

Summaries

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Who creates history? On structure and man as problems in the theory of history

The five essays contained under this heading use as their points of departure two different approaches to history. In the first case, society is investigated from above and interest is taken in how it worked as a system. In the second case, an attempt is made to grasp the social situation experienced by man in order to understand his norms and actions. The authors call these different approaches the *structural perspective* and the *subjective perspective*. The aim of their discussion is to transcend the contradiction between the two.

Attention is drawn to the fact that the structural perspective has had a dominant position within Swedish historiography during the last two decades. It has appeared in two forms: as *the positivistic method*, and as a version of Marxist theory. The latter has manifested itself in various ways but most conspicuously in the philosophy of Althusser. The authors are critical of this *structuralism* in the strict sense of the word, since the structural concepts can easily take on the character of reality, and the outlook threatens to entail determinism. Thus, it precludes all emancipatory ambitions of history. The positivistic method (which is called *structural analysis*) is questioned on the grounds that it fragmentizes our knowledge of society, that the holistic view is lost and that it leads to unsatisfactory explanations.

However, the authors would not opt for the solution of entirely abandoning the structural perspective and replacing it with one which focuses solely on the individual. Instead, they argue that the English historian E.P. Thompson has shown a possible way of transcending the conflict between structural perspective and subjective perspective. His method of doing so is to emphasize the fact that material conditions (which by themselves can be measured and expressed in terms of structures) only attain *social relevance* in so far as they affect human experience. This emphasis on the mutual interdependence of material conditions and social life in the historical works of Thompson bears a close resemblance to the concept of *praxis*, as developed by the Czech philosopher Karel Kosík. The authors emphasize that "praxis", as well as "experience" or "consciousness" are vague concepts that could benefit from being interpreted within a Marxist tradition, where the notion of exploitation is decisive.

Three of the essays elucidate these arguments in greater detail.

Kenneth Johansson discusses Thompson's renowned essay *The Poverty of Theory* and stresses four important differences between structuralism (as ontology) and the outlook of the British Marxists in general and Thompson in particular. These differences manifest themselves in their views of mankind, their philosophy of history, their position regarding the significance of ethics, and their attitude towards empiricism.

Through an analysis of *The Making of the English Working Class*, Maria Ågren discerns the theoretical notions that govern Thompson's historical investigations. At the core of these lies the significance of experience for the forming of the working class. The book is seen as a concrete example of the more general thesis that "consciousness is born out of the practical experience of life."

From a reading of *The Dialectics of the concrete: a study on problems of man and the world* by Karel Kosík, Peter Aronsson shows that the traditional idea of conflict between

the concepts of structure and subject obscures their mutual interdependence. Man, however, is neither a freely enterprising actor, nor does he reflect the social structures. Instead, he should be regarded as a conscious being, acting and thinking in the centre of the world. There, in *praxis*, mankind is formed and forms both himself and the world in a dialectical process.

Dag Lindström

**Die Meister und ihre Gesellen.
Stockholm ca. 1400–1600.**

Die Beziehungen zwischen Meistern und Gesellen sind ein wichtiger Aspekt des Zunftwesens. Es ist keine Selbstverständlichkeit, wie die Beziehungen zwischen Meistern und Gesellen beschrieben und charakterisiert werden sollen. Es ist wichtig, die Beziehungen nicht zu romantisieren, aber ebenso wichtig, die Gegensätze zwischen Meistern und Gesellen nicht zu übertreiben oder falsch zu charakterisieren. Ich meine, daß die zünftige Handwerksproduktion, ursprünglich, hauptsächlich ein Typus sog. einfacher Warenproduktion war, in welcher Ausbeutungsverhältnisse zwischen Meistern und Gesellen im Rahmen des Meisterhaushalts keineswegs vorausgesetzt werden können. Der Geselle war kein kapitalistischer Lohnarbeiter. Er lernte das Handwerk, und, wenigstens im Idealfall, war die Zeit als Geselle nur eine Stufe im Leben des Handwerkers. Dieses bedeutet nicht, daß die Beziehungen konfliktlos waren. Es ist möglich, verschiedene Konfliktgründe und die Voraussetzungen entstehender Ausbeutungsverhältnisse zwischen Meistern und Gesellen zu entwerfen. Die Umstände, unter denen Meister und Geselle verschiedenen sozialen Klassen angehörten, und unter denen die Konflikte zwischen den beiden Gruppen den Charakter eines Klassenkonflikts annahmen, können auch skizziert werden. Solche allgemeinen theoretischen Erörterungen sind, ganz selbstverständlich, nicht genügend, um die Beziehungen zwischen Meistern und Gesellen klarzulegen. Konkrete empirische Studien sind natürlich auch erforderlich. In diesem Aufsatz werden die zünftigen Normierungen und Regelungen der Beziehungen zwischen Meistern und Gesellen in Stockholm während des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts studiert.

