Summaries

Erik Oksbjerg

The Sjælland Chronicles 1355–1359

This examination of the news-items in the Younger Sjælland Chronicles of the years 1355–1359 sets as its objective to reveal hidden allusions and puns which might possibly show attitudes which the author could not or dare not express in plain language. The case of Valdemar Atterdag, the main figure at the chronicle, is particularly considered in this respect. References to mediaeval forms of literature are gathered in the introduction and in excursi 1–4, which give evidence of such allusions and concealed attitudes. Selected passages are then examined from the point of view of 6 particular aspects of five years of news items: 1. Citations from the Bible and related matters. 2. "Agustinian" terminology and related conceptions, in the sense of: allusions to the polarised relationship between *Civitas Dei* and *civitas diaboli* as well as methods of observing King Valdemar's position in this context. 3. Somewhat curious items, which are more reasonably explained in terms of veiled criticism of the King. Significant details which are clearly open to interpretations of underhandedness in this respect are: the story of the 1355 tournament, the ventriloquist in Vallensbæk in 1357, the prophecy from Toledo and the story of the wolf net or the wolf traps of the same year, as well as the allusion to "the holy blood of Wismar" in 1359. 4. The use of mirror images of the King in order to present an ideal picture and a distorted picture of a Chieftain. 5. Frequent repetition of stories and anecdotes as well as in the wording of the text, usually in a very striking manner, for example in the case of the story about King Valdemar's interest in water mills re-occuring throughout 1356, the story about fallen Holsten warriors in 1357, and others in a similar vein. 6. The interpretation of the story of the water mills as an allegory, intimating King Waldemar's political plans and methods. In the final section, number 7, the author summarises his understanding of the Chronicles' author as a Franciscan type of man, who probably dare not make criticisms of Valdemar Atterdag for political reasons, but who chose as a result to render an account which appeared on the surface to be positive and flattering to the King. By making associations and allusions the author of the Chronicles brought the reader's thoughts onto such different lines, that the account must be regarded as both a serious criticism and as highly satirical.

Janken Myrdal

Settlement and Expansion in Sixteenth-Century Sweden

As was the case in many other European countries during the sixteenth century, Sweden witnessed the expansion of her population as well as a growth in the number of households. A couple of studies have been devoted to this expansion, each concerning different regions of Sweden, and this article sums up the results of these studies.

Cadastres and tithe-registers have been preserved for most of the years after 1540, and indeed for the main part of the country. The registration of nearly every household was furthermore initiated by three wealth-taxes of 1571, 1599 and 1601. It has therefore been possible for researchers to give a fairly accurate description of the number of households in the countryside for the entire period 1540–1600.

Annual growth in the best-studied parts of Sweden – the western and southern regions – was about 0.7% in this period. These regions consisted mainly of woodland where cattle-breeding was the predominant occupation. In some parts of western Sweden annual growth in the number of households exceeded 1%. In the plains of central Sweden the expansion appears to have been more modest, perhaps in the region of 0.5%. The expansion continued in most parts of Sweden up to the first decades of the seventeenth century, but in the northern regions of the country the expansion seems to have halted earlier than elsewhere, that is to say, during the last decades of the sixteenth century.

Gunnel Furuland

An Association in the Public and Private Spheres: the Establishment of the Women's Association (Fruntimmersförening) in Uppsala 1844–45

This article deals with the background to the establishment of a philanthropic asssociation – the Women's Association in Uppsala – a group which was concerned with improving child care. The goal of the investigation has been not to *describe* the activities of the association in detail, but rather to attempt to *explain why* the association was founded as a reaction to changes in society.

Poverty and "pauperism" were central questions in the Swedish public debate about social issues in the 1840s. The government sought to solve the problem of the "dangerous lower classes" with the help of poor care and public schools. However, the way in which poor care actually functioned first becomes clear when studied at the local level. The contribution of the Women's Association to the care of the poor provides an illustration of how a number of private philanthropic associations flourished alongside official attempts to deal with these problems in nineteenth century Swedish society.

