

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF  
SCANDINAVIA

\*  
VOLUME II  
1520–1870

Volume II of *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia* provides a comprehensive and authoritative account of the Scandinavian countries from the close of the Middle Ages to the formation of the nation states in the mid-nineteenth century. Beginning in 1520, the opening chapters of the volume discuss the reformation of the Nordic states and the enormous impact this had on the social structures, cultural identities and traditions of individual countries. With contributions from 38 leading historians, the book charts the major developments that unfolded within this crucial period of Scandinavian history. Chapters address topics such as material growth and the centralisation of power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as the evolution of trade, foreign policy and client states in the eighteenth century. Volume II concludes by discussing the new economic and social orders of the nineteenth century in connection with the emergence of the nation states.



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1520–1870

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*Edited by*

E. I. KOURI

*University of Helsinki*

and

JENS E. OLESEN

*University of Greifswald*



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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

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Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521473002](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521473002)

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First published 2016

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-0-521-47300-2 Hardback

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## *General Editors' preface*

Cambridge Histories have become an established *genre* of collective scholarship. In this tradition *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, in three volumes, presents to readers worldwide the current state of historical knowledge about Scandinavia from the beginnings to the present. It is the first full-scale exposition of the whole area.

The General Editors have thought it wise that, apart from essential 'scene setting', the volume should contain both general comparative chapters on major themes in Scandinavian history and chapters on the individual histories of constituent countries. As far as possible, Scandinavia is presented as a whole with an attempted balance between economic, social and political developments. Special attention is given to cultural and religious matters and their history is seen in the light of the general history of Scandinavia. The General Editors' hope is that the reader will have, as the outcome, an authoritative history, based on the most recent research.

The General Editors have many specific debts to acknowledge. In particular, the late Sir Geoffrey Elton, Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge; Wallace T. MacCaffrey, Professor Emeritus of History at Harvard University; and the late Professor Robert W. Scribner of Clare College, Cambridge, and Harvard helped and encouraged them in launching the project of a Cambridge History of Scandinavia. William Davies of Cambridge University Press has for his part provided constant encouragement as he has skilfully overseen the planning and production of the series.

The General Editors gratefully acknowledge the generous financial assistance from the Nordic Cultural Fund towards the publication of these volumes. They also wish to thank the various archives, libraries and other institutions for granting permission to publish material from their collections and to thank most sincerely the translators and secretaries who have helped in the preparation of this series.

## General Editors' preface

Lastly, the remaining General Editors are sad to have to communicate the death of their senior colleague, Professor Erling Ladewig Petersen, on 21 June 1999. Without his initiative and scholarly standing the series would hardly have come about; and failing health did not keep him from continuing, energetically, his editorial work to the very last.

Knut Helle†

Torkel Jansson

E. I. Kouri

## *Volume Editors' preface*

*The Cambridge History of Scandinavia* presents to the reader – both the general reader and the student – modern historical knowledge about Scandinavia from the beginnings to the present. This volume covers roughly the period from 1520 to 1870, from the Reformation to the emergence of the modern nation state in Northern Europe.

Volume II opens with a chapter on the Reformation and the consequent reorganisation of the Nordic countries c. 1520–1600. It goes on to deal with material growth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the power states Sweden (including Finland) and Denmark (including Norway and Iceland) in the seventeenth century. Next, eighteenth-century cultural and material life as well as the client states and foreign policies are dealt with. In the last part of the volume the new economic and social orders of the nineteenth century are discussed in connection with the emergence of the nation states in all the Nordic countries.

No fewer than thirty-eight authors have contributed to this volume. They have all treated their material without editorial constraint. Some of the chapters are on individual countries, some are comparative studies and some deal with more general topics. The authors were chosen by the editors in consonance with the changing nature of history – in particular with the greater emphasis in modern times on social and cultural history rather than on dynastic and military chronology.

The bibliography has been updated. As in Volume I, the proper names in this volume are spelt in the standard modern Scandinavian form.

The editors want to thank Professor Anthony Upton and also Dr Richard Lorch, who have helped reading the contributions and given good and constructive advice. To the translators Jüri Kokkonen, Dr Thomas Munck Petersen, John Tanner and Harald Watson as well as to Thomas Eisentraut, Juliane Trempel and especially Max Naderer, who helped to compile the bibliography, goes the editors' profound gratitude. We are especially grateful

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to the Cambridge University Press, particularly to William Davies, Michael Watson, Elisabeth Friend-Smith, Dr Maartje Scheltens, Amanda George, Bronte Rawlings and Emma Collison, who have generously helped in the publication of this volume.

Our wives, Marjut Kouri and Marjatta Olesen, have been living with this project on Scandinavian modern history for a number of years. We are greatly indebted to them for their support during the whole process.

The editors are happy to acknowledge the generous financial assistance from the Academy of Finland, the Finnish Cultural Foundation and the Alfred Kordelin Foundation towards the publication of this volume.

E. I. Kouri

Jens E. Olesen



# Introduction

E. I. KOURI AND JENS E. OLESEN

This volume presents the history of Scandinavia from about 1520 to 1870. There are chapters on individual countries and comparative studies on various aspects of political, social, cultural, religious and economical developments. The authors represent different Northern European countries and approaches to Scandinavian historiography. Until recently historical research in Scandinavia has mainly been published from the viewpoint of national history, and mostly in corresponding languages. The general international audience cannot be expected to be acquainted with the matter. Therefore, by way of introduction, we add a few words about historical research in the Nordic countries since the Second World War.

For a long time Scandinavian historical scholarship mainly followed the style of German traditions, but this trend was interrupted by the Second World War. Since then research on Northern Europe has followed international trends more closely. Nowadays Anglo-Saxon and French styles are favoured in all the Nordic countries, although some tendencies of German theory still prevail.

In the years after the Second World War two schools dominated Scandinavian historiography: historicism and source criticism. The one school preferred to stick to informative exploitation of sources, while the other used the sources in their capacity as proofs for a theory. Such antagonism produced bitter controversies between different schools in Denmark and Sweden. Finland and Norway remained almost untouched by similar quarrels. They were, as new independent states, more concerned with defining their own new identities. The years from the late 1940s until the mid 1960s formed a period of reconciliation. In Sweden, however, there was a struggle for mastery between those who accepted new impulses from abroad, mainly from the Anglo-Saxon world and France, and the stubborn traditionalists.

In many ways Scandinavian historical research has followed European trends, though it has diverged in some respects. Political and economic

developments were of decisive importance. This applies in particular to the long-term waves of economic depression and social tension. Part of the German inheritance has survived: historicism and hermeneutics, down to Weber's ideal types. Also influences from French positivism remained. In addition, efforts were made to interpret economics through Marxist doctrine, which however faded away soon after it started during the 1970s.

Since the later 1960s, the foundation of new universities in all the Nordic countries has taken place, and this influenced historical research. New subject areas were taken up. Also new were extensive research projects – for example, on Scandinavia's move from domain state to military/tax state. In addition, administration became the subject of a large research project in which the differences between Sweden-Finland and Denmark-Norway were stressed.

Typically, new subject areas were taken up during the post-1960s expansion. Contemporary history became a field of activity in Denmark and in Sweden. According to a Swedish governmental decision, every second vacant chair should be allotted to a specialist of contemporary history. A further innovation was the study of overseas history. This brought new light to the former Danish and Swedish colonies abroad and to the non-European world in general. Economic history was much studied in all the Nordic countries, but it has often been incorporated into social history. Sub-disciplines like the history of mentalities – studies on criminality, healthcare and poor relief – have also been published. In demography historians have applied English and French methods, in works on agricultural and urban society. There are also studies of narrative history and biography. Along with these new approaches, new themes like the history of mentalities and women's history (or gender history) are now flourishing. There are also studies in other fields, such as, for example, the attempts at Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia or the role of the Northern powers in the diplomatic negotiations to create a pan-Protestant alliance.

In contrast to Sweden and Denmark, where local-regional history somehow remained weak, it has been eagerly studied in Finland, Norway and Iceland. This may be because these countries won their independence late and consequently have a need to find and define their national identities. Generally, in all the Nordic countries perennial controversies have continued to fascinate historians, although some older debates have lost much of their relevance.

Beside historical scholarship other sciences have been applied to explain the phenomena of Scandinavia. There are economic, social, religious, ethnic and linguistic borders – borders which are often crossed.

In times of economic recession, Scandinavian historical scholarship – like the humanities in general – has managed to survive cuts, bureaucratisation and the onslaughts of the fashionable gospel of productivity and efficiency. Several factors may have contributed to this: the remarkable internationalisation, co-operation and evident pluralism of historical research and, perhaps most obviously, the level of quality attained since the Second World War.

Political changes in 1989, the European Union's expansion to the East and its Baltic strategy, made public in 2009, have rekindled interest in the history of the area, including Scandinavia. There were – and there are – several linguistic groups: Danes, Swedes, Finns, Germans, Poles, Balts and Slavs. In the course of history the nationality of the various littoral territories and the control of the Baltic have been subject to changes. At the same time the area has been the scene of intense exchanges on all levels of social and cultural life. The increase of communication, with the help of shipping, trade and the migration of groups of people accelerated the process of transformation. Thus supra-national cultures were formed. European influences followed various lines of communication and there is still much work to be done on the relations between Scandinavia and the major European powers in the diplomatic, political, economic, social and cultural areas.

In the early stages of the period discussed in this volume the Scandinavian powers started to play a greater role in international relations, diplomacy and commerce. Ideological and religious considerations can also be seen. In Counter-Reformation Europe as a whole *les deux protectorats* were widely recognised: that of England over Continental and Scandinavian Protestants and that of Spain over the Catholics. The role of the northern countries was largely determined by the balance of power in Europe.

At the beginning of the early modern period the northern kingdoms continued to function within their medieval framework. Political and religious institutions as well as social and financial arrangements were still what they had been during the late medieval period. The dissolution of the Teutonic Order, the disintegration of the Hanseatic League in the Baltic Sea region and the breakdown of the Nordic Kalmar Union were, however, symptoms of a new time approaching. The Stockholm massacre in 1520 put an end to the late medieval efforts to establish a union of the Scandinavian kingdoms. Starting the volume from the 1520s makes it also possible to address the Lutheran Reformation and the growth of the early modern Scandinavian kingdoms. The Reformation initiated by Martin Luther was, after 1517, brought to Northern Europe by trading contacts, students studying abroad and cultural transfer. The Danish King Christian II (1513–23) had

ambitions to control the church politically and economically and was inspired by reformed Catholicism. In Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland the new reform ideas spread only slowly.

Chapter 1 deals with the Reformation. The concept of the Reformation as a significant period, with characteristics and central events, has had long life as such historical categories go. In the first place, the age marked the break-up of Western Christendom. In a short time it achieved an extraordinary spread, both rapid and wide. No part of Western Christendom remained unaffected by it. There existed widespread dislike of clergy and it often went with hostility to Rome and also with nationalism. But the reformers' message answered a spiritual thirst which the Catholic church was failing to satisfy. All this was true also in the Nordic countries. There it took place within the framework of political and social progress and depended on the complex political changes that have to be known as the emergence of the nation state. Also inner-state politics and the formation of nations were determined by the Reformation and by the Lutheran confessionality with its modernising tendencies towards state, society and nation.

The Lutheran Reformation reached Denmark in the mid 1520s. Under the reign of Frederik I (1523–33), Denmark remained officially Catholic. The king, however, soon adopted a policy of protecting Lutheran reformers like Hans Tausen and Peder Palladius. The new faith spread especially among the citizens of the provincial towns. Frederik's son Christian III (1534–59) was openly Lutheran and introduced the Reformation into his duchy in 1528. After the Count's War, which ended in 1536, Lutheranism became official in Denmark and Norway. The Catholic bishops were removed and the church was reorganised. Luther's friend Johannes Bugenhagen drew up the new church order in 1537. This order constitutes the common root of the churches in Norway, Iceland and the Føroyar.

The first decades of the sixteenth century were filled in Northern Europe with social, political and religious tensions. The Kalmar Union came to an end caused by the Bloodbath of Stockholm in 1520, where King Christian II tried once and for all to eliminate his Swedish opponents. With the help of an uprising in Dalarna the young nobleman Gustav Eriksson Vasa was elected regent of Sweden in August 1521. Two years later he became king (1523–60). His royal election represented a final victory of the policy against the Kalmar Union. Since Christian II had favoured Dutch interests the election was strongly supported by Lübeck. Moreover, it was not in Lübeck's interests that the Nordic countries formed a strong united political unit. The expulsion of King Christian II in 1523 led to an aristocratic renaissance in Denmark and

also in Sweden. The aristocracy in Norway was, however, unable to unite the existing political factions and form a national programme. The formal transformation of Norway into a Danish province in 1537 has been highly debated, but stands out as a confirmation of a process which had been taking place over a long period.

As elsewhere in Europe it seems that the uprisings in Scandinavia during the sixteenth century were a reaction against the growth of monarchical power and the improved position enjoyed by noble landowners as a result of population growth and the increased supply of labour. It also seems that the greatest inclination towards rebellion was to be found among the peasantry in geographically peripheral provinces, who felt their modest prosperity and independence threatened. The social uprisings complicated the religious tensions in the Nordic countries.

Traditionally the picture of the Reformation in Denmark, Norway and Iceland has been solely that of a princely reformation. This view is, however, no longer valid. In Denmark the evangelical movement had taken roots in the major provincial towns and had created a solid ground for the introduction of a Lutheran church in 1536. The princely reformation of King Christian III (1534–59) in Denmark rested on a reformation in the towns. This was however not the case in Norway and in Iceland, where the introduction of the Reformation lasted longer. The last Catholic archbishop of Nidaros, Olav Engelbrektsson, fled to the Netherlands, where he died in 1537. The Danish government recognised the strength of Catholicism in Norway and avoided disturbances among the population in general. It was not until the second generation of superintendents was appointed in Norway that some form of Lutheranism was successfully promoted. In contrast, in Iceland the Reformation was promoted by force, after the last Catholic bishop had been executed with two of his sons in 1550. Real progress was, however, not achieved until the 1570s. The last Catholic bishops had been defenders of Icelandic national, cultural and political aspirations, and this might explain why Lutheranism generally proved slow in gaining support among the Icelanders.

In the fifteenth century the Catholic church in Sweden was in a powerful position, effectively independent of both the crown and *curia*. It held the balance between the Danish Union kings with their Swedish supporters and those who preferred an independent Swedish national policy. Finland came under Swedish rule from the mid-twelfth century and was an organic part of the Swedish realm. In the Middle Ages the Catholic church there had enjoyed the same privileged status in society as in Sweden. Its bishops were able men

who had studied in foreign universities, mainly in Paris. As a Catholic bishopric, the Finnish church belonged to the archdiocese of Uppsala, but it also maintained direct contacts with the *curia*. It was only after the Reformation that it became fully incorporated into the Swedish church. Finland remained under control of Christian II's supporters when the evangelical reorientation of Swedish church policy began. When Gustav Vasa gained control over Finland in 1523 a new bishop, the king's former chancellor, was appointed to the vacant see of St Henry in Turku/Åbo (named after an Englishman, Henry, who was the first missionary bishop of Finland c. 1157).

The doctrinal reform in Sweden and Finland was carried out by young theologians who had been acquainted with the new religion during their studies abroad. Sweden's and Finland's reformers, Olaus Petri and Mikael Agricola, had studied in Wittenberg, where they personally experienced Luther's and Melancthon's evangelical teachings. Also the close connections between the German colonies in Stockholm and Turku and the Baltic cities, where the Reformation had taken hold in the mid 1520s, helped the new faith to spread in Scandinavia.

King Gustav Vasa was not a particularly religious man. In many respects he resembled Henry VIII of England. He cautiously encouraged the Reformation with the help of Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae. Historians of the Reformation have traditionally seen the parliament held at Västerås in 1527 as the birthplace of the reformation of evangelical Sweden-Finland. However, the actual doctrinal alterations were minimal. Of far greater significance were the decisions relating to the church's economic position: much church property was transferred to the crown and the jurisdiction of clergy was drastically curtailed. Thus, in contrast to what happened in Denmark, the Swedish church lost its economic, political and judicial immunity a decade earlier. But it was not until 1593 that a territorial Lutheran church with a written formula of faith was established in Sweden-Finland.

