

# Summaries

Lars Andersson

**Pirenne, Bolin, and the New Archaeology**

In *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe* David Whitehouse and Richard Hodges, medieval archaeologists and advocates of the New Archaeology — founded on anthropological models — re-examine the Pirenne thesis in the light of new archaeological evidence, models and theories.

They start by examining the demise of classical antiquity in the West during the period 500 to 800 and conclude that the Germanic peoples did not abruptly destroy classical civilisation in the West. The commercial life persisted until the sixth century, but thereafter declined. The Arab expansion around the Mediterranean was “a consequence rather than the cause of the catastrophe”. The decisive change came in the sixth century. In 600 conditions in the western Mediterranean bore little resemblance to those in the second century.

The authors thereafter discuss the conditions in the eastern Mediterranean in the period 500-800. Commercial activity in the East lasted almost a century longer than in the West. Nevertheless the Byzantine economy was undermined in the same way as in the West. The Mediterranean did not change from a Roman to a Muslim lake, as Pirenne had argued. It had instead, already before the advance of Islam, been divided into two regions focused respectively upon Rome and Constantinople. The archaeological evidence contradicts Pirenne’s view of a regular trade on a massive scale during the sixth and seventh century.

Turning to the North Sea trade during the period 500 to 800, the authors conclude that around the year 800 several thousand persons were involved in “a highly structured exchange network” controlled by the elites — kings, aristocrats and ecclesiastics.

Hodges and Whitehouse pose the question whether this economic development in the Medieval kingdoms was sufficient to create the economic foundation for Charlemagne’s political and economic aspirations.

In order to find an answer to the question the authors examine Charlemagne’s relationship to the Vikings. They conclude that the archaeological evidence contradicts Pirenne’s view of a gradually evolving feudal economy. Instead there are signs of a sudden and massive economic expansion. Dorestad experienced a dramatic increase in activity between 780 and 820. Charlemagne’s reforms of the Carolingian coinage system in 793 and 794 is seen as an attempt to spread the coinage system as an active means of exchange.

To determine the source of the silver necessary for these reforms, Hodges and Whitehouse turn to Sture Bolin, who claimed that the silver as well as the reforms came from the Abbasid Caliphate via Russia and Scandinavia. This trade route between the Carolingian Empire and the Caliphate, together with trade with Anglo-Saxon England and some commercial activity in the Mediterranean, offered the means for an economic expansion.

The authors find the final argument in support of Bolin’s theory in the archaeological material from the Abbasid Caliphate. Baghdad, founded in 762, soon became the center of an extensive commercial network. The Abbasid caliphs failed to achieve political stability in their empire and were, with few exceptions, reckless spenders. The result of constant warfare and economic extravagance was economic catastrophe. The peak in the silver export from the Abbasid mines coincided with an economic boom in West Asia

during the reign of Harun al-Rashid. The discontinuation in the silver flow coincided with the gradual exhaustion of the Abbasid economy. The authors state that Bolin was correct in assuming that Charlemagne had access to the Abbasid silver imported into the regions around the Baltic Sea by the Vikings and that this silver supported the Carolingian Renaissance. The decline in long distance trade might have been the catalyst behind the social unrest and the civil war in the 830s.

By removing the critical role of Islam in the Mediterranean the authors claim to have “demolished one of the planks with which Pirenne constructed his historical model”, but they also stress that Pirenne was correct in emphasizing the critical transformation that took place between 400 and 850.

The book has been reviewed by several historians and archaeologists. It is said that the book presents new evidence, but that the authors are slightly biased and over-emphasize the archaeological and ignore the documentary evidence. The New Archaeology is criticized and the majority of the reviewers do not accept the trade chain constructed by the authors which connects the Abbasid and the Carolingian worlds. The critics also find it difficult to accept the decisive role of Abbasid silver in the genesis of the Carolingian Renaissance, the theory promoted by Maurice Lombard and Sture Bolin.