Man kann bereits vor einer Untersuchung der Zunftordnungen feststellen, daß die Werkstätte der Handwerker meistens sehr klein waren. Die Meister hatten normalerweise nicht mehr als einen oder zwei Gesellen, und viele Meister hatten gar keine. Im Durchschnitt war in Stockholm die Anzahl nur etwa ein Geselle pro Meister. In den anderen schwedischen Städten kamen die Gesellen noch seltener vor. Diese Struktur des Handwerks spricht dafür, daß Meister und Geselle zusammen in der Werkstatt arbeiteten, und daß die Meister keine Möglichkeit hatten, allein von der Arbeit der Gesellen zu leben. Es soll weiter gesagt werden, daß die Anzahl der Gesellen so klein war, daß es ihnen von diesem Gesichtspunkt gesehen nicht unmöglich gewesen wäre, Meister zu werden. Ein Studium der Zunftordnungen läßt ohne Schwierigkeiten die Feststellung zu, daß keine Ausbeutungsbeziehungen in den Zunftordnungen geregelt wurden. Solche Beziehungen wurden zwar nicht verhindert, aber sie wurden wegen dieser Bestimmungen auch nicht garantiert und aufrechterhalten. Es läßt sich auch konstatieren, daß die Organisation der Arbeit, die Löhne der Gesellen und die Länge des Arbeitstages nur selten in den Zunftordnungen geregelt waren, wenn auch ein vorindustrieller Arbeitsrhythmus, mit fließenden Grenzen des Arbeitstages und der Arbeitswoche, angedeutet wird.

Die zünftigen Regelungen der Verhältnisse der Gesellen hatten aber eine bestimmte Funktion. Die Meister waren keine kapitalistischen Unternehmer, die nach dem höchsten möglichen Ertrag eines eingesetzten Kapitals strebten. Statt dessen war der unmittelbare Zweck der Produktion des Handwerkers, das Fortleben seiner Familie und des Handwerkerhaushalts, einschließlich Gesellen, zu garantieren. Der Zweck der zünftigen Rege-

lungen war auch die Reproduktion des Meisterhaushalts. Um diese Reproduktion zu schaffen, war es notwendig, die Voraussetzungen des Gewerbes unter den Meistern zu verteilen. Wenn ein Meister seinen Betrieb erweiterte, wurde das als eine Drohung gegen die Gewerbe der anderen Meister betrachtet. Eine absolute Gleichheit unter den Meistern war keineswegs notwendig, aber jeder Meister sollte die Möglichkeit haben, sein Gewerbe zu betreiben, und jeder Meisterhaushalt sollte die Möglichkeit zur Versorgung haben.

Obwohl es für den Handwerker offenbar keine Notwendigkeit war, über Gesellen zu verfügen, war es für ihn ganz bestimmt ein wirtschaftlicher Vorteil. Infolgedessen wurden die Gesellen unter den Meistern verteilt, und einzelne Meister wurden daran gehindert, zu viele Gesellen zu dingen. Die Dingungen sollten in geregelten und kontrollierten Formen stattfinden — Formen, die zu überwachen möglich waren. Konkurrenz unter den Meistern um die Gesellen sollte auch vermieden werden.