The new Lutheran church was led from the top and was based in the cities; in the countryside it only slowly gained ground. To a great extent the Reformation in Finland followed the same pattern as in Sweden, although it had its own character. In Finland – as in Norway – the Reformation stressed the national language and was very important for the formation of nationality and culture. Unfortunately, the consequent 'Swedishing' of Finland by the government in Stockholm soon caused a decline in the use of Finnish.

The Reformation in Scandinavia was, on the whole, a long process. It was in the first place the great revolution in religion and church. With its

by-products in thought and learning, in constitutional changes, in national and international affairs and, of course, in economic, social and cultural factors in general, it changed history. To what degree the Lutheran church succeeded in introducing its new doctrine into people's minds has been debated. The church addressed itself to the matter with great vigour: towns and villages were visited every year by members of the clergy to test the people in the matters of faith. As well as struggling against the remnants of Roman Catholicism the church leaders had to fight against various kinds of magical belief and practice.

The Reformation also generally affected the intellectual life profoundly. The University of København was reopened in 1537. In Sweden the University of Uppsala was temporarily closed, and it was not until 1595 that it was refounded. In Iceland the introduction of the Reformation after 1550 was followed by the closing of the schools in the two bishoprics of Skalholt and Holar.

The influence of Lutheran Wittenberg was of great importance in Denmark during the reign of King Christian III. The economy improved at the end of his reign, and it was especially his son and successor King Frederik II (1559–88) who secured the economic base for the University of København. A number of students from the Nordic countries undertook a *peregrinatio academica* during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The break-up of the Kalmar Union in 1520 saw the rise of two Scandinavian monarchies. How the state-building processes took place and how the conglomerate states were formed constitutes an important research theme in Scandinavian history. The Nordic Kalmar Union had been beneficial for the leading noble families regardless of country, but it had negative consequences for other social groups. In Denmark the aristocracy was victorious and the power of the council increased as an institution keeping royal power under control. The year 1536 is regarded as that of the birth of the modern Danish state. Norway was almost completely incorporated with Denmark. It became one of the Danish provinces and could no longer formally be called a kingdom. Only a few remnants of Norway's former independence existed. Norway, including the Føroyar and Iceland, were governed from København, and Danish governors were responsible for the local administration. The monarchs, however, were not left completely without authority. The methods they used to reach these goals were dependent on the *Realpolitik* of the single monarchs.

In Sweden Gustav Vasa built up a stronger position than that of the Danish king. The crushing of the power of the bishops both weakened the council

and improved the finances of the crown and of the king himself. Gustav Vasa managed to implement the hereditary monarchy in Sweden and revived the importance of the Swedish diet (*riksdag*). Administrative and fiscal modernisation took place in Sweden as well as in Denmark. Church property was confiscated in 1536 in Denmark, and in 1549 a new form of enfeoffment was introduced. The number of small fiefdoms was radically reduced. In Norway a great variety of administrative units existed side by side. The Danish chancery was strengthened, and a similar change accorded in Sweden. Danish fiscal administration lagged behind its Swedish counterpart in the sixteenth century, largely because the enfeoffed nobility had a more independent position vis-à-vis the crown. The development of the financial systems helps to explain the financial possibilities – and often severe problems – of the Scandinavian countries. Around 1600, they were able to modernise their finances, but not yet their administration. This was not completed until the eighteenth century.

As shown in Chapter 2, the population generally rose in number, but in the greater part of the Nordic region the positive trend ceased in the first half of the seventeenth century at the latest, resulting in a general period of stagnation. The development of settlements in Norway from 1520 up to 1720 was characterised by regional differences. In Denmark the greatest part of the population shifted from Jylland to the Danish islands. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, the growing population in Denmark produced an expansive phase in settlement. Thus the proportion of cottar households and landless cottars grew substantially. The increase of these groups caused a social stratification and differentiation within the Danish agrarian community. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Iceland experienced a population decline. In Sweden the population grew significantly during the sixteenth century and into the first decades of the following century. In Finland settlement growth continued until the latter half of the sixteenth century, when expansion was replaced by decline. Colonisation of the interior of Finland was above all promoted by the crown.

Scandinavia varied linguistically and ethnically. Denmark, Norway and Iceland were ethnically stable. It was otherwise in the Swedish kingdom. The Finnish-speaking population dominated in Finland, but this also accorded in parts of Sweden due to the emigration of Finnish settlers to the forested districts of Sweden from the end of the sixteenth century. The northernmost parts of the Scandinavia were inhabited by Sami. Their culture differed from the main stream of agrarian culture because of its nomadism or semi-nomadism.



As elsewhere in Europe, mortality from plague and other epidemics tended to decrease in the Scandinavian countries from the second half of the fifteenth century. Other factors like hunger, war, migration, politics of taxation and privileges influenced trends in population – and settlement development too. The number and the size of Nordic households and family relationships deserves attention, since during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the ‘European family-model’ seems to have been dominant in Denmark as early as the second half of the seventeenth century.

Due to the economic boom experienced in Western Europe in the sixteenth century, the Scandinavian countries more or less acquired the position of providers of foodstuffs and raw materials for the maritime powers. In economic terms, they were in a way virtually reduced to the status of vassals in relation to the maritime powers of North-western Europe. Each country had its own profile: Denmark was based on an agrarian economy, Norway showed an expanding economy mainly due to timber trade, while Sweden and Finland experienced during the seventeenth century a development of proto-industrialisation caused by their large natural mineral and forest resources.

The rising prices and dynamic trends in the Scandinavian economy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries combined with new patterns of trade, created a hitherto unknown movement in the old society based on estates. The Nordic countries generally saw a breakdown of the old social structure and an adaptation to new economic realities. Thus the Reformation swept away the Catholic church, and the formerly powerful clergy now became a class of civil servants, sinking beneath the aristocracy in the social hierarchy to become the second estate. The second ‘revolution’ was the military one, where the nobility lost their military monopoly. The price revolution changed the former static economy based on natural resources into an unpredictable and dynamic money economy, though liased with economic fluctuations. All these factors resulted in a change of the medieval social structure, which had been based on class privileges. The old nobility was now confronted with new groups with capital – and this became an important component of eighteenth century society. In Norway a new power-elite developed, based on mining, timber and other wooden raw products. Sweden and Finland saw a remarkable growth in the number of the nobility due among other things to the ennoblement of members of the bourgeoisie. The nobility was to a large extent an open class, while its Danish counterpart was almost closed as a group.

As elsewhere in Europe, Denmark and Sweden developed from being conglomerate states into power states. The trade with Northern Europe was,

up to the beginning of the sixteenth century, mainly dominated by Hanseatic traders and merchants. During the sixteenth century more and more English and Dutch merchants sailed to the Baltic and challenged the German supremacy. They were also active in the North Sea and in the Arctic. The development in the international market had consequences for everyday consumption in the Baltic Sea region and in the North Atlantic area.

As far as commerce is concerned, the Baltic area and Russia became more and more important for Scandinavia. Also the English founded the Eastland Company in 1579 and, as early as 1555, the Muscovy Company. The Dutch, for their part, founded in the early eighteenth century the *Directie van de Osstersche Handel en Rijderijen*. In 1557 Ivan IV concluded a commercial treaty with Sweden in which he embodied free passage to Western Europe. The passing of the market from Dutch to English hands during the seventeenth century meant a continuation on the road to a modern diversified economy. Scandinavian trade companies were founded according to the Dutch model. Traders from abroad settled in Scandinavian towns with the consent of the monarchs. The Danish cities in the Sound region and Göteborg in Sweden profited especially from international trade.

In Scandinavia confessional uniformity and a Lutheran identity had little effect on the relations between states. Here dominated competition and state-egoism just as they did between the two Catholic rivals, Spain and France. Fighting to control trade from Russia to Western Europe, for example, caused growing rivalry between Denmark and Sweden. From the middle of the sixteenth century until the end of the Great Nordic War (1720–1) the two Scandinavian powers were fighting each other to hold supremacy of the Baltic Sea and its coastlands. This struggle for *dominium maris Baltici* has attracted great attention among scholars, since this rivalry was linked to the politics of the Western European powers. The naval powers, England and the Netherlands, saw in the rise of Sweden a threat to their interests and followed a policy of balance in the Baltic. From the middle of the seventeenth century the Baltic Sea region became more and more an integrated part of the international European political and economic system. When Denmark and Sweden were reduced to middle-class states, Russia – and later Prussia – became the leading power in the Baltic region.

In order to rule over the Baltic territorial waters and to control the coastlands the Scandinavian powers not only built up armies for war, but they also strengthened their navies. Armies and navies became permanent state establishments thus leading to growing militarisation. This had

far-reaching consequences, for example in the form of tax-paying, the demand for soldiers, and the professionalisation and modernisation of the state administration. Both Nordic states reached their highest levels of demographic and economic militarisation during the Great Nordic War. Afterwards they were stable military states, from 1805 to 1870 ending up with a normalisation to European standards.

The Danish government dominated trade with the North Atlantic islands: Føroyar, Iceland and Greenland. It established factories in India and small trading posts around the Indian Ocean. Sweden had no colonies in Asia even though a number of trading expeditions were sent to India and China. Following in the wake of the big European maritime powers, Sweden started around 1645 to trade with the Gold Coast of Africa. Also the Danes became active in the trade with the Gold Coast and participated in the international slave trade. Especially during the eighteenth century, Denmark profited from the transatlantic slave trade, and she acquired the Danish West Indies. Sweden was active in Delaware and in St Bartholomew in the West Indies. Although the colonies were small and not many Scandinavians settled there, they were important, not least economically, in particular to Denmark. The North Atlantic trade was linked to the transatlantic trade by the distribution of products.

During the early modern period the Scandinavian power states developed fiscally and militarily. Absolutism was introduced in Denmark in 1660 and in Sweden in 1680 at the latest. This was due, among other things, to growing tensions between the estates and the growth of bureaucracy. The Nordic states were as a whole consolidated, and the area became more and more Europeanised.

Society in the eighteenth century is dealt with in Chapter 4. Around the middle of the seventeenth century some 2 million people lived in Scandinavia. Half of the population lived in Sweden and Finland, the other half in Denmark, Norway and Iceland. The population in Iceland stagnated due to disease, famine and volcanic eruptions. In contrast to the stagnating Icelandic population, there was a clear population growth in the rest of Scandinavia. Household structures and family patterns generally reflect the social groups of society and their economic conditions. There were regional differences within the countries.

In contrast to those of Sweden and Finland, the Danish peasants were as a whole not freeholders, but after the 1760s and after the peasant liberation in 1788 the development took speed, and by 1810 two-thirds of Denmark's peasant farms had gone over to freehold and the remaining had their

conditions improved. In all Scandinavian countries the groups of landless people increased during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Different cultures and traditions existed among the social groups.

Among the new religious currents during the eighteenth century, the pietism of Halle was the only one to have any chance of dashing success in Scandinavia, where Lutheran uniformity dating from the period of orthodoxy still prevailed. The Moravians also became important in Denmark, and active Moravianist circles emerged in Sweden and Finland too. Inspired by Halle there were attempts to provide elementary education as well as schools leading to university studies. Attempts at reforms in social care as well as the spreading of rationalism opened Scandinavia to international ideas. Also in arts and architecture, literature and music at the royal and aristocratic courts, new ideas and tastes were imported from abroad.

Chapter 5 deals with political structures in Scandinavia and the foreign policies of the realms during the eighteenth century until the beginning of the nineteenth century. With the death of the Swedish king Karl XII in 1718 at the Swedish–Norwegian border the Great Nordic War soon came to an end, absolutism in Sweden disappeared and the Age of Liberty under the leadership of the Swedish *riksdag* took its beginning and lasted until King Gustav III (1771–92) restored the old autocratic system in 1772. The Swedish political system of the period was a blend of arguments about natural and contractual rights derived from European constitutional law mixed with concepts derived from the Swedish heritage and underlying continuity. The political centre was concentrated in the *riksdag* in Stockholm, where all four estates and especially the nobility were represented; the limited degree of royal power was exceptional in Europe. The political system created the preconditions for the formation of proto-party groups, the so-called Hats and Caps. During the rule of the Hats (which commenced in 1738/39) a catastrophic war was fought with Russia in 1741–3, which led to an internal crisis of the Swedish political system with growing anti-aristocratic, anti-bureaucratic and even anti-mercantilist sentiments. An important result of these attitudes was the Freedom of Press Act laid down in 1766 on the initiative of the Finnish clergyman and economist Anders Chydenius.

The two Scandinavian kingdoms were during the eighteenth century basically agrarian in nature and the peasants constituted the greatest part of the inhabitants. The towns were small in European terms with the capitals København and Stockholm being the biggest followed by Göteborg, Turku (Åbo), Kristiania (Oslo) and Bergen. In the eighteenth century many

new towns were founded. This was greatly due to the economic doctrines of the time and served the fiscal interest.

Although many similarities between Denmark and Sweden existed, two almost different systems of administration and bureaucracy can be observed. While Sweden during the Age of Liberty was governed by a 'parliamentary rule by the estates', Denmark's government was more centralised due to its 'bureaucratic absolutism'. The Danish realm was, however, still a conglomerate state, but in comparison with Sweden the political system did not offer its subjects much in the way of opportunities for political influence. The political role of the Swedish and Finnish peasants was prominent in a European context; the peasants in Norway occupied a position between Denmark and Sweden.

The Napoleonic Wars were to become long and enduring consequences for Scandinavia. Gustav IV Adolf of Sweden (1792–1809) had stuck to an alliance with England. Against this background in 1807 Napoleon and Alexander I agreed at Tilsit to force Denmark and Sweden into the Continental System against England. As a result of the Swedish–Russian War (1808–9) Finland as an autonomous grand duchy was lost by Sweden and placed under the rule of the Russian tsar. In Porvoo (Borgå) in 1809 Alexander I confirmed the Finnish privileges and welcomed Finland '*inter nationes*'.

Denmark, in spite of her policy of neutrality, had been attacked by the British in 1807 and the Danish fleet was confiscated and destroyed in order to prevent it falling into the hands of Napoleon. As a result, Denmark allied with France – also in order not to lose Norway – but, having lost her naval fleet, Denmark could not effectively oppose Swedish attempts to take over Norway. A Danish war with Sweden became inevitable since Gustav IV Adolf turned down the French and Russian suggestion to join the Continental System.

The map of Scandinavia thus changed significantly during the first decades of the nineteenth century and this generally marks the beginning of a new era. Most notably, Denmark became smaller with Holstein as the most important duchy. At the Congress of Vienna the personal union between Norway and Sweden was confirmed and Sweden handed over Swedish-Pomerania to Prussia after having given compensation to Denmark in the form of the small duchy of Lauenburg near to Hamburg and a great sum of money.

Chapter 6 discusses the many demographic transitions of the nineteenth century in the light of mortality decline and population growth. In the countryside great changes took place; the agricultural systems in Scandinavia

were modernised through reforms spanning new crops and seeding plants, the use of steam-machinery and new technology as well as the rise of new classes and co-operative movements. The disappearance of corporations and of the collective nature of the old economy – the emergence of capital – led in the social sphere to a growing individualisation, but also to the organisation of associations.

During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century an important social transition took place in Northern Europe, although it happened with great regional variations. Chapter 7 deals with these aspects and discusses the coming of a new social order in Scandinavia. It is characteristic that the old feudal societies gradually changed into modern capitalist societies, built upon commodity relations and monetary principles. The development of the countryside did not follow the same lines in all Nordic countries but, ultimately, land fell into the hands of freehold peasants, who constituted an elite and which generally transformed into a class-conscious group of modern market-orientated farmers. The social and political position of the peasants with a huge proletariat of cottars and land-workers changed the picture of peasant society radically. Different religious revivalist movements like the Norwegian Haugians, the Danish Grundtvigians and the Swedish and Finnish Laestadians helped to emancipate the peasantry as a reaction to the dominant rationalism of the established state churches. The peasants organised themselves in the different Nordic countries with increasingly articulated political demands. Also in the cities a social differentiation and stratification took place with an embryonic working class coming into existence.

The growing population and the rising social problems in the countryside and in the industrialised cities were followed by an emigration from the Nordic countries especially to the United States. Emigration started early in the nineteenth century with small religious groups, but speeded up particularly in the 1860s. Between 1866 and 1870 emigration from the Scandinavian countries accounted for about 10 per cent of the total number of European migrants. The pull- and push-factors behind this emigration are thoroughly discussed as well as the different social groups which emigrated. In comparison with other Scandinavian countries emigration from Finland started a bit later and reached a peak at the end of the nineteenth century.