Birgit Sawyer

## The erection of rune-stones in Viking-Age Scandinavia

The Scandinavian custom of erecting stone memorials with runic inscriptions began in the migration period but flourished most vigorously from the end of the tenth century to the beginning of the twelfth. The approximately 2000 inscriptions of that period in Denmark, Norway and Sweden are very different from earlier and later runic inscriptions and show that there was a distinctive fashion in the monuments of the late Viking period. Earlier attempts to explain this, relatively short-lived, fashion have linked it with contemporary developments, in particular Viking activity and the Christianization of Scandinavia. Viking raids are a possible explanation for the stones erected in honour of men who died abroad, but since these only amount to less than 10% of the whole material they clearly cannot explain the fashion. It has alternatively been suggested that the inscriptions were associated with the abandonment of pagan burial customs in favour of Christian ones. There are good reasons for thinking that the inscriptions did meet religious needs, especially in the Mälars region, but religious change cannot alone explain the origin of the fashion, the remarkable similarity in the formulation of the inscriptions, or their uneven distribution in Scandinavia (there are very few in Norway, Bohuslän, Halland, Blekinge and South Jutland). The distribution suggests that in some parts of Scandinavia inscriptions were not needed because circumstances were different or because in those areas the functions that were served by inscriptions were fulfilled in some other way.

Any attempt to discover the function of these inscriptions must in the first place take account of the fact that they were memorials not merely to the dead but also to the people who raised them, the sponsors. Over 90% of the inscriptions describe the relationship between the sponsors and the deceased, thus revealing the principles that determined who commemorated whom, and showing that there were some significant regional variations. Since most sponsors were closely related to the people they commemorated it can reasonably be assumed that they had claims to something that had been owned or controlled by the dead person. These claims could have involved inheritance (of land, goods, title or status), or a right to dispose of something that had been administered by the deceased (e.g. a widow's dowry), or a right to a share of what had been jointly owned (e.g. by man and wife, or by partners). There are two principal patterns, one prevailing in Uppland, the other in Denmark; other regions show traces of both these patterns, in varying degrees. The Uppland pattern is of multiple sponsors, including numerous women, the Danish pattern has individual sponsors, few of them women (see Tables). These regional differences focus attention on the distribution of the inscriptions and raise many new questions. It is suggested here that the inscriptions sponsored by individuals may reflect claims to those parts of inheritances that could — or should — not be divided, e.g. certain rights or titles, while inscriptions sponsored by two or more people may reflect the claims of each sponsor to a share of what had been owned or controlled by the dead person. The difference could have been due to different purposes behind the claims, the former being mainly political, the latter mainly religious. In Denmark royal power was more fully developed than elsewhere in Scandinavia, and this could explain the high proportion of undivided inheritances, either because it was in the interest of the king to keep estates intact, thus making it easier to collect the renders and services that were due or, alternatively, as a reaction

to royal power, for it was in the interest of landowners to retain control over the land that was the basis of their power.

It is argued that the fashion spread from Denmark and was initiated by King Harald Bluetooth's large stone in memory of his parents at Jelling. That monument was influential for several reasons. Harald himself had great prestige throughout Scandinavia, and the Jelling stone was a symbol not only of the transition from paganism to Christianity, but also of the development of a new form of government. Harald's predecessors had been content to have indirect control over many parts of their kingdom, but he and his son Sven began to bring the whole of Denmark under a more direct form of royal control. It is suggested here that the great social and economic changes caused by these religious and political developments in effect detonated the explosion of runic inscriptions in many parts of Scandinavia. In areas that were most heavily affected there must have been a need either to resist the changes or to acknowledge the acceptance of the new situation, and both ends could be served by erecting rune-stones. In Götaland, where royal power was also growing, the inscriptions may have answered similar needs. In the Mälars region, including Uppland, where royal power was less effective, religious factors seem to have been more significant; there is much to suggest that in that part of Sweden families registered their acceptance of Christianity by erecting inscriptions, thus declaring their active support for the missionaries. As the nascent church needed material support, it was in the interest of all that claims to inheritances and property should be clearly stated. Christianity was not officially accepted in Uppland until the end of the eleventh century, and as long as there was what has been called a 'free-church system', Christian runic inscriptions served as memorials to Church benefactors, both sponsors and the dead. In conclusion it is suggested that people who sponsored rune-stones in memory of themselves did so in order to make sure that their pious generosity was well known in their own life-times.