Den einzelnen Meistern sollte auch die Verfügung der Arbeitskraft ihres Gesellen gesichert werden. Der Geselle war eine längere Zeit an seinem Meister gebunden, und durfte ihn vorzeitig nicht verlassen. Der Geselle konnte, wenn er nicht bei seinem Meister arbeitete, bestraft werden.

Aber die Gesellen konnten auch eine potentielle Drohung gegen die wirtschaftliche Versorgung der Meister und ihrer Familien sein. Die Gesellen erwarben ja die notwendigen Kenntnisse des Produktionsprozesses, und ihnen fehlte auch nicht der Zugang zu einer Werkstatt und der Werkzeuge. Deshalb wurden die Gesellen auch gehindert und es wurde ihnen verboten, eigene Produkte herzustellen und zu verkaufen. Sie durften unter keinen Umständen als Konkurrenten der Meister tätig sein.

Für die Meister waren die Gesellen demnach sowohl ein wirtschaftlicher Gewinn als auch eine potentielle Drohung. Aber die Gesellen waren den Meistern immer unterlegen, weil die Zünfte über solche Machtmittel wie z. B. Zunftzwang und Arbeitsverbot verfügten. So lange die Gesellen damit rechnen konnten, Meister zu werden, gab es für sie auch einen Grund, die Regelungen der Zünfte zu befolgen. In einer späteren Lage aber, wo die Gesellen sich nicht mehr als künftige Meister sahen, und in vielen Fällen sogar eigene Haushalte bildeten, die die bisherige, einzelne Produktionseinheit, d.h. den Meisterhaushalt, sprengten, können auch schärfere Konflikte zwischen Meistern und Gesellen erwartet werden.

Magnus Perlestam

Moving Peasants. Geographic Mobility in Sweden 1545—1620

In her article "Bofasta och flyttare i äldre vasatidens bondesamhälle" Eva Österberg tried out a new method to investigate geographic mobility. It amounts to establishing, with the help of the nominal information found in the land register (*jordebok*), how long cultivators were registered as the responsible farm holder. These cultivation periods give us an idea of their geographic mobility. Inasmuch as this category of individuals was of great importance in the contemporary agrarian society, an investigation can also offer us a picture of how geographically stable the society then was.

Naturally, it would be much simpler to establish the degree of geographic mobility if one knew with certainty the reasons behind the changes in cultivators. However, such information is scanty for the 1500s. Österberg, Brunius and Jutikkala have made use of the above method for three delimited areas for the periods 1540—1620, 1560—1620, and 1540—1633, respectively. I have placed my own investigation in Fagerhult parish, in the district of Handbord, Småland, for the period 1545—1619. I have accordingly considered the suitability of the land register material and have compared the results of my investigation with those of Österberg, Brunius and Jutikkala.

An analysis of Österberg's working method reveals the following weaknesses as to source material:

1. The land register often does not provide more than the cultivator's given name. The risk exists that a mix up in the names would not be discovered and two periods of cultivation would be noted as one.
2. The land register does not give an actual division of the farm. It is possible that two farmsteads are hidden behind the one farm unit recorded in the land register.
3. It was earlier suspected that what was given in the land register lagged by a number of years. For any investigation of relatively short periods, a decade for example, a check for lags is absolutely necessary.
4. It is possible that several families lived on the same farmstead. Their respective family heads could have alternated as the responsible farm holder.

Österberg, Brunius and Jutikkala report that the average length of cultivation was generally about 11 years, 13 years (in one parish, 17 years), and 20 years. The average period in my own investigation was 10 years. If one discounts the large number of gaps in the land register material I have been using, the average sinks to 8 years. This is low and to a certain degree ought to be seen as the result of geographic instability. It ought to be noted that the median value is 5 years and the standard deviation 10. The diversity in the lengths of cultivation is striking.