The new political order after the Napoleonic Wars saw the emergence of a nation state in Scandinavia as elsewhere in Europe. Chapter 8 discusses this development. A nation-building process first took place in Denmark and Sweden, and later in Finland, Norway and Iceland. The constitutional situation in the Nordic countries was inspired especially from England and

Prussia. The citizens who had been subjects of the state now became citizens of a nation. Representation ceased to reflect the nature of land-ownership/possession, and came to be associated with the individual citizen. There were demands for an entirely new type of parliament based on individuals, not on corporations. Municipal bodies, legislation and also local governmental praxis developed. During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century the Nordic region saw the emergence of new political groups and their demands for political reforms.

During the first half of the nineteenth century Scandinavianism as a movement to unite the Nordic countries into a new democratic Kalmar Union inspired by the Norwegian constitution of 1814, became an attractive model dominating the political debate. As early as the end of the eighteenth century, there were signs of vague Scandinavian sympathies within the literary world. In the wake of the Romantic Movement, spiritual Scandinavianism grew in strength and flourished at the end of the 1820s and in the 1830s. Literary Scandinavianism took over from the end of the 1830s. This was originally oriented against Russia in order to reconquer Finland, but during the 1840s it was directed against the Schleswig-Holstein movement. Students were especially active at student congresses in Denmark and in Sweden.

After the Danish war in 1848–50 against the Schleswig-Holstein movement, where the Swedish-Norwegian troops were not actively involved, political Scandinavianism was revived in the second half of the 1850s. In the second war about Schleswig in 1864 Denmark fought against Prussia and Austria. It brought an abrupt and effective end to political Scandinavianism. Only cultural Scandinavianism flourished after 1864. The Nordic movement for political unity was not successful, as it was to be in Germany and Italy; now the nation-building projects had first priority.

In the 1520s Scandinavia was the provincial fringe of Europe. Later the Nordic states Denmark and Sweden became strong early modern princely states. The history of Northern Europe during the 350 years from 1520 up to 1870 is in many aspects one of growing Europeanisation and economic and cultural transfer, first of all because of the international importance of Scandinavian, Baltic and Russian trade. By 1870 the Nordic countries were no longer isolated and static societies, but had started to develop into modern nation states.



Map 1: Scandinavia in the sixteenth century



PART I

\*

REFORMATION AND  
REORGANISATION

1520–1600



## The disintegration of the medieval church

MARTIN SCHWARZ LAUSTEN

In the decades preceding the recrudescence of the Lutheran reform movement, the tendencies of disintegration in Denmark were so strong that in general it may be said that the church caused its own downfall long before the penetration of the evangelical agitation, unlike the case in Norway, Sweden and Finland. The Danish church controlled approximately one-third of all cultivated land in the kingdom, and the desire to redistribute this land was strong among the nobility and the citizens. With the exception of one, Bishop Jens Andersen, Odense, all Danish bishops were noblemen lacking theological education and were members of the council of the realm (*rigsråd*). However, it was even more fatal that the Holy See in its short-sighted policy engaged in a direct co-operation with the Danish king to the detriment of the Danish church and its bishops. Agreements about appointments to the highest ecclesiastical posts and about sales of indulgences were only to the benefit of the *curia*, the papal court, in Rome and of the kings Christian I, Hans and Christian II (1513–23). At the same time the latter in particular tried to force his own men into the sees and infringe on the possessions of the church. Worse was his manner of conduct in the case of the archiepiscopate in Lund; no fewer than five of his men were appointed within a period of two years, and it ended up with the nobleman Aage Sparre, who – without papal approval – managed the diocese until 1532. Along the way the king had two of the candidates imprisoned and murdered, but the scandal reveals to what extent the *curia* guided itself by economic and political interests, and how little it was concerned with the cause of the Danish church.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. O. Andersen, *Der Reformkatholizismus und die Reformation* (Gütersloh, 1934), pp. 6–11; P. G. Lindhardt, 'Reformationstiden 1513–1536', in H. Koch (ed.), *Den Danske Kirkes Historie*, 3 (København, 1965), pp. 222, 236–8; O. P. Grell, 'The Catholic Church and its Leadership', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 72–5.

More serious Catholic circles were severely discontent with the negligence of the ecclesiastical leadership and its lack of religious seriousness. The Danish Reformed Catholic Paul Helie was convinced that the papal vendor of indulgences Angelus Arcimboldus, who operated in Denmark in 1517, quite simply was the indirect cause of the spread of the Lutheran heresy,<sup>2</sup> but Reformed Catholicism was not able to hold its ground. Indirectly, Reformed Catholicism itself was a contributing cause to the evangelical movement. This was also related to the development which had taken place in theology and devotional life since the late Middle Ages. In spite of all Old Catholic, even Vulgar Catholic, features in the national religion, there was an increasing focus on Christian faith being a personal matter. This was why the texts of the New Testament were translated into Danish already long before the evangelical preachers came forward, contributing to the critical attitude towards the entire episcopally managed church's sacramental life and devotional instructions.

### National churches

Denmark's kings had thus deliberately worked towards an episcopally managed national church supervised by the king since the mid-fourteenth century, and did so to the most extreme extent from 1513 when Christian II assumed the throne. His ambition in this direction was revealed by his despotical actions against the bishops as well as by a substantial body of laws (1521–2), which interfered with the discharge of the bishops' official duties and their economy and established a new Danish ecclesiastical court of appeal, which meant that costly processes in Rome no longer were necessary. But now the bishops also supported the national principle; in the coronation charter to Frederik I (1523–33) they demanded that in the future the sees were to be filled by Danish noblemen only and they rejected the policy of the Holy See which hitherto implied appointments of foreign 'courtesans' to Danish offices. In 1526 (the Diet of Odense), yet another step was taken as the bishops and the rest of the *rigsråd* together with the king decided that henceforth episcopal elections were to be confirmed only by the archbishop – who, as mentioned above, was an uninitiated nobleman – and the duties paid for the papal confirmation were now to be paid to the king. A legal foundation for the national church was thus created, independent

2 P. Heliae, *Chronicon Skibyense*, in P. Severinsen *et al.* (eds.), *Skrifter af Paulus Helie*, 6 (København, 1937), p. 75.

of pope and *curia*, and during the rest of his reign Frederik I more and more demonstrated his control of the church and his sympathy for the evangelical movement which had started spreading since 1526. He preserved the Catholic church, but from 1527 he allowed the establishment of evangelical churches that did not belong to the episcopal jurisdiction. The king himself had supreme authority over both churches. He appointed Catholic bishops, he inducted evangelical ministers to the many churches of which he was patron, he issued documents of protection to evangelical preachers summoned to religious discussions with Lutherans and Catholics (1530) and he omitted to take action when mendicant friars were assaulted.<sup>3</sup>

The church in Norway, which had been united with Denmark under the Danish king since 1450, was treated equally arbitrarily by Christian II, as was the case in Denmark. After his flight (1523) his successor Frederik I took the usual vows to protect the privileges of the church, but his church policy eventually followed the same line as in Denmark, while Archbishop Olav Engelbrektsson struggled for the independence of the Catholic church. These endeavours suffered a decisive defeat when, after the victory of Christian III (1536), Norway was simply annexed to Denmark as a province.

Contrary to Denmark, the church was strong in Sweden and Norway around 1500, as it had gained independence from the crown, and the centralising regulations of the Holy See had always been difficult to uphold because of the isolated location. Through the parochial system, the church showed great educational activeness. Religious life was by no means decaying, and the decentralised conditions gave the church economic independence on the local level, where also the laity actively participated in the administration of the church economy. Finally, the church was not as closely connected to the great nobles as in Denmark; all the bishops, with the exception of Archbishop Gustav Trolle, had their background in the gentry or the middle classes. After the struggle for liberation against Denmark, the newly elected King Gustav Vasa (6 June 1523) appointed his own men to vacant episcopates and on 2 November 1523 he declared to the pope that unless he approved the elections and remitted the annates to the king, he would supervise the church himself. The break with Rome became a reality. Facing powerful opposition from the inflexible Catholic Bishop Hans Brask,

3 Lindhardt, 'Reformationstiden 1513–1536', pp. 218–24, 232–8, 302–18, 353–71; *Coronation Charter*, in F. C. Wegener (ed.), *Aarsberetninger fra Det Kgl. Geheimearchiv indeholdende Bidrag til Dansk historie af utrykte Kilder*, 2 (København, 1856–60), pp. 65–79; O. P. Grell, 'Herredagen 1527', in *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger* (1978), pp. 69–88; N. K. Andersen, *Confessio Hafniensis. Den københavnske Bekendelse af 1530* (København, 1954), pp. 43–66.

conservative noble circles and the strongly Catholic common people, the king extorted substantial 'loans' and infringed on the tithe. At the final diet of Västerås (June 1527), King Gustav finally acquired economic and political power over the church. With reduced privileges the organisation of the church was still to function with bishops in *successio apostolica*, monasticism and maintenance of celibacy, but it was to preach 'God's pure words'. The result was a national episcopal church under the firm rule of the king, although, theologically speaking, the church was not very Lutheran.<sup>4</sup>

### Reformed Catholicism

The church policy of Christian II was not only dictated by his ambitions to control the church politically and economically. There is no doubt that he also entertained genuine interests of a cultural and religious character and that he was inspired by Reformed Catholicism. Therefore, he established an economic basis for the order of Carmelites to establish a college at which the leader was to teach men from this order and others, as well as teach theology at the university. In addition, the king was sent, at his request, three learned men from Wittenberg: Martin Reinhard became royal curate (February 1521), and in København preached publicly against Catholic faith and devotional life; Matthias Gabler became lecturer in Greek at the university in March 1521 and a posthumous poem dealing with the condition of the university bears witness to his familiarity with the mentality of classical humanism; finally, in May 1521, Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt arrived to function as a member of the new ecclesiastical court of appeal as royal counsellor and preacher. For reasons unknown he left Denmark precipitately after no more than three weeks; presumably, his radical attitude collided with the king's Reformed Catholicism.<sup>5</sup>

4 M. Schwarz Lausten, 'The Early Reformation in Denmark and Norway 1520–1559', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 27–9; H. Holmquist, 'Reformationstidevarvet 1521–1611', in H. Holmquist and H. Pleijel (eds.), *Svenska Kyrkans Historia*, 3 (Stockholm, 1933), pp. 72–157; E. I. Kouri, 'The Early Reformation in Sweden and Finland, c. 1520–1560', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 42–52; Grell, 'The Catholic Church and its Leadership', pp. 94–110.

5 J. O. Andersen, *Overfor Kirkebruddet. Den første lutherske Bevægelse og Christiems II's Forhold dertil* (København, 1917), pp. 63–138; U. Bubenheimer, *Consonantia Theologiae et Jurisprudentialiae. Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt als Theologe und Jurist zwischen Scholastik und Reformation* (Tübingen, 1997), pp. 230–7; J. O. Andersen, *Paulus Helie*, 1 (København, 1936), pp. 40–50; G. T. Bakken, 'Martin Reinhart, den første lutherske utsending til Norden', *Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift*, 73 (1972), pp. 57–92.

Admittedly, Christian II did ban the university's publication of the papal document in which he threatened Luther with excommunication, and Luther himself had the impression (March 1521) that the king now 'persecuted the papists'. From the Diet of Worms (April 1521) where the final conviction of Luther took place, the papal nuncio Alexander could report to Rome of rumours about Luther saying that he may be granted permission to stay in Denmark, but that the emperor, Christian II's brother-in-law, in that case would punish Christian II. Furthermore, Alexander reported that Christian II's minister in Worms travelled with a box containing Lutheran books, and when Christian II shortly after (1521) met with Erasmus of Rotterdam, he defended Luther's uncompromising methods against the reproaches of Erasmus. At the same time, however, the king had forbidden Karlstadt, verbally and in writing, to attack the pope and the Catholic faith. In spite of this and the value of the rumours, it was obvious that the prominent Catholic circles in Europe were well aware of the Danish king's critical attitude towards the church. This can be supported by the large body of laws for the towns, for the country and for the educational system (1521–2) which limited the economic and legal rights of the pope and the bishops, corrected the negligence of the clergy and enjoined the bishops' ecclesiastical duties, as well as the necessary education and the cure of souls of the parish priests. Old Catholic (scholastic) textbooks in the schools were to be collected and replaced by new humanist books. The laws were manifestations of Reformed Catholicism, but the emphasis on the obligation to preach the 'Gospel', and the criticism of celibacy pointed forward. In the showdown with Christian II, the *rigsråd* accused him of having encouraged 'the Lutheran heresy', and in the coronation charter his successor Frederik I was obligated to promise to attempt to oppose it. Nevertheless, he soon settled with a Reformed Catholic programme of action which gained support from the consultative chambers of the duchy of Schleswig and the duchy of Holstein, where Reformed Catholic demands to the prelates had recently been expressed (Diet of Rendsburg 1525). Frederik I never openly confessed to the evangelical or Lutheran faith, but he expressed his sympathy ever more strongly and he moved from Reformed Catholicism towards church political tolerance for both churches.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Luther to Spalatin, Wittenberg 7 March, 1521, *WABr*, 2, p. 283. Alexander to pavestolen, July/August 1521, *Acta Pontificum Danica*, 6, pp. 366f. Erasmus to John Cochlaeus, in P. S. Allen (ed.), *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmus Roterodami*, 7 (Oxford, 1928), Ep. 1228, pp. 145f.; Andersen, *Overfor Kirkebruddet*, pp. 139–202; Grell, 'The Catholic Church and its Leadership', pp. 71f.; T. Lyby, *Vi evangeliske. Studier over samspillet mellem udenrigspolitik og kirkepolitik på Frederik I's tid* (Aarhus, 1993), pp. 441–9.

The North Alpine humanism had reached Denmark during the reign of Christian II. On study tours to Paris, Louvain, Wittenberg, Erfurt, Rostock and other places, young Danes had experienced the interest of humanism in classical antiquity, the new ideal of education and the critical attitude towards the church. Most important was Christiern Pedersen; in Paris (1510–15), where he took his MA degree, he published both humanist textbooks, popular devotional books and nationally historical monumental works from the Middle Ages, such as Saxo's *Gesta Danorum*, an edition supported by the king and Archbishop Birger Gunnersen. In his book of sermons 'All Epistles and Gospels . . .' (Paris 1515, called the *Jærtegnspostille*) he translated the biblical texts into Danish, and this – as well as the emphasis on the necessity of biblical reading – were typical examples of the biblical humanist Reformed Catholicism. The contents of the book, which was quite unoriginal, did render the theology of late Catholicism. However, later on, Christiern Pedersen confessed to the Lutheran faith and publicly expressed his regrets about this collection of sermons. Another Danish humanist, Petrus Parvus Rosæfontanus, published a dictionary of synonyms (1520), and in the preface (5 December 1519) one of his friends, Henrik Smith, praised modern education and, on a par with Erasmus and other celebrities, Luther and Wittenberg were mentioned as the centres of humanism. The humanist 'wave' at the university was also reflected by Christiern Thorkelsen Morsing's instruction in 'refinement' (around 1521); but the most influential person was to be the provincial Carmelite Paul Helie (c. 1485–c. 1535) who since June 1519 was the leader of the Carmelite college and lecturer in 'the Holy Writ' at the university. Even though he saw eye to eye with Luther on some reformatory demands as well as in his motivation to personal piety, his ideal was the biblical Reformed Catholicism represented by Erasmus of Rotterdam, and he repudiated Luther's evangelical theology, his rejection of the papacy and his entire radicalism. Heliae's ideal was 'a unity of pious theological learning and a piety influenced by this learning'. He made reformatory demands to the bishops of the church, encouraged students' reading of the New Testament, but did not break with the Church of Rome.<sup>7</sup>

7 M. Schwarz Lausten, *Reformationen i Danmark* (København, 1987), pp. 13–18; M. Schwarz Lausten, 'Die Universität Kopenhagen und die Reformation', in L. Grane (ed.), *University and Reformation* (Leiden, 1981), pp. 99–105; Andersen, *Paulus Helie*, 1, pp. 40–138; Lindhardt, 'Reformationstiden 1513–1536', pp. 240–57; K. Hørby, 'Humanist Profiles in the Danish Reform Movement', in L. Grane and K. Hørby (eds.), *Die dänische Reformation vor ihrem internationalen Hintergrund* (Göttingen, 1990), pp. 28–38; S. Scholtens, 'Recent Studies on the Carmelites and the Reformation in Denmark', *Carmelus*, 12 (1965), pp. 38–67.