Sigurd Kroon

**Canute the Holy's Lost Deed of Gift of May 21, 1085.  
An Antedated Twelfth Century Document**

The investigation takes a position on a much debated question: whether the gift of property and privileges which the Danish king Canute the Holy (1080-1086) bestowed on the St. Laurentius Church in Lund was accompanied by a sealed charter, issued by the king, or if the latter was constructed later and then antedated. The deed has generally been considered as "contemporaneous" and thus as the only diploma issued in Denmark in the eleventh century whose text is known. In this capacity the deed account for considerable portions of our knowledge about eleventh century Danish society. If judged as "later," the deed probably describes a more extensive gift than that of Canute and, in addition, a society under another king and other conditions than applied at the moment of the gift. What is involved here is Danish language, Danish place names, regional subdivisions, royal power, the church, governmental organization, the structure of society and much else.

The deed has been missing since the end of the 17th century. Its text exists in five different copies. The oldest of these, indicated here by the letter a., can be found in the first and second pages of the chapter book of the monastic congregation of the St. Laurentius Church in Lund. The copy dates from the 12th century. Of the other copies, one was made in the year 1494. The rest date from the 17th century (pp. 212-222). The drawing of the seal dates from the same century (p. 204, especially note 10).

A Danish diploma specialist A. Køcher, claimed in 1923 that the deed was composed in the middle of the 12th century. His Swedish critic, history professor L. Weibull of Lund, in 1925, dated the copy a. to the beginning of the 1120s, with the conclusion that the original could not be later. Thereafter the deed's contemporaneity with the occasion of the gift has not been questioned. Nor did this happen at the interNordic symposium arranged in Lund in connection with the latter's celebration of the 900th anniversary of the gift and deed. The commemorative book, *The Deed of Gift 1085* (1988), which reproduces the papers and discussions of the symposium, attests to this.

The investigation presented here reconstructs the form of the inscribed portion of the parchment used for the deed, the arrangement of the writing on it, the letter type that was used, how the deed's "Invocation" looks in that type, etc. The reconstruction and the consequent conclusion, given in the title above, is presented in five sections (I-V).

*Section I.* constitutes a further development of the author's contribution to the discussion that followed the paper by Birgitta Fritz, which began the Lund symposium. The section shows that Weibull's dating of copy a. is built on faulty premises and thus misses its mark. In fact, copy a. belongs to the period of c. 1140-1186. This dating opens up the possibility of a later time designation of A., i.e., the missing original, than that which Weibull considered possible, given his dating of the oldest preserved copy a. to the 1120s.

*Section II.* We can observe among the characteristics of 12th century diplomatics a description of the parchment's short side, a consequence of the recommendations of central ecclesiastical and temporal authorities that were drawn up during the century with the intention of making scarce parchment go further. The thus imposed line reductions brought about a calligraphic effect that was new for the century. This was achieved by

increasing the Invocation's usual 11th century form, "*In nomine sancte et individue trinitatis*," with the words "*patris et filli et spiritus sancti*," which was codified in that century's canon law as well as written with capital letters taken from the Gothic alphabet developed in the course of the 12th century. The result was a whole first line filled with large, imposing letters. An A. reconstructed along these lines shows itself to represent the 12th century characteristics referred to above. Køcher lacked the decisive argument to support his view that A., due to its extended Invocation, belongs to the 12th century. Our observation here fills in that lack. Contributing to it is a particular knowledge of the Gothic letter type. This came into existence under Anglo-Norman rule during the reign of William II Rufus, 1087-1100. In short, the letter type came into existence about the same time as the coming 1100s, the century that gradually developed the continental Gothic within all of the art forms affected by it, a development which eventually reached even Denmark. Canute had already died by then. Taken together these facts place A. in the 12th century. Canute the Holy's existing deed of gift, dated May 21, 1085, thus constitutes an antedated 12th century document.

