

Summaries

Kim Salomon

THE LIMITS OF PLURALISM
A STUDY OF THE EXPLANATIONS OF THE CONFLICTS
BETWEEN DANE AND GERMAN IN SCHLESWIG

In the name of pluralism different explanations of the same phenomenon are accepted if they are derived from extra-scholarly values. Two researchers studying the same object and having the same goal of impartiality can arrive at incompatible explanations on account of their different points of departure, their different values. The question, however, is whether certain explanations are not “more reasonable” or “more correct” than others.

We can illustrate this problem by taking up the explanations given for the conflicts between Dane and German on the Schleswig question. The historical writing on Schleswig is an excellent example of the importance values have in the research process. In order to limit the material, the investigation is concentrated to three conflicts, those of 1848, 1864 and 1920.

In the scholarly literature attempting to explain these conflicts there exists a clear and obvious tendency: Danish historians defend the Danes, German historians the Germans. Seen across time, however, certain nuances can be noted. In more recent research – after the Second World War – the need to defend one’s own nation-state is not so marked as during the 19th century. However, a common denominator for both Danish and German accounts is to explain the conflicts from a national point of view, in national terms.

During the 19th century the dominant role of the state was a central doctrine in historical research. The lack of objectivity and the effort to defend Germaness or Danishness was compatible with the understanding that history should defend national unity and consolidate the German or Danish state.

This scholarly view was dominant, however, not only during the 19th century but also well into the 20th – and indeed even to our own time. The historical writings on Schleswig illustrate to a high degree how the national factor pervades the entire research process.

In some of the current research there are, however, indications of another perspective than merely the national one, a broader perspective. However, these remain but indications.

Is it possible to see the conflict only in national terms? The thesis in this investigation is that the development must be seen from an overall perspective which includes social as well as national factors. One representative of this view is E J Hobsbawm.

As concerns the historical writing on Schleswig, Gottlieb Japsen works from these criteria. He considers the nation-state and nationality feelings a consequence of society’s embourgeoisement and thus the reason for the oppositions in the region. Japsen works from a materialistic perspective. He does not consider the national factor to be the dominant force in history and has no need either to point out the responsible party in the conflict.

The analysis of the explanations of the conflicts shows that the only reasonable approach is an overall perspective which includes economic, social and ideological aspects. From such an overall perspective it is possible to argue against a national conflict perspective that isolates national factors and gives as a result a more narrow picture of the development. In the same way a national standpoint in the posing of the problem

is rejected, and it becomes possible to argue for the need to examine one's own state's behavior as well as the opposition's. Such a conflict perspective cannot be rejected on account of the values it contains. Rather its reasonableness or unreasonableness must be discussed as an essential part of the intra-scholarly research process.

Niels Peter Stilling

TRELLEBORG-HYPOTHESIS.

ON THE FUNCTION AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DANISH VIKING FORTRESSES

In the more recent research on the history of the Viking Age there has been considerable consensus about the importance of the Danish Viking fortresses of the Trelleborg-type in the general picture of Scandinavian history around the turn of the 10th century. But when it comes to the interpretation of the purpose and function of these fortresses, the agreement is much less distinct.

Two factors make it especially relevant to discuss the historiography of the Viking fortresses at this time: 1) the increasing interest, due to the recent excavations of Viking towns in Britain and Scandinavia, in the "urban Viking" (i.e. a culture which was something more than plunder and rape), 2) The recently established dendrochronological dating of Trelleborg, which makes this year (1981) the 1000th anniversary of Trelleborg.

The aim of this article is to reach the least contradictory interpretation of the role of the Viking fortresses in history. The point of departure is the theory that the Viking expansion in a wider sense was due to some extremely favourable economic fluctuations in and around Scandinavia in the last quarter of the first millennium. Only a great capital surplus can explain how it was possible to carry out the construction of these projects so demanding in men and accumulated wealth.

With this in mind the concrete evidence and the dating situation of the fortresses are set against especially, the theory which connects the fortresses to Svend Forkbeard's attack and conquest of England in 1013. After a careful examination of the arguments of the scholars in favour of this training camp hypothesis, it must be concluded that neither their arguments – based as they are on a confusion of the cause and effect relationship – nor the archeological evidence or the dating support this thesis.

The foremost defender of the training camp theory, Olaf Olsen, has suggested that the fortresses were unthinkable without the 20 years of warfare in England, since it was there that the Vikings collected the capital which enabled otherwise poor Denmark under Svend Forkbeard to construct these big camps. However, it seems difficult to understand how in his interpretation the fortresses at the same time could act as the starting points for the attack on England.