Whether Reformed Catholicism manifested itself in Norway is unknown. Norwegian students, among others the archbishop since 1523, Olav Engelbriktsen, had studied at the University of Rostock, and the chapter of Nidaros also was in possession of characteristic humanist literature, but the source material is too scarce to give a more positive account. The fact that in 1526 complaints were made concerning damages to the church inflicted by 'the Lutheran sect' in Bergen hardly indicates more than some kind of criticism of the church was adduced, presumably among the German traders. Reform Catholicism, however, played an important part in church policy during the first period of King Gustav Vasa's development of independent Sweden-Finland. Laurentius Andreae has been called a 'reformer of national churches' (Kauko Pirinen), and when Olaus Petri returned from abroad he had almost become a humanist Reform Catholic. Together with the king, these two men ensured that Reformed Catholic Erasmians like Petrus Magni, Erik Svensson, Magnus Sommar and Sven Jacobi were appointed to episcopates. Men like Johannes and Olaus Magnus were to some extent also influenced by the humanist Catholicism and the king's letters to the Holy See in the autumn of 1523 and to the monastery of Vadstena (21 February 1524), in which the Roman Catholic interpretation of the essence of the church was rejected, and were also marked by the spirit of Reformed Catholicism. The decisions made at the decisive Diet of Västerås (1527) and the subsequent Diet of Örebro (1529) were expressions of biblical humanist Reformed Catholicism and not Lutheranism. In 1539 Reformed Catholic bishops still tried to prevent a total break with the Roman Catholic church. Swedish modernism had a considerable impact on church policy that, contrary to the situation in Denmark, delayed the accomplishment of the Lutheran Reformation. The first one to preach the new faith in Finland was Pietari Särkilähti, the son of a mayor of Turku (Åbo), who had studied in Rostock, Louvain and probably also in Wittenberg. He returned to his home town in 1523 and was active there until his early death in 1529.<sup>8</sup>

8 C. F. Wisløff, *Norsk Kirkehistorie*, 1 (Oslo, 1966), pp. 378, 390–3; Holmquist, 'Reformationstidevarvet 1521–1611', pp. 74–212, 234, 257–87; H. Nyman, 'Gudstjänstereformen i Finland under 1500-talet', in C.-G. Andrén (ed.), *Reformationen i Norden. Kontinuitet och förnyelse* (Lund, 1973), pp. 172–6; K. Pirinen, 'Bibellhumanism och reformation. En forskningsöversikt', in C.-G. Andrén (ed.), *Reformationen i Norden. Kontinuitet och förnyelse* (Lund, 1973), pp. 56–8; Kouri, 'The Early Reformation in Sweden and Finland, c. 1520–1560', pp. 44–52.

## Mendicants, preaching and popular religion

Among the mendicant orders, the modernisation of the Franciscans in Denmark was completed in the early decades of the fifteenth century. They were popular among the royal family and the common people as both confessors and preachers, but it is difficult to assess their spiritual level; information about a Franciscan collection of books suggests interest in both older Catholic and Reformed Catholic literature. In the houses of the order of the Carmelites – nine such in Denmark – there was great emphasis on studies of philosophy and theology and especially on knowledge of the Bible as a means of training the clergy as preachers among the common people. Paul Helie was the key force in this area. The mendicant friars and especially the Franciscans, however, were from 1526 pronouncedly criticised by the evangelical preachers. They adduced both theological and social arguments against the friars' interpretation of the Gospel and their mendicity, which the evangelicals perceived as an extreme manifestation of Catholic 'justice by deeds' and an insult to the common people. A preserved 'Chronicle of the Franciscans' Expulsion from their Monasteries' relates the citizens' violent assault on and insults to the friars in a number of Danish provincial towns (1528–32), but this partisan source should be treated with care.

To a great extent it was especially the Franciscans, the Dominicans and the Carmelites who acted as preachers during the last decades of Catholicism, but it is unknown how often they preached. Yet, the evangelical reformers' attack on negligence can be supplemented by the Reformed Catholic Paul Helie's accusation of the same sort. The preserved unpublished Latin material and the published Danish sermons, of which Christiern Pedersen's is most important, contain didactic and extremely moralising pleas. Imagery and naive miracle stories are included, but the encouragements to personal faith, devotional life and studious reading of the New Testament unintentionally point to the age of the Reformation. Similar tendencies can be traced in the sermons from Sweden, where nearly all come from the monastery of Vadstena.<sup>9</sup>

9 Lindhardt, 'Reformationstiden 1513–1536', pp. 198–202; Andersen, *Paulus Helie*, 1, pp. 13–30; Scholtens, 'Recent Studies on the Carmelites and the Reformation in Denmark', pp. 38–67; K. R. Jørgensen, 'Om Karmeliterordenen i Danmark', *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger* (1986), pp. 7–42; J. Nybo Rasmussen, 'De danske franciskaneres bøger', *Kirkehistoriske Samlinger* (1977), pp. 51–80; Hørby, 'Humanist Profiles', pp. 36f.; *Cronica seu brevis processus*, Danish translation: *Kroniken om Gråbrødrenes fordrivelse*, H. Heilesen (ed.) (København, 1967); Andersen, *Confessio*,

One should be careful not to equate the official direction of the church with reality in the popular religion. Nevertheless, preserved Danish private prayer books dating from around 1500 contain information of numerous religious fraternities, among others Maria Rosenkrans's fraternity of that period; of testaments, *messestiftelser*, the numerous murals and other kinds of ecclesiastical art, suggesting bustling religious activity among the laity in Denmark-Norway. In Sweden there was also great 'religious energy' (Yngve Brilioth) among people and the limited source material particularly illuminates cloistral piety. It is important to realise, though, that the church-critical reform movement from the beginning of the 1520s in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and from around 1526 in Denmark was a movement among the citizens of provincial towns. Admittedly, the peasant revolts were predominantly economically and socially motivated, but the real enemies were the bishops. In Norway and Sweden-Finland, townsmen and peasants remained Catholic. The peasant revolts in Sweden during the 1520s were clearly anti-evangelical and, unlike in Denmark, no evangelical churches were established in the Swedish provincial towns except Stockholm. This may explain why the penetration of the Lutheran Reformation lasted so long in Sweden-Finland.<sup>10</sup>

### Biblicistic current

Paul Helie's biblical- and church-critical Reformed Catholicism intended to re-establish a true Roman Catholic church, but a group of his students went one step further and became evangelical reformers. This is one of the reasons why the clash between them became so personal and bitter, which is evident from their numerous preserved writings. These evangelical 'preachers', as they characteristically called themselves, were earlier perceived as Lutheran

pp. 228–37, 353–63; Severinsen et al. (eds.), *Skrifter af Paulus Helie*, 2, 65; 3, 146; A. Riising, *Danmarks middelalderlige prædiken* (København, 1969), pp. 32, 60–3, 459–66 (Summary); Christiern Pedersen, *Jærtegn-Postil*, 1–2, in C. J. Brandt and R. T. Fenger (eds.), *Christiern Pedersens Danske Skrifter*, 1–2 (København, 1850–1). Research on Swedish preaching, Å. Andréén, 'Svensk medeltid i kyrkohistoriskt perspektiv', in G. Dahlbäck (ed.), *Svensk Medeltidsforskning idag. En forskningsöversikt* (Uppsala, 1987), p. 99.

- <sup>10</sup> M. Schwarz Lausten, *A Church History of Denmark* (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 71–80; Y. Brilioth, 'Den senare Medeltiden', in H. Holmquist and H. Pleijel (eds.), *Svenska Kyrkans Historia*, 2 (Stockholm, 1941), pp. 778–89; L. Bisgaard, 'Det religiøse liv i senmiddelalderen', in P. Ingesman and J. W. Jensen (eds.), *Danmark i senmiddelalderen* (Aarhus, 1994), pp. 346–52; Kouri, 'The Early Reformation', pp. 44f.; Schwarz Lausten, *Reformationen*, pp. 35, 42–52; Grell, 'The Catholic Church and its Leadership', p. 100.

without hesitation. More recent research, however, has placed them in the evangelical humanist group because on all decisive dogmas they dissented from Luther's theology, either consciously or because they misunderstood him. Only one of them, Hans Tausen, with certainty stayed in Wittenberg. They literally brought the biblical humanism with them, which they had been taught by the Reformed Catholic Paul Helie, when they became evangelical, and this can be ascertained from their attitude towards fasts, images, Holy Communion and the secular arm. It is especially important that they did not relate to Luther's biblical understanding. On the contrary, for them the Bible was the 'law of Christ', which contained all instructions regarding the faith, religious life and the secular society. They were biblicists. In this connection it is noteworthy how closely they associated their evangelical theology with battles against the social injustices of society, especially as it appears in the distinction between the wealthy Catholic bishops, the socially secure friars and the citizens and the poor common people. Olaus Petri in Sweden equally moved from humanist reformed Catholicism towards an evangelical standpoint. In connection with his interpretation of the Bible and other dogmas he could also be called a biblicist, just as he in powerful terms stressed the idea of equality in his repudiation of the Roman Catholic hierarchy's request of authority.<sup>11</sup>

11 Andersen, *Confessio*; Ingebrand, *Olavus Petri*; Schwarz Lausten, *Reformationen*, pp. 70–87.

## Social, political and religious tensions

LARS-OLOF LARSSON

### The collapse of the Kalmar Union

When Christian II was crowned king of Sweden on 4 November 1520, he achieved his goal after many years of endeavour, thus re-establishing the union of the three Nordic kingdoms. His most prominent opponent, the regent (*riksföreståndare*) Sten Sture the Younger, who had sought the Swedish crown for himself, was dead, and Christian II had placed his loyal men in charge of the castles in Sweden. He had agreed that the Swedish council of the realm (*riksråd*) would exercise strong influence on the affairs of the Swedish kingdom. This concession had opened the gates of Stockholm to him. However, his subsequent conduct had demonstrated by the time of his coronation that the agreement was worth less than the parchment it was written upon. The strong royal power which Christian II already exercised in Denmark and Norway, now embraced Sweden as well, and the monarchical union, which Margrethe and Erik of Pomerania had ruled a century earlier, seemed to have been restored.<sup>1</sup>

King Christian's coronation was rounded off with an act of unique violence, not only in Nordic history, and caused great sensation. The gates of Stockholm castle were closed, a large proportion of the guests were arrested and close to one hundred were soon executed after improvised and hasty legal proceedings. This blood-soaked purge continued during the following weeks in various parts of the Swedish kingdom. Those who lost their lives in the bloodbath of Stockholm included two bishops, five lay members of the council of the realm, ten members of the lower nobility and over forty burghers of Stockholm. All the executed had one thing in common – they had all been linked closely to the politics of the deceased Swedish regent, Sten Sture.

<sup>1</sup> For the developments which led to the restoration of the union, see L. Wie Andersen *et al.* (eds.), *Uppsala-overenskomsten 1520. Magtstrukturer og magtkamp i Sverige, januar-oktober 1520* (Odense, 1975).

These purges were intended to remove from the scene all potential future leaders from uprising and to intimidate the remainder of the prominent men in the Swedish kingdom and make them behave like obedient subjects.<sup>2</sup>

It is possible that these repressive measures would have enjoyed long-term success, if King Christian II had not challenged the peasantry with a series of provocative demands. Instead, the king issued menacing decrees imposing additional taxation and insisting on the disarmament of the peasant bands (*bondeuppbåd*), which had played an important role in the conflicts within the union since the 1430s, and there was rebellion in Småland before the end of 1520. This first uprising was suppressed, but new ones flared up in January 1521, and King Christian's bailiffs (*fogdar*) were quickly driven from the province. However, the rebellion raised in Dalarna a little later by Gustav Eriksson (Vasa), a young man from the Sture family, proved to be of greater political importance.<sup>3</sup>

Gustav Eriksson's men gained their first military success over King Christian's forces in April 1521. Gustav Eriksson's progress was facilitated by the division among the magnates who governed Sweden on Christian's behalf. After Hans Brask, the influential bishop of Linköping, and Ture Jönsson (*Tre rosor*), the leader of the higher nobility, joined forces with Gustav Eriksson, the latter was elected regent of Sweden in August 1521. However, all the larger castles of Sweden were still in the hands of Christian and his navy controlled the sea. In order to achieve victory, the Swedish rebels needed warships to cut off supplies to the Swedish castles by sea and also mercenaries, if these castles were to be successfully besieged. Thus they established contacts with the Hanseatic city of Lübeck, which felt its interests strongly threatened by King Christian's wide-ranging commercial plans.<sup>4</sup>

The final military attack on King Christian's remaining positions in Sweden was launched with the assistance of Lübeck. At the same time, Christian II had to fight with growing opposition from the higher nobility in Denmark. His position was further undermined by an acute shortage of money. The nobility of Jylland rose in open rebellion as early as the winter of 1523 with the willing support of King Christian's uncle, Duke Frederik of

2 For a discussion of the extensive scholarly literature concerning the bloodbath of Stockholm, see K. Hørby and M. Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', in A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Danmarks historie*, 2:1 (København, 1980), pp. 250ff.

3 L. Sjödin, *Kalmarunionens slutskede. Gustav Vasas befrielsekrig*, 1–2 (Uppsala, 1943 and 1947), pp. 110ff.; L.-O. Larsson, *Det medeltida Varend. Studier i det småländska gränslandets historia fram till 1500-talets mitt* (Lund, 1964), p. 210; L.-O. Larsson, *Kalmarunionens tid. Från drottning Margareta till Kristian II* (Falun, 1997), pp. 460ff.

4 K. Kumlien, 'Gustav Vasa och kungavalet i Strängnäs 1523', *Historisk Tidskrift* (1963), pp. 1ff.; H. Yrwing, 'Konungavalet i Strängnäs 1523', *Scandia*, 30 (1964), pp. 357ff.

Schleswig and Holstein. In April 1523, Christian II fled from Denmark to the Netherlands in order to seek assistance from his brother-in-law, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. After Frederik had been proclaimed king of Denmark and Norway, he demanded recognition as king of Sweden too, and this accelerated the royal election held at Strängnäs.

The election of Gustav Eriksson as the new king of Sweden on 6 June 1523 represented the final victory of the policy towards the union question which had been espoused by Sten Sture when he was regent. The election was strongly supported by Lübeck, which wanted security for its investment in the Swedish struggle for independence and also a reward for its assistance in the form of favourable trading privileges. Moreover, it was not in Lübeck's interests that the Nordic region should be amalgamated into a united political unit.<sup>5</sup>

The ideal of the union was dead in Sweden after the events which occurred in Stockholm in 1520 and afterwards. It had already been undermined before by numerous conflicts, the growth of princely power and, not least, the erosion of the Scandinavianist teamwork among the nobility. In the 1480s, leading members of the higher nobility had still enjoyed a strong political position and had held large estates in all Scandinavian kingdoms. The situation changed by the second decade of the sixteenth century: the higher nobility was on the retreat politically and its inter-Nordic contacts had weakened. It was now mainly the inhabitants of the frontier districts who upheld cross-border peace and who remained open to the idea of a continuing political union. The problem of the union tended to be presented as a pure national conflict, particularly in central Sweden, even if it clearly retained some of the aspects of an internal power struggle to the very end.

### Social structures

The social structures of the Nordic countries in the early sixteenth century were all marked by characteristic features of a society based on estates (*ståndsamhälle*), but there were striking differences between the three kingdoms. These differences were especially marked in the area of land-ownership and the economic and political strength which it conferred. The Danish nobility was both more numerous and far better endowed with estates than their Swedish and Norwegian counterparts. In Norway, the native higher nobility had virtually died out, but was supplemented by

5 R. Ringmar, *Gustav Eriksson Vasa – kung, kamrer, koncernchef. Återblick på en monark av Guds nåde* (Stockholm, 2002).

Danish noblemen who had obtained a strong position in the kingdom as faithful servants of the crown. In all three kingdoms, the lower nobility had been decimated. The protracted agrarian crisis which followed in the wake of population shortage, had led to the abandonment of numerous farmsteads (*gårdar*) and declining revenues from rents. The absence of new ennoblements, particularly in Sweden, provided an additional explanation for the quantitative regression of the lower nobility.