*Section III.* According to section I, the year 1186 appears as the *terminus ante quem* for A. Based on other calculations, the period 1140-1150 emerges as the deed's *terminus post quem*. The deed's *Narratio/Dispositio* shows itself as specifying a publication date of September 1, 1145, the date of archbishop Eskil's inauguration of his archbishop seat, the St. Laurentius Church in Lund.

*Section IV.* The sentence in A. fixing the date notes Lund as the place where A. was drawn up and issued. The deed's *Sanctio* — "*anathema marantha*" — which was unusual in European diplomatics, occurs additionally in only five of the preserved Danish 11th century deeds. All these are exhibited by Eskil. The initiative for A. would thus appear to emanate from archbishop Eskil and the circle around him.

*Section V.* Only reluctantly did contemporaries allow themselves to be convinced that A. possessed the power of law. Saxo Grammaticus, author of *Gesta Danorum*, informs us that several persons tried to undermine the authority of the deed and thus the legal force of the gift registered within it. One understands why. For according to the results put forward in section II and III, A. was written in letters of the Gothic type. Further, as shown in section II, the deed also reflected other well established norms of 12th century diplomatics. Saxo adds that the deed nevertheless maintained its authority. It is evident that its authority did not come from positive law's understanding of right and wrong, false and true. What was critical for the decision was *aequitas*, a more flexible, dynamic legal concept than that of positive law. Wrong and untruth were what stood against God's plan of salvation, having God's Spirit as its prime mover. Right and justice were what furthered this plan. For God, but not, on the other hand, "the law", was the source of justice. What was "reasonable" and "just" took precedence over blind law. A deed that united Canute's gift to the St. Laurentius Church with its solemn inauguration in actual fact brought to the fore roles to which the martyr king and the church were designated when God's plan of salvation would achieve its fulfillment in the final days at the final judgement. *Aequitas* explains the initiative behind the deed, the failure of the contemporary critique to undermine its authority, and the confirmation that King Canute Waldemarsson gave to the whole of it in his deed of gift to St. Laurentius in 1186.

In conclusion: what is brought forward here opens the door for a reevaluation. As a 12th century document antedated to the 11th century the deed does not reflect ecclesiastical, political, social, linguistic or legal conditions in 11th century Denmark, but rather such conditions well later in the 12th century.

Peter Aronsson

**The servant girls' shouts and the upper classes' discourse.  
An attempt to interpret a religious awakening in the 1840s**

During the first half of the 1840s a movement of religious awakening, the "shouter movement", developed and spread to large parts of the interior of Götaland province. This took place to the great alarm of those in power and to the curious and engaged debates of the scholarly community.

The shouters are more often younger persons from the countryside's lower strata. Particularly conspicuous is the active role played by young servant girls. They become shouters when, upon experiencing physical convulsions, they fall into a kind of trance during which they preach and "shout." The involuntary and unconscious aspect in the prophesizing is given a popular interpretation as being a direct communication from the Holy Spirit since the message is a Christian-ethical one.

The content in the shout offers an important clue toward understanding the movement's social significance. People of the time are accused of living in sin and degradation. To the degree to which this is specified in the contemporary evidence it is set against the background of a theme of privation; it is affluence and luxury — jewelry, lavish clothes, long draperies and corsets — as well as the more traditional sins of drinking, swearing and card playing that must cease. Improving oneself is all the more important as the Day of Doom is near and the Judge stands at the door.

In the 1840s male and female farm helpers are confronted with an increasingly self-confident and commercialized peasant culture. At the same time the process of proletarianization has gone on so long that the hopes they could earlier entertain with a certain degree of realism — one day to become peasants and peasant wives themselves — appear to be increasingly utopian. Nonetheless, they live very close upon their masters and share their daily cares. That, together with the fact that at the time property is a basis of political citizenship at all levels, makes it difficult for the countryside's underclass to develop organized political protest. In the religious protest which they develop as shouters, they make use of that time's ideological resources and at the same time declare themselves free from responsibility: it is the Holy Spirit that is talking, not themselves. That posture can, however, be turned against them, which, in fact, is done by contemporary citizens and responsibility conscious scholars.

