on the relation between experts of different kinds and amateurs on the boards of the different associations. I also study central documents from an ideological perspective, while also considering attitudes to the recipients of assistance – the handicapped.

In the study of the four associations we see two distinct philanthropic patterns, one traditional, where giving is in the centre, and a more modern one, where the giving is merely a way to achieve a superior goal, adjustment to society. Three associations – those dealing with the care of the mentally handicapped, the blind, and the physically disabled – all had a greater element of expertise on their boards, and their work aimed to educate the handicapped and give them vocational training. The goal was thus to help them to help themselves, and the associations were fully prepared to cooperate with public authorities to achieve this. In addition, the programmes for these three associations also show that they had ambitions to chart the need for care, to spread information about handicaps and the handicapped, and to professionalize care. In other words, they had largely the same ambition as other philanthropic organizations of the day, which advocated a scientific approach.

The fourth association in my study, for the care of chronically ill children, appears more like a traditional charity organization. It wanted primarily to relieve the suffering of the children, not to rehabilitate them. The association also drew a clear boundary to separate it from the public authorities, in order to ensure continued private finance.





Mikael Argenziano

### **Class struggle and Cultural "Immunity" – The reactions among Swedish Socialists towards Italian Fascism 1919–1929**

Few scholars have studied the reactions among Swedish Socialists towards Italian Fascism. This applies especially to the third decade of our century (1919–29), a period that I have therefore chosen as the object of my research. The analysis is based upon Steven Payne's definition of Fascism, and the focus lies exclusively on the reactions provoked in Sweden (among the Socialists) by its Italian variant. The sources are essentially the newspapers and magazines published by Swedish Socialists during the period, although certain political pamphlets have also been employed. The following factors have been considered when forming the pattern of analysis: globality, centralization and national autonomy. The Swedish currents of Socialism (Social Democracy, Communism and Syndicalism) are discussed on the basis of three main aspects – class struggle, the libertarian-constitutional aspect and the cultural aspect. This last dimension has deliberately been given a somewhat vague character, in an attempt to group together interesting features that do not fit within the framework of the two first aspects.

Throughout the period concerned, Social Democracy was generally characterized by heterogeneity. This picture of an ideologically composite Social Democracy is matched by the heterogeneity of its reactions towards Italian Fascism. Many of the most influential commentators (such as Allan Vougt, Sven Backlund and Arthur Engberg) excelled in making statements that not only stressed the reactionary and bourgeois character of Fascism – i.e. the class struggle aspect, but also tended to emphasize and defend parliamentary democracy while condemning tyranny (the libertarian-constitutional aspect). If any tendency is to be discussed, it goes from the first aspect to the latter, interestingly enough culminating not in 1929 but in 1927. In this year, in the name of the "Matteotti Campaign" originally initiated by the Socialist International, "freedom" and "peace" were advocated in almost all Social Democratic newspapers, appealing against "dictatorship" in Communist (Sovjet Russia) and Fascist (mainly Italy) countries. However, the Social Democratic commentaries were also rich in elements that I have somewhat tentatively placed with the cultural dimension. Throughout the period, the Social Democratic columns are filled with statements that bear witness to Swedish selfassurance. Fascism was not considered a genuine threat since the Swedish, especially the working class, were viewed as prime examples of maturity and common sense, being "immune" to anti-democratic influences. The commentaries on Fascism in Italy were often accompanied by exotism and chauvinist clichés. Italian Fascism was generally given very little space in Social Democratic publications, and tended to be a strictly peripheral preoccupation, often the concern only of foreign correspondents.

This picture is, nevertheless, complicated by the Social Democrats' mental association of Fascism with Swedish Conservatism and Right Extremism. Social Democratic columnists perceived Swedish Conservative newspapers as being apologetic towards Fascism, and from 1923 and on, rather fierce attacks were directed against them (especially Arthur Engberg's in the dailies *Arbetet*, *Malmö*, and *Social-Demokraten*, Stockholm). On several occasions the Conservatives were accused of harbouring Fascist sympathies, and such allegations were often accompanied by allusions to the Conservative resistance to democratization in the beginning of the century. This tendency culminated in 1925, when a parliamentary decision to cut the defence budget triggered the creation of a National League for the Defence of Sweden by malcontent military officers (one of them taking part in the foundation of the Swedish Fascist Party, SFKO, one year later). The major Social Democratic newspapers expressed their anxiety, and the Social Democratic Youth League (SSU, led by Rickard Lindström) published an appeal against Fascist tendencies in the

armed forces. In 1928, similar fears were ventilated by Per-Albin Hansson (the future prime minister) in the daily *Ny Tid* (Gothenburg). A certain pattern can be traced from these events. 1. The Swedish Social Democrats were quite confident seeing Fascism as a Mediterranean, or at least a Continental (i.e. foreign) phenomenon which could not contaminate Sweden. 2. Events connected with Swedish history (the struggle for democracy and working class influence) made the Social Democrats associate Fascism with Swedish Conservatism and class struggle and were concerned over Fascism. 3. Communists, also alerted by the above-mentioned tendencies, intensified their agitation against Fascism. The Social Democrats, generally uninterested in radicalizing the course of events, feared that this might be beneficial to the Communists and thus de-emphasized the threat of Fascism. The key factors here are of a structural nature, since the Social Democrats were in an intermediate position between Fascists and Communists.