The Swedish nobility did not exceed 500 adult males in the 1520s. Denmark with her 250 to 300 noble families had considerably more noblemen, but there were extremely few in Norway. The difference between an aristocrat with a seat on the council or descended from a councillor with many estates and who held a fief (*län*) or some other official positions bringing good income, on the one hand, and a member of the lower nobility with fairly few estates was very marked in all three kingdoms. The owners of great estates like Arvid Trolle in Sweden or Erik Nielsen (*Gyldenstjerne*) in Denmark possessed private estates amounting to almost one hundred farmsteads and fortified manors (*sätessgårdar*) which resembled castles. In contrast, the majority of the numerous but poor members of the lower nobility in the Finnish part of the Swedish kingdom only held a handful of estates.

At the end of the Middle Ages, the nobility in Denmark owned about 35 per cent of the farmsteads in the kingdom. The corresponding figures for Sweden and Norway were 17 per cent and a mere 13 per cent respectively. These landholdings were distributed very unevenly in geographical terms, especially in Sweden, where they were strongly concentrated in the provinces south of Lake Mälaren and were virtually non-existent in Norrland and northern Finland.

Table 2.1 *The distribution of land-ownership in the Nordic kingdoms around 1520 as a percentage of the total number of farmsteads*

	Church	Nobility	The crown	Tax-paying peasants
Denmark	35	35	18	12
Norway	48	13	7	32
Sweden	17	17	4	62
Sweden minus the Finnish parts of the kingdom	25	24	6	45
The Finnish parts of the Swedish kingdom	5	3	2	90



The nobility had previously been very active in donating land to churches and monasteries, but there was a marked decline in such donations during the last phase of the Middle Ages. Even so, the proportion of land owned by the church was extremely high: in Denmark and Sweden, it was on the same level as the nobility, and in Norway it embraced almost half of the farmsteads in the country. Most of the bishops and cathedrals were great landowners with Roskilde, Nidaros (Trondheim) and Uppsala in the lead with 1,000 to 2,600 farmsteads each. Vadstena, the most prestigious monastery in the kingdom of Sweden, alone owned 1,000 farmsteads.<sup>6</sup>

The church and particularly the aristocracy of the church, in the form of the bishops, and the prelates attached to the cathedrals, exercised considerable economic power and enjoyed a great political influence, which could be channelled in various directions. The bishops were automatically members of the council, and several of them had been driving forces in formulating the policy of the conciliar aristocracy. The strongly constitutionalist elements in this policy had won great triumphs with the accession charters issued by King Hans in 1483 and Christian II in 1513.

All the Nordic countries still possessed a highly agrarian structure, but the towns had become more common and the burghers were more numerous in Denmark than in the other countries. København was the only Danish town with a population reaching almost 10,000, but there were many towns and their population may have constituted close to 20 per cent of the overall population of the kingdom. In comparison, there were only thirty towns in Sweden with Finland and fewer than ten in Norway. Bergen was a flourishing commercial centre, but it was strongly dominated by Lübeck. Merchants or artisans who were burghers and thus entitled to participate in the administration of the town made up less than half of the urban population.

The overwhelming majority of the people worked on the land – the peasantry (*bönder*) or, to use a more general term, the common people (*allmoge*) – but they were far from being a homogeneous group socially or in terms of wealth. In the case of Sweden and Norway in particular, the high proportion of freeholding peasants, also called tax peasants because they

6 A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Den nordiske Adel i Senmiddelalderen: Struktur, funktioner og internordiske relationer, Rapporter til det nordiske historikermøde i København 1971* (København, 1971); J. Samuelsson, *Aristokrat eller förädlad bonde? Det svenska frälsets ekonomi, politik och sociala förbindelse 1523–1611* (Malmö, 1994), pp. 45ff.; S. Gisse, *Desertion and Land Colonization in the Nordic Countries c. 1300–1600: Comparative Report* (Stockholm, 1981) and the works cited in its bibliography; L.-O. Larsson, 'Jordägfördelningen i Sverige under Gustav Vasas regering', *Scandia*, 51 (1985), pp. 61ff.

paid a regular annual tax to the crown, was a unique feature of the social structure. In Sweden, the tax peasants were a quite dominant element in Norrland and the Finnish parts of the kingdom, as they were in Dalarna and Värmland, and they owned over 60 per cent of the farmsteads in the kingdom.

The proportion of freeholding peasants was lower in Norway (just over 30 per cent) and much lower in Denmark (only 10 per cent). Moreover, most of the freeholding peasants in Denmark were located in the most marginal and least prosperous districts – Halland, northern Skåne, Blekinge and western Jylland. In the case of Denmark, the trend for those peasants who worked on land held by the church, the nobility or the crown was towards greater dependence on the landowner during the closing stages of the Middle Ages. The institution of *vornedskab*, a form of serfdom which existed no later than the 1490s in the bishopric of Roskilde, tied such peasants to the farmstead and its owner.

The political structure reflected the social one and was also based on the concept of the estate (*stånd*). Each estate tended to meet as a distinct entity, and this pattern included both assemblies of the great men of the kingdom and wider meetings for the whole kingdom of all the estates. However, a more federative political structure also survived in which the inhabitants of a certain district jointly addressed matters of local concern at provincial or local assemblies. In such cases, the great men of the locality were generally spokesmen of the district. The survival of such institutions was most pronounced in the geographical periphery. Dalarna and Småland in Sweden and Blekinge in Denmark are clear examples. In Norway, however, local assemblies of this kind were active almost everywhere because of the ongoing disintegration of state power.<sup>7</sup>

### The crown, the council and popular discontent

At the end of the Middle Ages, the role of the aristocracy's most prominent political forum, the council of the realm, had been circumscribed in all Scandinavian countries by the crown – in the case of Sweden, as represented in the second decade of the sixteenth century by the regent, Sten Sture the Younger. The expulsion of Christian II led to an aristocratic renaissance in

<sup>7</sup> See the works cited in nn. 16 and 18 and for Norway, especially S. Imsen, *Norsk bondekommunalisme: fra Magnus Lagabøte till Kristian Kvart*, 1: *Middelalderen* and 2: *Lydkrieketiden* (Trondheim, 1990 and 1995), and the works cited there.

Denmark under Frederik I, and in Sweden too the newly elected king, Gustav I (Vasa), was clearly dependent at first on the council. However, at least in Sweden the potential for mobilising political support from the non-noble estates lurked in the background, and Gustav learned to exploit it. In particular, the burghers of Stockholm, the miners (*bergsmän*) of Dalarna and the peasants north of Lake Mälaren had traditionally been faithful supporters of the Stures at market and provincial meetings and at assemblies representing the whole kingdom. The great political initiative launched by Gustav Vasa in 1527, which had profound consequences for the future, was made before a parliament (*riksdag*) of all four estates was summoned to Västerås. Even so, the decision to impose swingeing taxation on the church and to institute a resumption of some property and revenue alienated to bishops, cathedrals and monasteries in the past was based primarily on the support of the nobility, which obtained an opportunity to regain property donated to the church since 1454 and were given other benefits as well.

The decisions taken at Västerås were not only the first step towards crushing the economic power of the Catholic church. They also involved the immediate political exclusion of the bishops from the council, which now came to be recruited purely from the ranks of the aristocracy. The leading men within the aristocracy were rewarded with large fiefs (*förläningar*) and became, with a few exceptions, a reliable source of support for the growth of central state power as embodied by Gustav Vasa.

The decisions taken at Västerås also led to a radical improvement in the crown's financial base. The crown arbitrarily extended the strictly limited resumption of church property agreed at Västerås so that within fifteen years all church land, the major part of the tithe and the great collections of silver in the kingdom's churches were in the hands of the crown. A small proportion of the church's farmsteads were redeemed by noblemen, but in this case the richest parts went to the king, in his capacity as a private individual. The private estates of the king (*arv och eget*) increased by over 3,000 farmsteads.<sup>8</sup>

In contrast to the situation in Sweden, the aristocracy in Norway was unable to build on the efforts at national self-assertion which had manifested itself when Hans was proclaimed king in 1483, but sporadic efforts were made. In 1501–2, Knut Alvsson made an attempt in this direction in

8 L. Weibull, 'Västerås riksdag 1527', *Scandia*, 10 (1937); I. Hammarström, *Finansförvaltning och varuhandel 1504–1540. Studier i de yngre Sturarnas och Gustav Vasas statshushållning* (Uppsala, 1956), pp. 195ff., 318ff.; U. Söderberg, *Gustav I:s arv och eget i Uppland – en godsmassas framväxt organisation och förvaltning* (Stockholm, 1977).

conjunction with the uprising of the Swedish magnates against King Hans. He failed utterly because of the absence of any support from the peasantry, and Knut Alysson was murdered by the king's men, even though he had been granted safe-conduct. Some years later, Vincent Lunge of Bergenhus and other members of the council tried to take advantage of Christian II's fall to gain a more independent position for Norway, but only with transient success. A further vain attempt of the same kind was made during the Count's War (*Grevefejden*) of 1534–6 under the highly ineffective leadership of Archbishop Olav Engelbrektsson. The formal transformation of Norway into a Danish province in 1537 merely confirmed a process which had been taking place over a long period.<sup>9</sup>

Another feature of this period in Norway was the series of spontaneous and local manifestations of popular discontent which occurred parallel to the crown's long-standing efforts to tighten its grip on the country. They generally took the form of the murder of the local bailiff (*fogde*) and his men, and were especially common from the early 1490s onwards in south-eastern Norway, where the crown's strongest castles were located. However, this continuing peasant unrest, which was heightened by the severe policies practised by the future King Christian II while he was governor (*stathållare*) in Norway, lacked political leadership. It was rather a spontaneous protest against the threat of changes to ancient customary law, which was also called 'St Olav's law'. There is little evidence to support the view of earlier scholars who sought to present these disturbances as some sort of class conflict.<sup>10</sup>

In Denmark, the social unrest of the 1520s and 1530s was far more strongly expressed than in Norway, and it became partially intertwined with the efforts of the exiled Christian II and his supporters to win back his lost thrones. His internal policies had aimed at strengthening both the personal power of the crown at the expense of the council and the Danish burghers from whose ranks he recruited several trusted advisers. Christian's laws, which were brought together in 1521–2 in one code for the countryside and another for the towns, contained a number of provisions which sought

9 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Henrik Krummedige og Norge', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 12:3 (1968–9); E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Frederik I, Tyge Krabbe og Vincens Lunge', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 51 (1972); O. J. Benedictow, 'Fra Rike til Provins 1448–1536', in K. Mykland (ed.), *Norges historie*, 5 (Oslo, 1977).

10 S. Imsen, 'Bondemotstand og statsutvikling i Norge ca. 1300–1700', *Heimen*, 27 (1990), pp. 78ff. In contrast to H. Koht, *Norsk bondereising: furebuing til bonde politikken* (Oslo, 1926), Imsen strongly plays down the social tensions behind the disturbances.

to limit the power of landowners over their tenants while reinforcing the rights of the crown. The same applied in the case of his policy towards the towns. Christian tried to protect their interests by restricting the right of landowners to engage in large-scale trade without involving burghers as middlemen.

The accumulated discontent of the Danish aristocracy against King Christian's policies was unleashed when the nobles of Jylland rose against him at New Year 1523 and elected his uncle, Frederik, the duke of Schleswig and Holstein, as the new king. There was also widespread discontent among the peasantry, not so much against Christian's new laws, which contained aspects favourable to them, as against the constantly recurring demands for additional taxation which he had imposed. Only the burghers in towns like København and Malmö supported Christian's cause to the very last.

The discontent among the peasantry further increased after Frederik I had gained power. He rescinded his predecessor's laws and in his accession charter granted increased privileges to the nobility. They were given the right to receive fines paid by their tenants. They interpreted this as also giving them the right to seize those fines by direct action on their own part if necessary. Landowners were granted more rights over their social inferiors in other respects too, and the growing supply of labour in the countryside made it possible for them to increase the economic demands on their tenants. Moreover, the crown imposed new additional taxes to pay for the mercenaries needed against the risk of Christian II's return.<sup>11</sup>

Disturbances broke out as early as 1524, when taxes were collected in Skåne. The unrest was exploited the following spring by Søren Norby, who was based on Gotland. In the spring of 1525, he landed in Skåne with soldiers, and this unleashed a general rising among the peasants in the eastern and northern parts of the province and also in Blekinge, where some noblemen made common cause with the rebels. This revolt, in other words, acquired a political as well as a social dimension and coincided with the great peasant uprising in Germany. The uprising was put down in two bloody battles, the last of which took place at Ringsjön on 11 May 1525, when a large band of peasants was crushed.<sup>12</sup>

11 For the change of government in Denmark in 1523 and the period that followed, see especially M. Venge, *Christian 2.s fald. Spillet om magten i Danmark januar-februar 1523* (Odense, 1972); M. Venge, *Når vinden følger sig* (Odense, 1977).

12 For the Skånean uprising, see in addition to C. F. Allen, *De tre nordiske Rigers Historie under Hans, Christian II, Frederik I*, 1 (København, 1870), pp. 347ff., and 3 (1872), p. 1; L. J. Larsson, 'Søren Norbys skånska uppror', *Scandia*, 30 (1964), pp. 217ff.

The outbreak of the peasant uprising in northern Skåne and Blekinge also needs to be seen against the background of the strong provincial particularism which these two frontier areas had long manifested. On several occasions during the many conflicts within the Kalmar Union, this particularism had led to the conclusion of separate arrangements with the Swedish population on the other side of the border at times of war between Sweden and Denmark. These so-called 'border peaces' were in effect declarations of neutrality designed to safeguard the interests of the region, which rarely coincided with the interests of the leaders of the two kingdoms at the national level. In its most extreme form, these agreements involved a complete refusal to pay taxes and the passing of warnings about attacks being planned.

In the final phase of the uprising of 1525, a new border peace was concluded between Blekinge and the Swedish district of Varend. Varend promised to help the inhabitants of Blekinge if, as expected, the Danish crown attempted to exact retribution on them. The tradition of border peaces was maintained both during future uprisings and during all the Danish–Swedish wars which broke out until the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>13</sup> These agreements are not only unique phenomena in a broader European perspective. They emphatically disprove the notion that there was widespread 'national hatred' between Swedes and Danes because of the wars associated with the Kalmar Union.

The social tensions in Denmark came to the surface far more openly in the civil war which began in 1534 after King Frederik I's death the previous year. Lübeck engaged itself actively in the power struggle and backed the deposed Christian II against the claims to the throne of the late king's son (Christian III), whom the nobility of Jylland had elected to the throne. The burghers in the large towns of eastern Denmark supported Christian II, and in September one of his old supporters, the naval commander Skipper-Clement, assumed command of a sizeable peasant uprising which had broken out in northern Jylland and which spread as far as south of Randers. Clement was the son of a freeholding peasant in Jylland. The troops of the nobility suffered initial military setbacks, but the revolt was put down after powerful intervention by Christian III's mercenaries, who were commanded by Johan Rantzau, who had crushed the uprising in Skåne during the previous decade.

<sup>13</sup> F. Lindberg, 'Bondefreder under svensk medeltid', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 48 (1928), pp. 12ff.; Larsson, *Det medeltida Varend*, pp. 199ff.; Larsson, *Kalmarunionens tid*, pp. 439ff.

The uprising in Jylland had been preceded by earlier disturbances among the peasantry as recently as 1531 and took place in the same area as the great peasant revolt in the 1440s. There are several reasons to believe that the background for the uprising of 1534 is to be found in growing social antagonism towards the nobility and in particular against its attempts to gain control over the lucrative trade with oxen destined for the slaughterhouse. The tensions between peasants and landowners were also clearly expressed in other parts of Denmark during the *Grevens Fejde*.<sup>14</sup>

Sweden was also shaken by repeated disturbances in which peasants played a prominent role, but in Sweden – as in the case of Norway – the discontent had a more strongly political tone. In addition to the occasions when groups of peasants had sided with one faction or another in the conflicts which troubled the union after 1463, there had also been a series of peasant uprisings, some bloody, since the 1480s, directed against the regent's bailiffs and fief holders, especially in Västergötland and Småland.<sup>15</sup>

There was recurring unrest among the peasants and miners of Dalarna after Gustav Vasa had become king. The background for these disturbances varied, but a common thread is provided by the self-confident and independent-minded attitude which marked the actions of the Dalecarlians (Dalsmen) during the period of the Kalmar Union. The two first uprisings in Dalarna were led by old supporters of the Stures and were directed against new additional taxes which had been imposed. The first of them, which occurred in 1524–5, received little support, but the second seemed more threatening since its unifying figure was said to be the son of the former regent, Sten Sture the Younger. This uprising is sometimes named after him and called the *Daljunkern's* rebellion. At all events, this uprising was used as an excuse to summon the *riksdag* at Västerås in 1527 and to push through the measures which launched the first steps towards reducing the power of the church in Sweden.