In the public debate or in the different measures taken by the authorities no completely prevailing agreement can be said to exist about the character of the shouter movement. Three main lines can be discerned:

1. The shouter movement is seen as a religious awakening which, despite certain excesses, basically stands for a good cause: a view that is found represented by a few persons of rank. What is still more surprising is that the negative counterpart is nearly completely absent: that is, an attack on the movement from orthodox views, with the Conventicle Decree as a weapon, fails to appear for quite some time. When it comes it is made not by clergymen or provincial governors but by peasants who tire of the authorities' laxity with the servant population's disharmonious, disobedient and self-righteous behavior.
2. The line which wins out is instead one that sees the shouters as being sick. They have



- an epidemic disorder which ought to be treated at the hospital and the laws protecting against contagion are used as the primary instrument to control the "infection's" spread, particularly in Småland province. The debate in these situations concerns the character of the sickness: is it a physical nervous disorder, perhaps caused by poor grain, or is it a psychological disorder, perhaps caused by the preachings about hell made by the clergy and temperance people and the effect these have on simple persons?
3. Animal magnetism was a sort of universal force that was considered able to explain all sorts of things and the attempt is made by Bishop Butsch among others to place the shouters within its sphere of influence.

In practice the shouters were not treated in the same way in the different counties. The question that needs to be posed for future research is whether this reflected the fact that the authorities simply came to different understandings of the situation or whether the movement witnessed a shift in its social significance as it spread from the Småland uplands in 1841-42 to Västergötland in 1842-43 and from there to Närke and southern Värmland in the following years.

In Småland the judgement that it was a sickness was prevalent and a not insignificant number were taken to the hospital for compulsory treatment. In the same way fines were imposed upon many for listening to or entertaining those infected without informing the authorities in the prescribed way. As concerns this province the actions of the parish meetings have also been examined. The result shows that the peasants, after a somewhat cautious and sometimes curious and positive attitude to the shouters, soon discover the movement's class related message and wholeheartedly support the governor's program to reestablish the peace.

The judgement of sickness also existed in Västergötland, but the actions taken by the authorities there were quite milder and serious confrontations seem not to have taken place. On the other hand, this province is the least well researched.

In Närke the meetings early led to regular riots between the meetings' participants and persons in authority. Besides judgements against shouters for riot, it would appear that the measures most employed were the pass laws in order to send the unwanted shouter off to his or her home parish. In the beginning the shouters had often come wandering in from Västergötland.

Generally considered, we can thus note that strategies were worked out in Småland by the provincial governors, provincial doctors and the hospital, in Västergötland by the bishop and clergy, and in Närke by the provincial governor with the county men and pass laws.

The different strategies all appear to have achieved their goals, which explains why the different participants in the debate commended themselves for having found the cure against the sickness. Our own conclusion is rather that the awakening follows an epidemic and acute course as a reflection of its inner structure: the movement lacks stable organization; the message and prophecies about the end of the world and the need for speedy improvement do not last more than one season if nothing happens to confirm the predictions. The yearning which people have is forced to seek new forms of expression. After the shouter movement either they remain in the church and let themselves be inspired by particularly forceful priests or they begin to form their own congregations with a more long-term strategy at play. Or perhaps they emigrate to The Promised Land ...?

Björn Horgby

## Tradition and Change in Working Class Culture, 1850-1940

A number of the changes experienced in Swedish working class culture during the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th may be described in terms of undiscipline and conscientiousness. An undisciplined life style in the middle of the 19th century was complemented and partially replaced as of the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century by a conscientious one.

In the middle of the 19th century the working class population lived in a tight social community, which was welded together by honor. A person's honor was determined by his social position, which, in its turn, was determined by family, occupation, age, sex and behavior.