In the essay *Fattigvårdsfrågan* ("The Question of Poor Care"), the Swedish historian Erik Gustaf Geijer, a perceptive observer of his own society, maintained that two trends could be seen in this question – one compulsory and one voluntary. According to Geijer in his contemporary reflections, associations that represented the voluntary line of development acquired the function of supporting the work of the state, which "had *altogether too much* on its hands."

The point of departure for this analysis of the Women's Association has been a number of hypotheses derived from Jürgen Habermas' theory of *bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit* (roughly, a civic sense of public spirit). In the first hypothesis the assumption was made that, because of changes in society, the public and private categories of poor care increasingly confronted and even co-incided with the concrete social reality. Secondly, the association was assumed to have come into being on the initiative of a growing *bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit,* which arose in the field of tension between the state and society. However, the Women's Association may also, as in the case of the third hypothesis, be interpreted as semi-official with very specific characteristics, because for example it constituted an early example of a federation of women. Finally, it was assumed that the letters and diaries produced in the private sphere by the leading women in the association could contribute to an explanation of the rise of the association.

An exposé of the miserable conditions in the city's poorhouse in the Uppsala newspaper *Thorgny* (in the January 11, 1844 issue) proved to be the breeding ground for a poorhouse scandal, which outraged both the authorities in charge of poor care and the general circle of readers of the newspaper. This situation was embrassing enough in itself to the city's bourgeoisie – combined with Fredrika Bremer's plea for the establishment of a rescue house for neglected children – which was published in the leading newspaper *Aftonbladet* (in the December 20, 1843 issue) – to motivate some Uppsala women to publically appeal for the first time in January 1844 for the establishment of a rescue house in Uppsala.

The rescue house was rejected, however, because of economic and organisational problems; a Women's Association was founded instead, and this became one of those well-established women's organisations, run under the guidance of numerous countesses and professors' wives. The financial and administrative posts were held by men from the

official poor care committee. In co-operation with the Women's Association, official care of the poor, which was otherwise restrictive, became an institutional bridge which contributed considerably to facilitating contact between the private and public sectors.

The programme of the association for philanthropic child care included many aspects which were clearly ideological, and appeared as an attempt to create national solidarity, to foster class harmony, and to encourage diligence in the home. Loyalty – to both authority and to the Royal Family – became an important component in an association which worked under the auspices of Queen Josefina. The efforts of the women in the soccial field through their association were limited by the relatively small resources available to this special semi-official group, as well as by the women's lack of legal and economic rights. However, in their philanthropic activities, these women still held a view of the family and of their country as preservers of the general social values which were represented by *bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit.*

In private letters, Anna Lisa Geijer and her daughter Agnes Geijer expressed their personal reactions to the dilemma of poor care. Through these articulate women we discover why there was such a rush to collect money for the rescue house. The Provincial Governor (*Landshövding*) simply ordered some representative ladies to demonstrate their good will towards philanthropy by means of an appeal whose aim was to cover up much-criticised shortcomings in official care of the poor. The women were sceptical about the rescue-house project and preferred the method of association, which could support organised care of the poor through the medium of specific contributions.

As did other associations with a "common goal", the Women's Association attempted to elevate social problems to a higher plane, where education and improvement aimed at building up a new nation which was more suited to the growth of capitalism. The hope was that women, a social category which was previously unproven in the area of officialdom, could make an important contribution to the education of the most vulnerable and helpless group in society – that is to say the children.

Gunnar Karlsson

People and Nation in Iceland

During the first half of this century chroniclers of Iceland's national history viewed the establishment of the Althing in or about the year 930 A.D. as the beginning of a nation-state, and they were certain that the Icelanders had regarded themselves as a separate nation even during the Viking Age. Among various reasons for this basic notion is the fact that there is no distinction made in Icelandic between "people" and "nation". This work deals with three stages in the development of ethnic/national consciousness: I) Ethnic identification, II) Cultural (but not political) nationalism, and III) Political nationalism.