The second rebellion in Dalarna was also crushed without difficulty and without much fighting. A third rebellion in this province was a more serious affair. It broke out in 1531 in response to a new additional tax imposed by the

<sup>14</sup> The fundamental work on the Count's War is still C. Paludan-Müller, *Grevens Fejde. Skildret efter trykte og utrykte kilder af C. Paludan-Müller* (København, 1853–4). For the Clement uprising, see especially L. Tvede-Jensen, *Jylland i oprør. Clementsfejden 1534* (Århus, 1985); L. Tvede-Jensen, 'Clementsfejden. Det sidste bondeoprør i Danmark', in A. Bøgh, J. Würtz Sørensen and L. Tvede-Jensen (eds.), *Til kamp for friheden. Sociale oprør i Nordisk middelalder* (Ålborg, 1988), pp. 232ff.

<sup>15</sup> Larsson, *Kalmarunionens tid*, pp. 390ff.

king – this time on church bells, a measure which provoked deep discontent. The uprising was led by the old miner aristocracy, which had previously supported the king, and gained support throughout the whole of Dalarna. It emphasised far more strongly than the two previous rebellions the old, independent attitude of the province towards a source of authority which the inhabitants regarded as oppressive.

King Gustav Vasa saw the rebellion as particularly dangerous because it soon came to coincide with the exiled Christian II's landing in Norway in an attempt to regain his lost throne. There is no evidence that there was any co-ordination between Christian and the Dalecarlian rebels, who remained passive during the campaign against Christian and were promised full amnesty. However, once the threat from the exiled pretender had been removed, Gustav Vasa broke his promises and had the leading men behind the uprising executed. This was the only bloodshed during the so-called church bells rebellion, but the king's actions decisively put an end to the provincial particularism of Dalarna. More than 200 years would pass before the inhabitants of Dalarna once again took up arms against the representatives of central authority, and when they did, it was on entirely different premises.<sup>16</sup>

Before the church bells rebellion in Dalarna, Gustav Vasa had overcome an uprising in another part of the kingdom. This time, the rebellion had the character of a last attempt by the old conciliar aristocracy to resist the growth of princely power and the gradual dissemination of Lutheran ideas. This uprising was led by the bishop of Västergötland and some aristocrats in the same province, but the uprising broke out in Småland and fighting was restricted to this region. In a proclamation issued by the rebels, Gustav Vasa was described as 'no better than the tyrannical King Christian' and was attacked in particular for destroying the church. The king prevented the uprising from spreading by using skilful negotiating tactics and the leading figures behind it were soon forced to flee. Two were seized and executed.<sup>17</sup>

By far the greatest rebellion of Gustav Vasa's reign broke out in southern Småland in June 1542. It was also the one which presented the greatest threat to growing royal power. The peasants of this region bordering Denmark had developed a far-reaching measure of separatism during the various conflicts

16 Lindberg, 'Bondefreder under svensk medeltid'; S. Samuelsson, 'Till diskussionen om Daljunkern', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 68 (1948); K.-I. Hildeman, 'Klockupproret', *Historisk tidskrift*, 66 (Stockholm, 1946).

17 L.-A. Norborg, 'Västgötaherrarnas uppror', *Scandia*, 27 (1961), pp. 235ff.; S. Kjöllnerström, 'Västgötaherrarnas uppror', *Scandia*, 29 (1963), pp. 1ff.



of the union period. The border peaces concluded with their neighbours in Blekinge were a typical manifestation of their attitude. Another was a consistent refusal to accept additional taxes and to provide soldiers for the crown's service outside the confines of their region except by their own consent. They had continued to adopt the same rugged approach to the demands of central authority after Gustav Vasa had been elected king. There had been an extensive uprising in eastern Småland during the winter of 1536 in reaction to the heavy additional taxes imposed in connection with Sweden's involvement in the Count's War. The rebellion had been severely punished, but continuing peasant unrest manifested itself the following year in both Småland and Östergötland.

The anger of the peasantry was deepened by the energetic efforts of central authority to increase its revenue during the so-called German period, 1538–42. The great uprising of 1542 was a violent reaction to a series of measures which had trebled the annual tax burden and imposed greater state control on the collection of tithes. The strict supervision of new prohibitions on the felling of oak and beech and the hunting of game had created discontent, and so had the confiscation of church silver too. The new settlers and smallholders in the forest districts were hardest hit by these measures. The leading figure behind the uprising, Nils Dacke, was himself a settler on previously uncultivated land and had played a prominent role in the 1536 rebellion.

The great uprising also needs to be seen against the background of population growth and the extensive clearing of new land for cultivation and the claims of the crown, on the basis of Roman law, to ownership of all common land. In general, the crown's new demands on its subjects were often derived from the provisions of Roman law, which was in clear conflict on a number of stipulations with 'old law and custom'. Moreover, noble landowners were emulating the crown and their Danish counterparts by making new economic demands on their tenants. The discontent of the peasants was thus directed equally towards the crown and towards noblemen – in the case of the latter both as private individuals and as servants of the crown.

When the uprising broke out and rapidly spread through Småland, Öland and large parts of Östergötland, the rebels explicitly rallied to the cause of 'old law and custom' and demanded a return to how things 'had formerly been in olden days'. In many respects, both the background and the goals of the rebellion were identical to those of the great German peasant uprising of 1525, but there was one striking difference. While the German rebels

were inspired by the preaching of the radical Reformation, their Swedish counterparts sought to defend their Catholic heritage and castigated the new liturgy with statements like 'it is now as pleasing in a deserted forest as in a church' or 'a babe in arms will soon be able to whistle up a mass from a dung cart'. The uprising, which is usually named after Nils Dacke, was entirely sustained by peasants and the parish priests who were closely allied to them in social terms.

Gustav Vasa sent several strong bodies of troops against the focal point of the rebellion, but he was unable to crush the uprising, which gradually spread northwards to Östergötland. In November, the king was obliged to enter into a one-year truce which gave Nils Dacke a free hand in those parts of the country which were in rebellion, an area inhabited by close to 100,000 people. However, it was intended that the truce was to be followed by negotiations concerning all the issues which lay behind the uprising. Disagreement soon emerged within the ranks of the rebels, many of whom mistrusted the king's willingness to respect the terms of the truce.

The suspicious-minded were right: the king intended to break the truce as soon as he had recruited new German mercenaries. He had done so by January 1543, and his army of 5,000 men was able, after tough fighting in Östergötland, to press forward against stubborn resistance from peasant bands towards the core area of the rebellion. Gustav Vasa was assisted by Danish forces moving up from the south as a result of an alliance concluded with King Christian III at Brömsebro in 1541. A rebellion had broken out at the same time as the Dacke uprising in the neighbouring Danish province of Blekinge. The two groups of rebels had entered into a new border peace, but the uprising in Blekinge was soon pacified by rapid concessions by the Danish crown.

An unsuccessful attack on the king's army at Easter, when Nils Dacke himself was badly wounded, spelt the end of the uprising. Nonetheless, even after Dacke had been killed, unrest continued for a couple of years. The reprisals were severe, especially to those rebels who had not dared to accept the offered royal amnesty.

The Dacke uprising of 1542–3 was the greatest genuine peasant rebellion in Nordic history, and in many respects it was unique in early sixteenth-century Europe too. Most rebellions were easily crushed after a few weeks by the mercenary armies of the crown, but the peasants involved in the Dacke uprising were able to stand up to Gustav Vasa's mercenaries for almost a year and to take over the local administration. Nils Dacke was the first man to emerge from the great mass of common people and gain for himself an

enduring name in Swedish history. The uprising had both immediate and long-term effects on the central government of the Swedish kingdom.<sup>18</sup>

A number of common features are apparent in the popular uprisings which occurred in the Nordic countries in the early sixteenth century. First of all, as on the Continent, they were a reaction against the growth of monarchical power and the improved position enjoyed by noble landowners as a result of population growth and the increased supply of labour. Secondly, the greatest inclination towards rebellion was to be found among the peasantry in geographically peripheral provinces who felt their relative prosperity and independence threatened.<sup>19</sup>

18 Larsson, 'Sören Norbys skånska uppror', pp. 222ff.; Larsson, *Dackeland*.

19 E. Österberg, 'Agrar-ekonomisk utveckling, ägostrukturer och sociala oroligheter: de nordiska länderna ca: 1350–1600', *Scandia*, 45 (1979), pp. 171ff. Cf. also Imsen, 'Bondemotstand og statsutvikling i Norge', who underestimates the strength and extent of the peasant uprisings in Denmark and Sweden.

## The Reformation in Denmark, Norway and Iceland

OLE PETER GRELL

At first sight the Reformation in the kingdom of Denmark and Norway, including Iceland, appears to have been a classic example of a princely reformation. This somewhat misconstrued view has undoubtedly been enhanced by the political events which surrounded the official introduction of Protestantism in these lands. It tends, however, to overlook the fact that in Denmark a popular evangelical movement had taken root in the major towns from the mid 1520s, and thus created a solid platform for the introduction of a Lutheran, territorial church in 1536.

### Denmark

The Reformation king, Christian III, had only been able to succeed his father, Frederik I, who had died in 1533, after fighting a civil war, *Grevens Fejde*, which lasted three years. His victory, following the surrender of København in July 1536, presented the young king with a number of religious and political opportunities which had not been open to his father. First, it provided him with a context for unifying the hitherto separate kingdoms of Norway and Denmark. This in effect served to subordinate Norway further to rule from København and to strengthen royal control over this remote country, including the island of Iceland. Secondly, it made Christian III far less dependant on the nobility and the council (*rigsrådet*), who in 1536 were in no position to impose the often restrictive conditions it had traditionally been able to insert in the coronation charters which newly elected kings had to sign.

Thirdly, the imprisonment in Denmark in 1532 of the exiled king, Christian II, after his disastrous military adventure in Norway, and the failure of his son-in-law, the German Duke Frederik of the Palatinate, to intervene on his behalf in the civil war in 1535, had effectively removed the dynastic external threat to Christian III's rule, even if Christian II's daughters did not officially relinquish their claim to the Scandinavian kingdoms until the Peace of Speyer

in 1544. Fourthly, Christian III's defeat of the Catholic opposition in Denmark and Norway, made it possible for him to intervene decisively against the Catholic church, something which his father, Frederik I, may well have intended to do during the parliament of 1530, but postponed due to more immediate political concerns.

Thus, with the support of his evangelical advisors, the majority of whom originated from his personal power base in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, Christian proceeded to imprison the Catholic bishops in Denmark. They were accused of having caused the civil war, and even if Christian III's advisors had briefly contemplated the imprisonment of all the members of the Danish council who had been instrumental in the decisions of the parliament which had postponed the election of a new king in 1533, the bishops alone were held responsible. Simultaneously, all episcopal castles and estates were sequestered by the crown. The lay Catholic members, however, were neutralised when they were forced to sign letters of subjection in which they accepted that in future bishops should be excluded from the council and all political influence, while also promising not to hinder the preaching of 'the pure word of God'.

When parliament met in København in October the bishops were publicly accused of having been responsible for the previous years' disasters. A comprehensive document had been drawn up by the king, providing detailed accusations against each of them. That this initiative was as much driven by politics as religion can be seen from the fact that the two bishops, the elected bishop of Roskilde, Joachim Rønnow, and the bishop of Børglum, Stygge Krumpen, who were the prime targets for Christian III's anger, had never been particularly noteworthy for the strength and purity of their Catholic faith. Neither appears to have been particularly worried about the religious/theological implications of the evangelical movement prior to 1536, as long as they could retain their traditional episcopal powers and jurisdiction. It was their shared ambition to preserve a national, episcopal church, independent of the crown, which had caused them to play a prominent part in the decisions of the parliament of 1533 which had postponed the election of a successor to Frederik I. Accordingly, it was essential for Christian III who sought to create a Lutheran church under princely control to portray them and their policies as responsible for the kingdom's recent predicaments.<sup>1</sup>

1 For the Catholic bishops, see O. P. Grell, 'The Catholic Church and its Leadership', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation from Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 70–113. For the Reformation in

The parliament which met in København in the autumn of 1536 obliged Christian III and removed the Catholic bishops from office, deciding to replace them with proper 'Christian bishops and superintendents' and promising to introduce an evangelical church order. This was achieved the following year when the Lutheran Church Ordinance, produced under Johannes Bugenhagen's supervision, received royal confirmation and Bugenhagen ordained the first seven Lutheran superintendents.

This princely reformation, however, was not simply a reformation from above. It depended on a popular and urban magisterial base on which to engraft itself.<sup>2</sup> Evangelical ideas were, after all, widely disseminated within the urban areas in Denmark from the middle of the 1520s, especially in the mercantile centres along the Sound, such as Malmö and København. Here the resident German merchant population played an important part in spreading the new religious ideas often making sure that these places were visited by itinerant evangelical preachers and that the relevant evangelical literature was made available by their trading partners in Germany.

Initially, the evangelical movement made its greatest advance in Jylland, spilling over from the duchies where Duke Christian (the later King Christian III) was actively encouraging Protestantism. According to the Carmelite friar and Christian humanist, Paulus Helie, 'the poison of Lutheranism' was sneaking through the whole of Jylland in 1526. Its leading proponent was, according to Helie, Hans Tausen, the 'most obstinate of all heretics'. He was, like his antagonist, a Catholic cleric but, unlike him, not a Carmelite but a member of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. Educated at the universities of Rostock, Louvain and Wittenberg where he had studied under Luther in 1523–4, Tausen's Lutheran leanings had caused the prior of his Antvorskov monastery in Sjælland to send him into temporary exile at Viborg in Jylland. Here his continued evangelical preaching eventually caused Tausen to be expelled from the order in 1526. With the support of the leading burghers of the town Tausen, however, was able to continue his preaching in private residences, while the magistracy of Viborg managed to obtain a royal letter of protection for their favourite evangelical preacher in October 1526. Having been granted royal protection and encouraged by the magistracy

Denmark, Norway and Iceland see N. K. Andersen, 'The Reformation in Scandinavia and the Baltic', in G. R. Elton (ed.), *The Reformation*, The New Cambridge Modern History, 2 (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 144–56.

2 See O. P. Grell, 'From Popular, Evangelical Movement to Lutheran Reformation in Denmark: A Case of Two Reformations', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 102 (2011), pp. 33–58.

Hans Tausen was able to adopt a more daring approach. He began preaching regularly in one of the town's parish churches, assisted by another Wittenberg student, Jørgen Jensen Sadolin, eventually attracting such a multitude that he was forced to preach in the churchyard in order to accommodate his growing congregation. That Viborg, the administrative and mercantile centre of Jylland, initially became the focus for the evangelical movement cannot be detached from the fact that the local bishop, Jørgen Friis, was widely scorned and considered the politically and morally weakest of the Danish Catholic bishops in the Reformation era.

The predicaments of the Catholic church in Denmark were further emphasised by the decisions of the two parliaments which met in 1526 and 1527. In 1526 the traditional links with Rome and the universal church were broken. All fees which had hitherto been paid to the *curia* should from then on fall to the crown. While Christian III's father, Frederik I, continued to pursue a policy of guarded support for individual, evangelical preachers through letters of protection, he quietly undermined the Catholic bishops in their attempt to reassert their control over the church. In 1527, during parliament, he informed the episcopal college and their lay aristocratic supporters that 'the Holy Christian Faith is free' and that he only governed 'life and property, but not the soul'. The Catholic ecclesiastical aristocracy which had been instrumental in his election as king in place of Christian II in 1523 could not have been given a clearer message: Frederik I had absolutely no intention of honouring the paragraphs in his coronation charter in which he had promised to fight Lutheranism. Rather all his actions indicate that he intended to support the growing evangelical movement, as far as it was politically feasible for him to do so.<sup>3</sup>

By 1527 the centre for the evangelical movement had switched away from Viborg to the commercially and economically far more important cities of Malmö and København. Here, as in the towns of Jylland, anticlericalism was rife. In Malmö in particular, the evangelical movement made considerable progress from 1527, not least thanks to the often forceful support of the city's magistracy and its leading burgomaster, Jørgen Kock. The leadership of the city of Malmö enjoyed the advantage of not being hampered in their activities by any resident bishop or cathedral chapter. Furthermore, the archbishopric of Lund, which was around a day's journey away from Malmö, had remained in disarray since 1519. From 1523 it had been occupied by an

3 M. Schwarz Lausten, 'The Early Reformation in Denmark and Norway 1520–1559', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 12–41.

elected, but papally unconfirmed canon, Aage Sparre, whose occupancy of the see had caused a split within the Catholic leadership of the kingdom.