No more than Österberg or Brunius have I found any large differences in the average length of cultivation of different kinds of land. Nor do the areas of investigation show any pronounced differences in the average values of the various decades. The differences that do appear can largely be accidental.

The different Swedish investigations indicate a relatively short average length of cultivation (10—13 years). This might be compared with a Finnish and an English parish, where the average lengths of cultivation were 26 and 32 years, respectively.

Christina Carlsson Wetterberg

Women, Work, and Aging. Female Textile Workers in Malmö 1870—1918

This article begins with a discussion of certain basic aspects of the question of men's and women's different conditions of aging. It then presents some partial results of a study of the situation of older working women in Sweden around the turn of the century.

In a discussion of a definition of the concept of aging, the article indicates that within gerontological research, as in so many other contexts, men often constitute the norm of the purportedly general scholarly definitions. It has been common, for example, to relate aging in today's society to retirement from the work force, but this is a definition that can be applied to women only to a limited degree. Women's reality has been (and is) multifaceted: children, other care work, housework, and wage labour have occupied different places during the life cycle's different phases. We therefore ought to employ an open definition, one which can encompass women's varied life situations — economic and familial. Gerontological research employing a women's perspective must also, it is further claimed, pay heed to women's varying class backgrounds.

In 1913 the Swedish parliament decided to introduce a general old age pension. The background to this decision was the "aging problem," especially in the lower social classes, which arose as a consequence of the 19th century's economic and social transformations. The newer forms of production did not give the elderly the same opportunities as earlier to continue to work during their later years. The state therefore ultimately intervened and through legislative means tried to solve the elderly's subsistence problems.

The extensive investigation that was made of the elderly's social and economic conditions showed that the "aging problem" was to a large degree a "women's problem". The number of solitary elderly women (over 60) was more than double as many as the equivalent group among men, they composed the majority of those living on relief, and their ability to support themselves through their own work was significantly lower than men's. This, however, was not reflected in the committee's proposals. No widow's pension was proposed, housewives were placed in the lowest income class, and, in addition, women's pensions were to be paid out on a lower percentage basis than men's. This last measure was justified on the basis of women's greater degree of invalidity and their longer life span.

Closer examination of the old age insurance committee's defense of its proposal to give women, as a group, lower pension amounts shows that it proceeded from, and built into its proposal, an assumption of female *economic dependency*. It was assumed that the lower amounts could be compensated for by the fact that women would, to a large degree, be able to remain living with their children or to reside with other relatives. In this manner the general goal in introducing a pension system at all, namely to provide the elderly a certain degree of economic independence, was abandoned in so far as women were concerned.

Until 1946 the old age pension was not able alone to provide basic support during old age. An elderly woman who was not supported by her husband had to gain a livelihood in other ways. To what degree could she rely on the support of relatives, children in the first instance, and to what degree was she able to support herself through her own work?

A more detailed investigation of the conditions in Malmö, a strongly expanding industrial city at the turn of the century with many women industrial workers, confirms the

understanding which the old age pension committee had arrived at. Women were to a larger degree than men dependent on support of different kinds, from individuals and from the poor relief, and they had income from work to a lesser degree than did men. Most of those who were reported as employed we find in domestic work of different kinds. They were designated as help ladies, maids, cleaning ladies, laundry maids, etc. Only a small portion were factory workers.

A study of a textile factory in the city, Malmö Yllefabrik /Wool Factory/, confirms the information that very few older women worked in industry. To a certain degree the lower amount of women appears to have been an expression of a deliberate policy on the part of the factory's leadership. The company had established its own pension fund in 1884, which stipulated that women would receive a pension after 20 years in the company's service. This meant that those who might have begun their employment at age 20 could have received a pension at age 40. An examination of the women pension recipients also shows, true enough, that of the 254 women who were eligible for a pension in 1918, nearly 30 percent had stopped working before they turned 40 and nearly 80 percent before 50. On the other hand, men received no pension before they reached 55, and as a consequence the portion of men who were elderly was significantly higher.