It is not possible to maintain the training camp theory, in light of the dating of Trelleborg to more than 3 decades before the conquest of England, and of evidence which clearly shows that these fortresses could not house such a big army as has been formerly reckoned with. Their geographical position, perhaps with the exception of Aggersborg by the "Limfjord", does not speak for aims directed towards the sea, nor does the weight their constructors placed on the defensive elements in both the surroundings and the construction itself. Last but not least, the findings from the fortresses show us a rather normal life (within a military system), which speaks against the idea of the camps as "great warlord's dream of endless strife" (Olaf Olsen in Bruce-Mitford, 1975, p 109).

On the basis of this evidence it seems much more reasonable to look upon the fortresses as part of the whole process of change taking place in Danish society towards the end of the 10th century which we witness both in the written and non-written sources.

Here the Trelleborg fortresses find a much clearer function as strategic strongholds (administration and service centres) for the Danish king in the centralisation process, the process which Harald himself tells about on the big Jelling Stone, and the same process which could lie behind the violent overthrow of Harald by his son Svend. Going beyond the source criticism, it is perhaps worthwhile to imagine the short life of the fortresses in this context and change Svend's role from constructor to destructor of Trelleborg.

I do not need to insist that also the theory of centralisation bastions must be kept on the hypothetical plane to maintain the emphasis on the Trelleborg fortresses as a striking testimony of the Danish (Scandinavian) economic and political potential towards the end of the Viking Age. As such, it is of course possible to understand the conquest of England, but what is most important is that the fortresses tell us of a culturally and economically highly developed society in Viking Age Denmark, which in its turn is the basis for the unification under a forceful line of monarchs.

Jan Sundin, Lars-Göran Tedebrand

**MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY IN THE SWEDISH IRONWORKS
MILIEU, 1750–1875**

Within international historical demographic research there exists a newly awakened and increasing interest for the strategic role which the decline in mortality played in the demographic transition. At present, however, there are few empirical studies where modern population theory and fairly advanced data techniques are combined to illuminate the development of mortality during the final phase of the pre-industrial period. What is clear is that the research pay-off would be greatest if the relationship between environment and mortality could be observed. The article here has been framed as a model study, in which mortality and morbidity for a particular production milieu, the Swedish iron works, from 1750 to 1875, is intensively studied. Very extensive individual based data material has been able to be balanced against qualitative information, chiefly doctors' reports. Infant mortality's central role in the drop in the general mortality level stands out as one of the clearest results. The reduction in infant mortality has been locally followed during the entire 19th century and has been able to be studied in detail as a social diffusion phenomenon, in which the works' core population played an *avant garde* rôle. The importance of information for decreasing infant mortality has been largely underscored.

A strong selectivity in adult mortality during the final phase of the agrarian society has been demonstrated. People's own capacity to influence mortality must be more strongly stressed than in earlier research. Epidemics and morbidity crises seems to have been neutralized earlier in the works' milieu than elsewhere, given the generally equal economic situation and access to doctors there. The large presence of respiratory and acute and chronic stomach sicknesses among the laboring population shortly after the mid-19th century has been clearly illustrated. The earlier stereotyped ideas of mortality among the works' skilled workers has been revised, at the same time that the unavoidable work- related sicknesses have been delimited. Here and on many other points the article points towards continued study of health- sickness-death in different Swedish environments for the last 250 years.

Tom Ericsson

**WOMEN IN THE UNION STRUGGLE. A STUDY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN IN CIVIL SERVICE 1904–1912**

The expansion of the public sector during the latter half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th came to have a large significance for women's emancipation. For a large number of middle class women the extension of the postal and telegraph system, as well as the introduction of the typewriter within public administration, led to the creation of new work opportunities outside of traditional areas. When the governmental authorities at the turn of the century began to employ female civil servants to an ever greater degree, it was done on the basis that women were a cheaper labor force than men.

Women, however, obtained consistently subordinate positions, in which the work was characterized by tension and monotony on account of the routinized and impersonal character of the work tasks. The hard working conditions early on led to a strong union engagement among the clerks within the public administration. In 1907 they built their own independent organization, the Association of Women in civil Service.

In the article I have shown how the union organization brought forward its professional demands to the relevant authorities and decision-making organs. In its professional demands the female clerks emphasized the injustice of women not getting to occupy an ordinary post in the state administration. Gradually the clerks succeeded in improving their work and employment conditions. But even until 1912 clerks who married risked losing their post. The female clerks' union struggle was above all a conflict which bore on the demand for equality with men on the question of work and employment conditions.