All evidence would seem to indicate that the Icelanders had thought of themselves as Icelanders rather than Norwegians as early as the Middle Ages, i.e. in the 12th century or earlier. But from this it does not follow that they were familiar then with the ideas of national independence. If one accepts that they were not aware of these ideas, one can understand why it was so easy for the king of Norway to gain control over Iceland in the 13th century.

Clear indications of cultural nationalism, inspired by European humanism, can be found among the Icelanders from about the year 1600. Historians describe the period of Icelandic autonomy, which lasted more than 200 years, in glowing terms that reflect no dissatisfaction whatsoever with the country's position at that time under the king of Denmark.

Political nationalism made itself felt in Iceland during the first half of the 19th century, at the same time as democracy was becoming generally accepted in Denmark. This is surprisingly early, considering that modern theories on the origins of political nationalism usually connect it with the Industrial Revolution. The author believes that there are three reasons for this development. Firstly, the past played an important role. Their knowledge of the period of autonomy and their pride in the sagas must have given the Icelanders greater confidence when it came to demanding independence than would otherwise have been the case. Secondly, the Icelanders had actually been relatively independent during the period of absolute monarchy. Thus, the struggle for independence can to some extent be seen as an effort to preserve, under a democratic form of government, the autonomy that had existed during the autocracy. Thirdly – and this is the explanation to which the author gives the most weight – the old Icelandic rural society resembled a modern, industrialized, capitalistic society, since there existed no absolute dividing lines between the various social groups. There was an enormous gap in wealth between the well-to-do and the poor, but there was always a possibility, in theory at any rate and often enough in practice, of making one's way up the social ladder.

This presumably led to there being relatively small cultural differences between the upper and lower classes. Even local cultural differences were relatively slight. Consequently, the differences between the dialects of Icelandic are rather unimportant. For these reasons it has been more natural for Icelanders to identify with their own people rather than with any other, and this has made them more responsive to European nationalism.

Cecilia Ruthström

Universal applicability with reservations – The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Summary

The United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly on December 12, 1948. This paper describes the process of shaping the Declaration and demonstrates how political differences were expressed during the course of the work, mainly over basic assumptions concerning human rights. The main focus of this treatment is on the actions of the socialist states: an explanation of their actions is also put forward.

In the first section, some circumstances worth noting are pointed out concerning the process of shaping the Declaration. The structure of the Declaration was determined by the United Nations Secretariat at an early stage of the work. The changes made at later stages consisted mainly of corrections of and additions to particular articles. The conclusion is that the type of approach chosen in drafting the Declaration probably made fundamental changes difficult at later stages of the work.

In the second section, it is shown that the basic tenet of the socialist idea of human rights is the assumption that all rights originate from the state. This idea implies that all rights that are not guaranteed by the state lack meaning. It is shown that the UN Declaration is not based on any such idea.

In the third section, the principal arguments that were presented by the socialist states during the shaping of the Declaration are pointed out. The most important of these were requirements that prescribed that rights should be guaranteed by each state and that the national sovereignty of the individual states should be acknowledged in the text. These requirements correspond to the socialist idea of the basis of human rights.

In the fourth section, the conclusion is made that the socialist states abstained for several related reasons in the vote concerning the Declaration in its entirety. The socialist states refused to accept certain articles in the Declaration. The assumption is, however, that hypothetical agreements on these articles would not have been sufficient to induce the socialist states to accept the Declaration in its entirety. This assumption is based on criticisms made by the socialist states of the foundations of the Declaration. They felt that the basic assumptions underlying the Declaration were not compatible with their own ideology. Further, it is assumed that the Soviet tradition of suspicion toward international co-operation, especially in non-military areas, and the prevailing situation of world-wide political tension, contributed to making an abstention seem the best solution for the socialist states.