The composite character of the Social Democrats' reactions towards Fascism is also reflected in certain cases where commentaries tend to be ambiguous. Statements that appear somewhat sympathetic towards Fascism can be found in the daily *Örebro-Kuriren*, and also figure in the columns written by Sven Backlund and Rickard Lindström (the statement of the latter occurs as late as in 1924, well after the assassination of Giacomo Matteotti. As mentioned above, he wrote an appeal against Fascism one year later).

Swedish Social Democracy, with its limited connection to a global, centralized ideological movement and its high degree of national autonomy, tended to be as heterogeneous in its approach to Fascism as it was in general in the ideological field.

The Swedish Syndicalists judged Fascism in accordance with their ideology. Their statements to the class correlate struggle aspect, but the libertarian view also represented when the Fascists was criticized for being as dictatorial as the Communists. This libertarian aspect is strengthened from the middle of the decade onwards with Fascism seen as an example of State dictatorship. The Syndicalists, like the Social Democrats, tended to be culturally biased in their commentaries on Italian Fascism. At least until 1926 solid confidence in the maturity of the Swedish working class was expressed. Fascism was not considered a danger to Sweden, given the positive effects of the Swedes' national character. The Syndicalists, having strong national autonomy in common with the Social Democrats, also displayed heterogeneity – the cultural aspect was prominent throughout the period.

The Comintern-affiliated Swedish Communist Party (the name taken in 1922), having split from the Social Democrats in 1917 as Sweden's Social Democratic Left Party, was becoming increasingly dependent on Moscow. In accordance with this process its commentaries on Fascism became one-dimensional reflecting only the class struggle aspect, and the vocabulary became trivial and more vulgar, employing stereotype. Only in the beginning, until 1922, are there traces of a cultural dimension with the commentators expressing their disbelief in the ability of the Mediterranean character to achieve the Revolution. The Swedish Communists' adoption of the "agent theory" is simultaneous with the Comintern's, and there are examples of direct communication in the matter from Italian to Swedish Communists well before Comintern's Fourth Congress. The reaction among Swedish Communists (the Comintern-affiliated mainstream branch) towards Fascism reflects their dependency upon a global, centralized ideology – hence it is coherent, one-dimensional, with a clear tendency of development.

By taking into account a cultural dimension, my research, has also yielded many examples of national sentiment among Swedish Socialists, a non-ideological, non-nationalistic national sentiment, possibly to be ascribed to the mentality level. This phenomenon may well by one factor behind the remarkable success that was later enjoyed by the Swedish Social Democracy.

Per Gunnar Edebalk

### **From Competition to Monopoly Social Health Insurance 1891–1931**

The year 1931 saw a reform of the then voluntary health insurance system in Sweden. The reform led to the formation of local monopoly health insurance funds. In compensation, the state grant to the health insurance fund movement was increased.

The Swedish health insurance fund movement had developed rapidly since the latter part of the nineteenth century, and after 1891 the health insurance funds received state subsidies. Public support was weak, however, and competition between the different funds led to a problematic financial situation and poor levels of compensation. In the 1920s especially, the health insurance fund movement demanded higher state subsidies. The government agreed to raise the subsidies only if the destructive competition ceased; in other words, all the health insurance funds within a municipality had to join together in a monopoly fund.

A common view of social insurance had emerged in Sweden in the 1910s. In 1913 parliament decided to introduce old-age and invalidity insurance, the first in the world to cover the entire population. In 1916 a very modern occupational injury insurance was introduced, comprising the whole labour market. In 1919 a government committee of inquiry proposed the introduction of a general compulsory health insurance. This was based on monopoly health insurance funds, and was to handle short-term cases covered by occupational injury insurance and invalidity insurance. A total system was thus to be created. This idea had a broad political backing. After the deflation crisis in the early 1920s, however, the decision to introduce general health insurance was shelved for the future; it was not until 1955 that Sweden introduced a general compulsory health insurance system.

The 1931 reform of the health insurance funds was intended to bring about greater efficiency in voluntary health insurance. The reform also aimed to make it possible to coordinate health insurance on the one hand and insurance against occupational injury and invalidity on the other hand. Not least of all, the reform was also seen as a stage in the development towards a general health insurance in accordance with the ideas of 1919.