The result of the study this far thus clearly shows that different conditions of aging prevailed for men and women, respectively. The question as to how female wool factory workers actually managed to support themselves in their elderly years we have to leave open, however. To provide an answer to that question, life line studies of a smaller number of the older women factory workers are to be carried out.

Finally, the article is related to current women's research and the tendency that can be found there to wind up in a position where either focus is put on the repression of women or prominent attention is given to women's strength and ability to act. It is easy to fall into the same dichotomy in research on older women. Accordingly, we are putting emphasis here on a consideration of the variations existing among the group of women, variations which can be connected to class background and family situation, as well as of the fact that, in an analysis of the individual woman's situation, one has to count on finding aspects of both repression and strength.

Translated by Joseph Zitomersky

Sidsel Eriksen

Revival and Temperance Movement. A Contribution to the Study of Swedish and Danish Popular Culture

Why is there in Denmark a free and wanton attitude to alcohol while in Sweden the attitude is far more suppressed and restrictive? The question of the difference in attitude to alcohol between Denmark and Sweden has long been the object of attention not only in research on alcohol but also in modern studies of national popular culture. Much points to the fact that this difference is not merely something of the moment but was already apparent in the previous century. One expression of this is the fact that already by the middle of the 19th century the Swedish temperance movement had won somewhat greater support among the population than had its Danish counterpart.

But what is the reason for this difference? The explanations that are given for the temperance movement's growth in each of the two countries' respective research traditions show no striking differences. In both countries it is agreed that industrialization, urbanization or capitalism promoted the need of a diminished alcohol consumption, and that this in turn further promoted the development of a temperance movement. But was not the development of society further advanced in Denmark than in Sweden, and ought not therefore the temperance movement to have been stronger in the former? There may thus be other causal contexts of importance for the temperance movement's development — causal contexts which precise comparison, the systematic collocation of the temperance movement's social anchoring in the two otherwise parallelly developed societies, can point toward.

The article's thesis is that the difference may be due to the development, or lack of development, of a certain religious/ethical idea in the two countries. The development of the national popular culture is connected, at its most basic level, with the kind of view of Christianity which took hold, and that this generally came to mark the population's understanding of existence for generations. Put in so many words: while the 19th century's Swedish religious revival took on a Anglo-American nonconformist hue, the contemporary Danish revival largely followed a purely Lutheran direction.

Anglo-American teaching assumed that man, by bettering himself bit by bit, could achieve a degree of assurance of his own salvation. Working to propagate temperance was thus an important part of this salvation work, and much points to the fact that the first Swedish temperance movement developed very much as a part of such an Anglo-American revival. But it was also Anglo-American nonconformist thinking that lay behind the vigorous temperance movement that developed separately in the IOGT in the decades around the turn of the century, and this clearly put its ideological mark on Swedish Social Democracy in its systematic construction of "The People's Home" /the modern Swedish welfare state/.

The Danish religious revival was strongly influenced by N.F.S. Grundtvig and his particular Lutheranism. This held that true betterment could only come un-compelled "from within," and that it neither could nor ought to be measured or weighed. The Anglo-American betterment work that developed in the temperance movement was therefore not considered as true betterment; it was of an acquired kind and would inevitably lead to self-righteousness and a feeling of superiority. The ecclesiastical milieu in Denmark thus

presented the temperance movement with truly difficult conditions in the first half of the century, and when the temperance movement nevertheless did take hold in the 1880s with industrialization, it did so largely on the premises underlying this particular view of Christianity, and actually in two quite different ways: The Danish temperance movement did not take a strict Anglo-American nonconformist form nor did it seriously take hold among the opinion making circles of the country. It was not by chance that temperance ideas gained but a limited reception in Danish Social Democracy.

The growth of the temperance movement thus cannot be explained only on the basis of concrete social developments, but must be understood in terms of the religious-ideological context. As such, it is also likely that the difference in the Danish and Swedish popular cultures can be explained by the respective impact which a Anglo-American or Lutheran understanding of Christianity had in the two countries.

Translated by Joseph Zitomersky