Thus, in 1527 Jørgen Kock had no qualms in securing the services of the evangelical preacher, Claus Mortensen, who had just been prevented from continuing his preaching in København by the bishop of Roskilde (Sjælland), Lauge Urne. Mortensen was to be the first in a series of evangelical ministers recruited by the magistracy of Malmö from København, where the evangelical movement remained severely constrained by Bishop Lauge Urne and the collegiate chapter of Our Lady's Church until Urne's death in 1529. The bishop of Roskilde's departure heralded a dramatic escalation of evangelical activity in København. Frederik I was keenly aware of the possibilities and it was with his encouragement that Hans Tausen made the move from Viborg in 1529. By May 1530 København had at least four evangelical preachers, while the magistracy had taken over most of the monasteries and ecclesiastical property within the city walls. A split caused by differences within the magistracy over the religious and political aims of the evangelical movement, however, seriously weakened those who worked for the Reformation in København. A radical faction led by the city's most prominent burgomaster, Ambrosius Bogbinder, who sought a return of the deposed king, Christian II and favoured a faster and more radical reformation, tried to force the issue by actively instigating disturbances and iconoclasm. Consequently, Frederik I found it necessary to purge the magistracy of potentially disloyal radicals and København remained a partly Protestant, partly Catholic city, until its rebellion in June 1534 and the beginning of the civil war, *Grevens Fejde*.

In Malmö, however, the magistracy was united in the introduction of a carefully controlled and to a large extent magisterially inspired reformation, mainly directed by the forceful personality of Jørgen Kock. Under threat of a heresy trial in the autumn of 1528, involving the civic leadership, the magistracy made a tactical retreat, sending its two evangelical preachers, Claus Mortensen and Hans Olufsen Spandemager, into internal exile in the town of Haderslev, which had recently been fully reformed under the aegis of Frederik I's son, Duke Christian.

Undeterred, the magistracy proceeded to recruit new preachers and the former priest-turned-printer, Oluf Ulriksson, who had hitherto served Hans Brask, the Catholic bishop of Linköping in Sweden. His printworks were now put at the disposal of the evangelical theologians in Malmö and turned out a number of important Protestant pamphlets during the early 1530s. Among these evangelical authors were some of the leading Danish reformers such as Frants Vormordsen and Peder Laurentsen. Both were Carmelite



converts and former colleagues and pupils of the Erasmian, Paul Helie, at the Carmelite College at the University of København. Vormordsen arrived in Malmö during the first months of 1529. Once again an invitation appears to have been issued by the magistracy to a København activist who had found himself in trouble. Considering the negative response Vormordsen's sermons had already elicited from the canons in København it is surprising that the elected archbishop of Lund, Aage Sparre, was prepared to authorise him to preach in Malmö. Sparre may, of course, naively have hoped to contain the evangelical movement in the city by accepting a candidate whom he considered to be a Catholic humanist, but later events were to demonstrate how misguided he had been. As it turned out, the bishop had, in fact, assisted Malmö in acquiring a far more gifted and dynamic evangelical preacher than the previous two he had just forced into exile. Together with Peder Laurentsen, Vormordsen helped to accelerate the reformation of Malmö, while the eloquent Laurentsen became the leading apologist of the reformation which had been completed in the city by 1530.<sup>4</sup>

Both these reformers were included in the gathering of Protestant preachers who, on Frederik I's invitation, turned up in København in July 1530 and who used the occasion to produce a Protestant confession, *Confessio Hafniensis*. We can safely assume that the king had intended to introduce a full reformation of his realm during the parliament which met in København in 1530. The planned format appears to have been similar to that already successfully used by a number of German princes. A public disputation between the reformers and the supporters of the Old Church would take place after which the king would give his verdict in favour of the evangelical party and 'the Gospel'. These plans, however, had to be abandoned owing to the threat of an impending invasion by Christian II. In this situation Frederik I did not dare to intervene decisively on the side of the evangelicals. Taking on the still powerful Catholic bishops and their lay supporters had by then become a far too risky political game. Thus it fell to his son and heir Christian III to conclude the reformation his father had encouraged more or less openly since the mid 1520s.

Christian III inherited a popular evangelical foundation on which to erect his princely reformation in Denmark, but it quickly became evident that the

4 For the Reformation of Malmö, O. P. Grell, 'The City of Malmö and the Danish Reformation', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 79 (1988). For København, see O. P. Grell, 'The Emergence of Two Cities: The Reformation in Malmö and Copenhagen', in L. Grane and K. Hørby (eds.), *The Danish Reformation against its International Background* (Göttingen, 1990), pp. 129–45.

king had no intention of relying solely on those evangelical leaders who had promoted Protestantism in the previous decade. Thus the king showed little or no inclination to follow the suggestions of the evangelical preachers, presented in their Request of 1536 (*Andragendet*) which was later included in some of the early drafts for the Church Order of 1537. Here the preachers had suggested not only that Christian III appoint a new Protestant superintendent in each diocese, but also that an arch-superintendent be elected as the ecclesiastical head of the new Protestant church. The implicit suggestion that the new Protestant church should be semi-independent of the crown did not appeal to Christian III and was not included in the Church Order of 1537.<sup>5</sup> That the king and the most prominent evangelical leaders did not see eye to eye on all the religious and ecclesiastical issues may well be the reason why only one of them, Frants Vormorsen, was among the first superintendents appointed.

From the outset Christian III had sought Luther's approval of the religious and ecclesiastical changes he wanted to introduce in Denmark. Luther accepted the imprisonment of the Catholic bishops as necessary, since, as he pointed out to Christian III, they would not cease persecuting the Gospel nor interfering with lay government. Christian informed Luther that he would not introduce any changes in religion before either Luther, Melancthon or Bugenhagen had arrived to give their consent. When Johannes Bugenhagen arrived in Denmark Christian III asked him to recommend a Danish student in Wittenberg who could fill a leading position within the new Lutheran church. Bugenhagen suggested Peder Palladius who had studied in Wittenberg since 1531 and acquired his MA in 1533. The king followed Bugenhagen's advice, but wanted Palladius to receive a doctorate in theology from Wittenberg before his appointment to the highly important diocese of Roskilde (Sjælland) and the leading professorship in theology at the newly reopened University of København. Thus Christian III paid the 100 guilders necessary for Palladius's doctoral disputation which took place in Wittenberg on 1 June 1537. Luther presided over the occasion and among the audience were both Bugenhagen and Melancthon adding further prestige to an occasion which was intended to give Palladius enough Lutheran clout to discourage any ambition among the already established evangelical leadership in Denmark to try to challenge the theological credentials of this royal protégé.

5 M. Schwarz Lausten, *Reformationen i Danmark*, 2nd edn (København, 2002), pp. 98–122.

Thus, there was a clear royal imprint on the Lutheran Church Order introduced in 1537 and the Protestant superintendents appointed to administer it. But compared to the Herculean task of implementing this new order in the country in general this had been a relatively simple task. The government could hardly expect all Catholic institutions and practices to disappear overnight. Cathedral chapters, monasteries and nunneries, excluding those which had belonged to the mendicant orders, continued to exist for several decades. As opposed to the recently dismissed Catholic bishops who seem to have settled down quite happily as major landowners and even in some cases converted to Lutheranism, these institutions were to constitute the last bastions of the old faith. During the 1540s and 1550s the canons in the two most prestigious chapters of Roskilde and Lund fought a rearguard action against the Reformation. The government had to some extent realised the potential for obstruction and opposition within these chapters and taken the precautionary measure of attaching two of the leading reformers, Hans Tausen and Peder Laurentsen, as lecturers to these institutions, thus turning them into what has been termed 'one-man divinity schools'. However, the government still found it necessary to intervene directly during the 1540s when it forced recalcitrant canons to sign the Lutheran confession. Apart from the obstinacy of a handful of canons, most of the Catholic clergy who were incorporated into the new Lutheran church, appear to have accepted the new order without complaints or obstruction. Only a few examples can be found of rural ministers who were defrocked for false teaching and continued use of Catholic ceremonies.

Rather than tackling a Catholic clerical residue it was far more crucial to disseminate the new teachings among the laity, especially in the countryside. A major educational effort was needed to promote Lutheranism – something which had been publicly recognised by the evangelical preachers from as early as 1530. As was the case in most of the Protestant territorial churches in Germany the new Lutheran church in Denmark concentrated most of its efforts on education and social provisions. The University of København, which had been closed in 1531 to hinder the spread of Protestantism, was reopened in 1537, remodelled on the University of Wittenberg, which had recently been reformed by Melancthon. Lack of finances combined with the university's difficulties in attracting students, however, guaranteed that it remained a backwater until Christian III's son and successor, Frederik II, provided it with adequate funds in the 1570s.

The government fared better with regard to secondary schooling. At the time of Christian III's death in 1559 nearly all the major towns in the kingdom

had been provided with Latin schools. The administration, however, showed less interest in providing elementary schooling for the majority of the population. This is somewhat surprising considering that the religious instruction offered in the schools supplemented by that provided by the local ministers and the parish clerks in the rural areas was seen as essential in bringing the Reformation to the people. Peder Palladius hoped that the children who benefited from this process would bring the evangelical message home to their parents and older members of their families – ‘the egg had to jump up and teach the hen’ as he put it. Even if Christian III and his chancellor, Johan Friis, personally took a considerable interest in education – supporting Danish students in Wittenberg and providing capital for the Latin schools which were established in the market towns – the provisions proved inadequate. Due to the economic restraints imposed by the ravages of the recent civil war, most of the educational reforms were not implemented until the reign of Frederik II (1559–88).<sup>6</sup>

One of the main tasks of the new ecclesiastical administration was to try to monitor the clergy, as well as the laity’s adherence to the Lutheran faith. The superintendents constantly inspected the parishes in their dioceses and examined candidates for the ministry. Their visitations were supplemented on the local level by the rural deans, who, together with the royal officials, inspected the local clergy, schools and social institutions, not to mention the laity in the parishes. A constant synodal activity, from national, via provincial down to local synods, sought to achieve a measure of uniformity. As can be seen from the detailed provisions laid down for the visitations of Sjælland by Peder Palladius the importance of a gradual and evolutionary implementation of the Reformation through teaching and catechising was paramount to the new Lutheran church.

The acts of the diocesan synods of Sjælland between 1554 and 1569 reveal a preoccupation with the need to ensure that the local churches and ministers had the necessary books, including the Bible and postils by Luther, Melancthon and Brenz, the catechisms of Brenz and Palladius, not to mention a copy of the Church Order of 1537. Much was obviously lacking during the first decades after the Reformation. Unqualified and unauthorised ministers were seen as a constant threat by the authorities, while incumbents repeatedly had to be admonished to preach and not read their sermons from printed books,

<sup>6</sup> L. Grane, ‘Teaching the People: The Education of the Clergy and the Instruction of the People in the Danish Reformation Church’, in L. Grane and K. Hørby (eds.), *The Danish Reformation against its International Background* (Göttingen, 1990), pp. 164–84.

and to fulfil their obligation to catechise their flock every Sunday. But admonitions were not restricted to the clergy. The peasantry were reminded that they were obliged to send their children to school and that continued refusal to comply would be punished.

Likewise, many Catholic traditions refused to die within a Lutheran church which permitted most high altars, side altars, images of saints and frescos to remain in place. Many rural ministers who had often started their careers as Catholic priests, continued to elevate the communion wine and bread while the congregation knelt according to the Catholic custom. Furthermore, the same ministers would, more often than not, follow the Catholic tradition of consuming all the remaining communion wine and bread, showing the empty chalice and dish to their congregation. If the clergy found it difficult to adjust fully to the new order, the laity in the rural areas did not find it any easier. As before the Reformation, the popular demand for benedictions of food and seed corn around Easter remained strong, while pilgrimages to popular shrines often continued unabated. Thus in Sjælland the shrines in Egede dedicated to the Trinity, and the 'Holy Blood' in Bistrup, continued to attract crowds during the 1560s. Large sums were donated to these shrines, and the strong local opposition to their closure was as much economically as religiously founded, since the donations were by then divided between the local churches, the ministers and the poor.

However the extended period of peace which reigned in Denmark for a generation following the Reformation served the new Lutheran church well and offered it beneficial circumstances which most of its sister-churches in territorial Germany would have envied it. In spite of a lack of detailed studies showing how the Lutheran church fared locally in the second half of the sixteenth century, it is fair to assume that the Danish Reformation proved a lasting success within two generations of its formal introduction. That, of course, did not mean that society became fully Protestantised, but only that the spiritual authority of the new Lutheran church was unchallenged, if not generally accepted.<sup>7</sup>

When Christian III died in 1559 an era came to an end. By then most of the first generation of reformers and Lutheran theologians who had worked for the Reformation in Denmark had either died or were to pass away within the next couple of years. His son and successor, Frederik II, was solidly Lutheran, but far less concerned with theological issues and accordingly less directly

7 O. P. Grell, 'Scandinavia', in B. Scribner *et al.* (eds.), *The Reformation in National Context* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 111–31.

involved in the affairs of the Lutheran church than his father had been. Frederik II's reign was, however, characterised by the king's deep fear of religious unrest or schism. This was a concern which more than anything else determined his church policy. Theological debate about the religious truths was discouraged, while differences between Lutheran and Melancthonian theology were ignored and the occasional reference to the Augsburg Confession was considered sufficient. In the long run, however, it proved impossible to pretend that all was well, not least because the country could not remain isolated from the effects of the growing confessionalisation and doctrinal strife in Germany.

It all came to a head around the figure of Niels Hemmingsen (1513–1600), Peder Palladius's successor as the country's leading theologian. Like his predecessor Hemmingsen had studied in Wittenberg, but to an even greater extent than Palladius he was influenced by the theology of Philip Melancthon. Hemmingsen who had been a professorial colleague of Palladius since 1553 became the leading figure within the Danish church from Palladius's death in 1560 until his suspension from his chair nineteen years later. During this period he established himself as a leading Lutheran theologian not only in Scandinavia, but in Europe. His many doctrinal and pastoral works were widely disseminated in Latin, and were often translated into many vernacular languages shortly after their appearance. Considering Hemmingsen's international reputation and with his Calvinistic views of the Eucharist, it is hardly surprising that he became a target for German Gnesio-Lutherans, especially after he had published his *Syntagma institutionum christianarum* in 1574. It was the intervention of Frederik II's brother-in-law, Elector August of Saxony in 1574 against those professors in Wittenberg whom he considered Crypto-Calvinists which started the events which led to Hemmingsen's fall five years later. These Wittenberg professors chose to defend themselves by pointing to the famous Danish, 'Lutheran' theologian, Niels Hemmingsen, who shared their views. This caused the elector to send Frederik II a copy of Hemmingsen's *Syntagma*, advising him to intervene against this dangerous sacramentarian and Calvinist. In spite of these and further complaints about him from Saxony in 1576 Hemmingsen appeared to have ridden the storm after acknowledging his mistake and recanting in public. However, the publication of a fresh edition of *Syntagma* in 1578, this time in Calvinist Geneva and admittedly without Hemmingsen's knowledge, caused a further wave of complaints, this time supplemented by letters of protest from Frederik II's mother-in-law, Duchess Anna of Mecklenburg. It proved the final straw and Hemmingsen was suspended from his professorship

in June 1579. Since his fall had been brought about by foreign policy considerations he was able to retire to the cathedral town of Roskilde retaining the esteem of colleagues at home and abroad and occasionally consulted by the government. Hemmingsen and his views of the Eucharist might have proved a temporary embarrassment to the government, but his fall did not cause Frederik II to change his church policies. If anything it only served to make him deeply suspicious and hostile towards Gnesio-Lutheranism. He never consented to the Formula of Concord and under pain of death he prohibited the importation of the *Book of Concord* into his realm, personally burning the magnificent copies his sister sent him.<sup>8</sup>

### Norway

The overwhelmingly rural character of early modern Norway, even when compared with Denmark, may well explain why the evangelical movement seems to have made little or no impact at the popular level before the Reformation was introduced as a *fait accompli* by Christian III in 1537. The only place where evangelical preachers appear to have been active before this date was Bergen. It is no coincidence that the German Hansa had its base here and the first to bring the evangelical message to Norway were undoubtedly itinerant preachers who appealed to the resident German population in the first instance.<sup>9</sup>

The Danish Church Order included a separate chapter outlining what was necessary for a reformation of Norway. The king was to appoint new superintendents in the Norwegian dioceses as quickly as possible. They in turn were to ensure that good evangelical ministers, who were willing to obey the new Church Order, were available in all parishes. More importantly it publicly stated that Christian III should personally visit Norway and together with the new superintendents supervise the introduction of a Lutheran Church Order, specifically geared to Norwegian conditions. Considering the active opposition to his rule and the Reformation which had found its greatest exponent in Norway's last Catholic archbishop, Olav Engelbrektsson, who had actively supported the reinstatement of his deposed uncle, Christian II, Christian III's concern appears well placed.