During the 1950s Pierre Bourdieu studied Kabyle peasants in North Africa and found that they had elaborated an informal cultural grammar that regulated the game of honor. He saw honor as a symbolic capital that could grow or be misappropriated depending on how one behaved. In the Kabyle world there occurred a constant social exchange of gifts and return gifts, challenges and ripostes, which confirmed, reinforced or weakened a person's honor.

Honor also played a large role in early Swedish working class culture. The grammar of honor in Swedish working class culture was not identical with the grammar in Kabyle society, but many aspects were the same.

In Swedish working class culture, too, a man was to show his honorableness and meet the demands that were associated with his socially determined position. A lack of respect could not be tolerated. Even worse was a direct attack on honor, occupational skill or other serious insults. In such cases a counterattack was unavoidable.

In contrast to Kabyle society there existed, besides counterattacking, two additional ways to deal with an assault on honor. An insult that was withdrawn could lead to reconciliation. An apology rectified both the attacked and the attacker. By coming forward and explaining that one had erred and recognized one's mistake, the reason for the conflict disappeared and existence could go on as before. The other kind of alternative to counterattack was for the person who had been subject to an insult, when time healed the wound, to let it pass and forgive the offensive gesture. Here we can also talk of a rectification process.

The game of honor, with attack, counterattack and satisfaction, insult withdrawn (that is, a public apology) and reconciliation, complemented and became fused in the social interplay of working class culture with what Aksel Sandemose calls "the rule of envy" ("jantelagen"). There existed watchful eyes that saw to it that no one showed off and tried to make himself out to be better than he was. "The rule of envy," together with the sense of honor, regulated the amount of space that was available for self-assertion.

Did the importance of honor diminish in connection with the development of a culture of conscientiousness? What was considered as honorable behavior changed. The development of the labor movement meant that new rules of honorable behavior were written into working class culture. An ideal image of the labor movement came to be shaped, according to which the organized worker was loyal, honest, a good fellow worker and above all conscientious. Ethical demands were very high, especially for labor representatives. The

strike breaker was considered to lack ethics and to be betraying his fellow workers.

A culture of meetings developed whereby behavior was closely regulated. This formalized culture of meetings had members learning to discuss things rather than to use anger as argument. With the help of language — and education — a distance was created to the turbulent world of feelings. The way conflicts were resolved showed that it took a long time before the culture of conscientiousness became generally accepted.

One ought not therefore exaggerate the change. Neither “Blue Monday” nor “cheating” in one’s own occupation — when craft laborers worked for themselves during working hours — had disappeared at the beginning of the 1900s, despite the fact that such practices were combatted by trade unions and employers alike.

The development of a culture of conscientiousness meant a change from external behavioral control to inner restraint. A new type of socialization developed within working class culture. In the “undisciplined” culture people were socialized through control from the outside, which meant that the view which people in the surrounding milieu had of the individual formed the individual’s view of himself.

The development of the culture of conscientiousness and the education toward self-control meant a development of the “super ego.” The individual was brought up to control himself, with his conscience as an inner gyroscope pointing out the right path to follow. Any deviations resulted, via an “inner coercion,” in feelings of guilt. The bourgeoisie had developed this type of socialization during the 19th century.

The inner direction meant partly that feelings were turned inward towards one’s own ego instead of outward towards the surrounding milieu and partly a change from an outer-directed public to an inner-directed private control. One consequence of this process must have been that the importance of honor diminished when feelings of shame were supplemented and partly replaced as a steering mechanism by feelings of guilt.

Was the working class thereby “embourgeoisied.” The adoption of a form was not necessarily the same as the adoption of a bourgeois cultural content. The conscientious workers took over a form and filled it with a new content.

The fundamental difference in the content of the two cultures was that individualism was placed in the foreground in bourgeois culture and collectivity in working class culture, which made for differences in objectives as well as in social organization and forms of community. This, in turn, was a consequence of different kinds of experience and perspectives on the future.

*Translated by Joseph Zitomersky*