In the fifth section, it is proposed that a compromise between east and west and a Declaration acceptable to both sides were hardly conceivable in the prevailing circumstances. It is suggested, though, that much of the disagreement could have been avoided, if compromises had been made to create a useful, universally accepted basis for the work at its very beginning. One conclusion is that the UN could not deal with matters in which differences of opinion were due to ideological, religious and cultural considerations. The Saudi-Arabian abstention can be taken as evidence of this. It is concluded that opportunities for reaching compromises were not fully utilised in the shaping of the Declaration.

Ove Moberg

The Battle of Helgeå and its consequences

There are relatively many sources available which deal with the Battle of Helgeå, in which Canute the Great engaged his Scandinavian opponents. Since these sources give conflicting accounts about the engagement, researchers have come to different conclusions about the battle and its consequences. All researchers have so far been in agreement, however, that the battle was fought out in Skåne, at the mouth of the Helgeå river in the bay of Hanö. In Scandia no. 52:2, acting professor Bo Gräslund presented the theory that the Battle of Helgeå was fought in Uppland, not in Skåne, by a river junction to the Närtuna channels, which is assumed to have been known as Helgå during the Viking Age.

To support his theory that the Battle of Helgeå was fought out in Uppland, Gräslund refers to information in the historical Icelandic sagas etc. particularly Heimskringa, which he considers equate quite well with geographical features in Uppland. On the other hand, Gräslund does not go into Saxo Grammaticus' account of the battle. According to Saxo, the Battle of Helgeå was fought out in Skåne; Saxo explains amongst other things that Canute the Great had drowned fellow countrymen fished up after the engagement and had them buried in Åsum, in the vicinity of the battle. Archbishop Absalon, an officer of Saxo's, had a church erected in Åsum. It is probable that Saxo visited Åsum in the company of his officer and that his account of the battle is based upon local tradition. Saxo's account of the Battle of Helgeå supports the thesis that the battle was fought out in Skåne.

Bo Gräslund considers the consequences of the Battle of Helgeå in detail and maintains that Canute the Great controlled the district around Lake Mälaren for some years after the encounter. Gräslund presents as evidence for this in the form of a letter from Canute to his English subjects. The letter, which he entitled Rex Partis Suanorum, King of a section of the Svears, was composed during his return journey from a visit to Rome in 1027. Gräslund also points out that Canute had coins minted in Sigtuna with the inscription CNUT REX SV, Canute the King of the Svears. According to Gräslund, the circumstance that Canute the Great controlled the area around Lake Mälaren provides evidence that the Battle of Helgeå was fought out in Uppland.

The author of this article O. Moberg shares Gräslund's understanding that Canute the Great controlled the area around Lake Mälaren for some years after the Battle of Helgeå. In his letter from Rome, Canute mentions that he departed on a journey to Rome which he had long been planning, only after he had driven off the attack which the neighbouring princes had directed against Denmark. Before he returned to his English subjects, Canute would once more visit Scandinavia in order to defeat his enemies and secure lasting peace for the Danes.

The relationship between Canute the Great and the neighbouring prince in Scandinavia developed in the following way, in the view of the author. The allied Kings Olav Haraldsson in Norway, and Anund Jakob in Sweden directed an attack against Denmark in order to put an end to Canute the Great's military expansion in Scandinavia. Canute was in England when the attack was mounted, but sailed across the North Sea with a large fleet in order to do battle with the attackers. The decisive struggle was fought out at the mouth of the river Helgeå in the Bay of Hanö. According to the Anglo-Saxon chronicles, Canute suffered heavy casualties during the encounter, in terms of both men and crews.

He was however finally victorious, according to the poet Ottar Svarte. After the Battle of Helgeå Canute made his way to Rome, where he was present at tha coronation of Conrad the Second on the 26th of March. After the coronation of the Emperor in Rome, Canute returned to Scandinavia and directed a successful attack against the heartlands of the Svear Empire in the area around Lake Mälaren. The minting of coins with the inscription Canute the King of the Svears can be taken as evidence that Canute the Great controlled the area around lake Mälaren, at least for some years after the Battle of Helgeå.