8 T. Lyby and O. P. Grell, 'The Consolidation of Lutheranism in Denmark and Norway', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 114–43.

9 See O. P. Grell, 'The Reformation of Norway: A Political and Religious Takeover', *Nordost-Archiv, Zeitschrift für Regiongeschichte*, Neue Folge, 13 (2004), pp. 121–44.

As far as practical policy is concerned, however, this statement had little effect. Norway did not receive its own Church Order until 1607 and was left to follow the Danish Order for seventy years. Christian III never found the time to visit Norway and it proved difficult to find suitable and willing candidates to serve as superintendents. Apart from Geble Pederssøn who was appointed superintendent in Bergen, most of the posts remained vacant for years and in the case of the united sees of Oslo and Hamar the government took the unusual step of reappointing the former Catholic bishop of Oslo, Hans Reff, in 1541, only four years after his removal.

The government in København recognised the strength of Catholicism in Norway and the limitations of the fledgling Lutheran church it had created by emphasising in its instruction to the royal administrator, Esge Bille, in Bergen to quietly allow Catholic priests to continue their activities and not to seek to appoint new evangelical preachers in their stead, to avoid generating unease and disturbance among the population in general. Considering the government's difficulties in finding suitable evangelical superintendents the chances of the Norwegian administration being able to appoint evangelical ministers at parish level must have been remote indeed. Bearing in mind the strength of Catholicism in Norway throughout the sixteenth century it can hardly be a surprise that the Jesuit mastermind behind the attempts to introduce Counter-Reformation Catholicism into Scandinavia was a Norwegian, the indefatigable Laurentius Nicolai (Laurits Nielsen also known as Klosterlasse) and that Norwegians constituted the majority of Scandinavians who attended the Jesuit college in Braunsberg.

It was not until the second generation of superintendents was appointed in Norway that some form of Lutheranism was successfully promoted. As opposed to their predecessors they were all of Danish origin. By then the government in København must have felt confident enough to disregard the question of nationality and opt for a more forceful Lutheran reform. Frants Berg, who served as bishop/superintendent of Oslo and Hamar from 1548 to 1580 and who had been active in the evangelical movement in Denmark in the early 1530s, led the way by improving the financial situation of the new Lutheran church in Norway while also helping to raise the educational standards of the clergy. Jens Skjelderup, who succeeded Geble Pederssøn as bishop/superintendent of Bergen in 1557, also made a considerable contribution towards improving clerical training, while trying to rid the country of traditional Catholic rites and ceremonies, clashing with the town council of Bergen when attempting to have images of saints removed from the town's churches.



By far the most influential among this second generation of Lutheran bishops, was Skjelderup's son-in-law, Jørgen Ericksson, who became bishop of Stavanger in 1571. Through the tireless visitations and synods of his diocese, Ericksson did much to raise the educational profile of his clergy and the evangelical consciousness of the population. The significance of his work is proved by the fact that contemporaries labelled him 'the Norwegian Luther'. The lack of a Norwegian Church Order until 1607, however, hampered the new Lutheran bishops and the evangelical clergy in their work. That the Norwegians had to wait another 70 years before they were to receive their own Church Order is in itself an indication that the Norwegian Reformation lagged behind its Danish equivalent by nearly two generations. Evidently it took time to make up for the near total lack of popular support for the evangelical cause in 1537.<sup>10</sup>

### Iceland

Evangelical ideas reached Iceland by the early 1530s, not least due to the island's close mercantile contacts with Hamburg. However, Iceland remained firmly under the control of its two Catholic bishops, Ögmundur Pálsson of Skalholt and Jón Arason of Hólar, who were both powerful administrators. Compared with their European counterparts of the sixteenth century they were somewhat of an anomaly. Their worldly power and position as statesmen and soldiers made them resemble a previous period's European prince-bishops. Celibacy among the Catholic clergy in Iceland was virtually unknown and Jón Arason lived openly together with a woman with whom he fathered no fewer than six children who were all legally acknowledged by the bishop.

During the 1530s Icelandic students who had studied at German Protestant universities such as Wittenberg began to return to the island. Among them was Gizur Einarsson who appears to have been a favourite of Bishop Ögmundur. In spite of his evangelical leanings Ögmundur made him his assistant in 1535 and had him appointed his successor in 1539. To Ögmundur, Gizur appeared to be a competent Christian humanist who could lead the Catholic church in Iceland through a difficult period, faced as it was with attempts by lay authorities to introduce the Danish Lutheran Church Order.

<sup>10</sup> Schwarz Lausten, 'The Early Reformation in Denmark and Norway 1520–1559'; Lyby and Grell, 'The Consolidation of Lutheranism in Denmark and Norway', pp. 12–41, 114–43.

In 1538, the two Catholic bishops heading an ecclesiastical committee had rejected the Danish Church Order when asked to accept it by the Danish stadtholder, Claus von Merwitz.

The following year the *Alþingi* (diet of Iceland) was once more asked by the crown to introduce the Danish Church Order. Again Bishop Jón Arason of Hólar and his clergy refused to accept it, supported by the emeritus Bishop Ögmundur who issued a public letter to the inhabitants of his old see of Skalholt rejecting the Order. This intervention led to the imprisonment of the by then 80-year-old blind patriarch by the Danish stadtholder. His successor Gizur Einarsson, however, dutifully attempted to introduce the Lutheran Church Order in his diocese and personally translated it into Icelandic. But his success was limited and he was forced to conduct his visitations accompanied by a dozen armed men. His efforts were not helped by the attempts of the Danish stadtholder and his officers violently to promote the Reformation. This only served to enhance popular hostility towards Danish political dominance, uniting it with opposition towards the new religious teachings. Thus Icelandic aspirations for independence fused with a Catholicism which was perceived to be national as opposed to Lutheranism, which was considered foreign.

Furthermore, the government in København appears to have tolerated the continued presence of the Catholic bishop, Jón Arason, despite his rejection of the Lutheran Church Order, as long as he recognised Christian III as his king and made sure taxes were paid to København. This tentative situation proved unsustainable on Gizur Einarsson's death in 1548. Jón Arason immediately proceeded to take control over the diocese of Skalholt. He imprisoned Gizur Einarsson's successor, who had been confirmed and ordained in København, while actively persecuting Lutherans, many of whom fled to København. Outlawed by the government in København, Jón Arason was eventually defeated and imprisoned by one of the local Lutheran magnates, Dadi Gudmundsson in 1550. He and his two sons were handed over to the Danes who had them executed in November 1550. Two years later the diocese of Hólar finally accepted the Danish Church Order. This, however, did not mean that the Lutheran Reformation became widely accepted in Iceland. It proved an even slower process to win over the majority, or just a significant proportion of the population, than in Norway. Real progress was not achieved until the dynamic Gudbrandur Thorláksson became bishop of Hólar in 1571. During the next fifty years Gudbrandur spent considerable time and energy in promoting Lutheran education of the clergy, as well as the laity, publishing around ninety pamphlets. It was also during his period in

office that the first Icelandic translation of the whole Bible was published in 1584. Undoubtedly this lack of immediate progress can be explained by the fact that the Reformation in Iceland was so closely bound up with the efforts of Christian III's government to achieve political control over the island. The result was that Icelandic national, cultural and political aspirations continued to find support in Catholicism for a couple of generations and that Lutheranism proved slow in gaining support.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> For Iceland, see M. Schwarz Lausten, *Biskop Peter Palladius og Kirken 1537–1560* (København, 1987), pp. 313–32.

## The Reformation in Sweden and Finland

E. I. KOURI

In the Thirty Years War one of the deciding factors was an entrenched Lutheranism in Sweden, whose armies preserved European Protestantism from extinction. But in the 1520s, when evangelical ideas first made their way northward, Sweden was merely the provincial northern fringe of Europe. The establishment of Protestantism there was a gradual and largely political process.

The Reformation in Sweden and Finland has often been described as a peaceful transition from a universal, albeit corrupt, Catholic church to a pure, princely-led national church, but this idealistic picture is not entirely credible. In fact, in Sweden and particularly in Finland, which in those days was part of the Swedish realm, the evangelical movement made a curiously hesitant start during the first generation of reformers. The Reformation took place within the framework of political and social instability and its progress depended on the complex political changes that have come to be known as the emergence of the nation state. In the struggle for sovereignty, the state tried to bring the internationalist, Catholic church under local, lay control – a policy for which evangelical theology provided a much-needed justification.

### Sweden

In the fifteenth century the Catholic church in Sweden was in a powerful position, effectively independent of both the crown and the *curia*. It held the balance between the Danish Union kings with their Swedish supporters and those who preferred an independent Swedish national policy. Ecclesiastical decadence in Sweden and Finland was not so conspicuous as in the south. But around 1500 the church found its political and social status challenged. Relations between church and state were already strained when, in 1515, Gustav Trolle was elected archbishop. The situation deteriorated and matters came to a head in 1517, when the Swedish parliament decided to remove

him from office. The split in the Swedish leadership encouraged the Danes to invade Sweden. In November 1520 the Danish king Christian II was crowned in Stockholm. Soon he organised a bloodbath, killing a number of his leading Swedish opponents. During the final stages of the rebellion by the Swedish nobleman Gustav Vasa against the Danes in the early 1520s, all efforts were concentrated on liberating the country and religious matters took second place.

When Gustav Vasa (1523–60) was elected king by the parliament, which met in Strängnäs in the summer of 1523, Christian II had already gone into exile in the Netherlands. Fear of the exiled king and rivalry with the Hanseatic cities led by Lübeck, did not, however, serve to unite the new kings of Denmark and Sweden, Frederik I and Gustav Vasa. Apart from the meeting of the two in Malmö in 1524, where Frederik I abandoned his claim to the crown of Sweden and the leadership of the Kalmar Union, there was little contact between the two rulers.<sup>1</sup>

Politico-religious developments in Stockholm were of the greatest importance to the Protestant cause in Sweden. Evangelical ideas first seem to have reached the city in 1521, where they appear to have been spread by visiting German merchants. Simultaneously, some of the German mercenaries sent by Lübeck to assist Gustav Vasa appear to have disseminated evangelical ideas in Söderköping and two years later the new faith had reached Strängnäs. The large and influential German population in Stockholm was quickly won over to the evangelical faith. The Swedish population, however, was much slower in embracing it. There was little popular backing for Protestantism among the Swedish or Finnish peasantry, who militantly defended the old church.<sup>2</sup>

In Sweden and Finland the recently established royal house of Vasa encouraged the introduction and development of the Reformation. Civil strife had left most episcopal sees in Sweden vacant or held by bishops-elect awaiting papal confirmation. After the victory over the Danes and their allies, Gustav Vasa turned his attention to ecclesiastical matters – in

- 1 E. I. Kouri, 'The Early Reformation in Sweden and Finland, c. 1520–1560', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation from Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 43–5; J. E. Olesen, 'Inter-Scandinavian Relations', in K. Helle (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, 1 (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 768f. For the Union see H. Gustafsson, 'A State that Failed? On the Union of Kalmar, especially its Dissolution', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 31 (2006), pp. 205–20.
- 2 Å. Andrén, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, 3 (Stockholm, 1999), pp. 27f.; W. Buchholz, 'Schweden und Finnland', in M. Asche et al. (eds.), *Dänemark, Norwegen und Schweden im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung* (Münster, 2003), pp. 131f.

particular to appointments to these sees. He used this opportunity to weaken the Catholic church. Initially, he tried to enlist the support of the *curia* for episcopal candidates who would specifically serve the interests of the realm. When this was rejected by Rome, he drifted towards a new church policy, which aimed at creating a national church.

When Gustav Vasa realised that he could not count on the unqualified support of the Catholic clergy for his policies, he started to promote representatives of the evangelical movement. In 1523 he made the acquaintance of two men, Laurentius Andreae and Olaus Petri, who were to play an important part in the evangelical movement in Sweden until the early 1530s. In 1523 Andreae, the archdeacon of Strängnäs, became Gustav Vasa's secretary and chancellor. In 1524 Olaus Petri was given the influential position of clerk and preacher to the city of Stockholm. Olaus Petri, Sweden's foremost reformer, was born in Örebro in 1493. In 1516 he matriculated at the University of Wittenberg, where he personally experienced Luther's new evangelical teachings. Having graduated (1518) in Wittenberg, he returned to his home country, where he became secretary to the bishop of Strängnäs.<sup>3</sup>

By the mid 1520s, Stockholm had become the centre of the evangelical movement in Sweden. In February 1524 the municipal magistrates in Stockholm promised to punish all those who calumniated the new faith. At this time Gustav Vasa attacked priests and monks, accusing them of living at the crown's expense. At the same time he gave his consent to the guiding principles behind Laurentius Andreae's political ideas: that religious as well as political quarrels among all his subjects should be resolved in parliament. Following the protracted war of independence, the crown badly needed money and support from the church. It was because of this that Laurentius Andreae outlined a new church policy. In February 1524 he drafted his well-known letter to the monks in Vadstena. This document has traditionally been seen as the first evangelical writing in Sweden. In this letter Laurentius Andreae maintained that the property of the church belonged to the people and it could therefore be used for their benefit.

The evangelical movement in Sweden could not, of course, function without a vernacular, evangelical literature and the Swedish reformers understood the value of the printing press for the dissemination of evangelical ideas. In 1525, on the initiative of Gustav Vasa and the elected archbishop of Uppsala, Johannes Magnus, a circular was sent to all cathedral chapters and

3 C. F. Hallencreutz *et al.* (eds.), *Olaus Petri – den mångsidige svenske reformatorn* (Uppsala, 1994).

monasteries about the translation of the New Testament into Swedish, which was published in 1526. Laurentius Andreae and Olaus Petri played a central role in organising the enterprise. The Catholics, for their part, under the leadership of Hans Brask, the bishop of Linköping, the only Catholic leader of any ecclesiastical and political consequence, tried to prevent the spread of the Lutheran heresy, using the printing press to publish anti-evangelical literature, until Gustav Vasa, in 1526, moved the Uppsala press to Stockholm and closed down Brask's press in Linköping. Until 1527, Gustav's church policy was mainly concerned with economic and administrative matters. His disinclination to make any religious changes was undoubtedly based on a consistent policy of self interest. He had, after all, as recently as the spring of 1527, only just managed to defeat the first major peasant rebellion, Daljunkern's revolt, against his rule.<sup>4</sup>

Swedish historians of the Reformation have traditionally seen the parliament held at Västerås in 1527 as the birthplace of evangelical Sweden. This interpretation is based on the Swedish parliament's decision that 'The Word of God should be purely preached all over the kingdom'. However, the actual doctrinal alterations made in Västerås were minimal and, as in Prussia, the bishops were given responsibility for putting them into practice. If the diocese of Linköping was typical, then the administrative decisions of Västerås were only slowly implemented. No Catholic bishops were removed from office. A sign of the stubborn resistance in Sweden towards the new religious doctrines can also be seen in the writings of Olaus Petri on clerical celibacy and his attacks on monasticism, which were published in 1528. Petri sharply criticised the mendicant orders, which constituted the Catholic bulwark against the evangelical preachers. Already in 1527 he had strongly attacked the leading Danish humanist and Reformed Catholic Paulus Helie.

Of far greater significance, however, were the decisions made in Västerås relating to the church's economic position, making it possible for Gustav Vasa to initiate the policies which ultimately doubled his revenues. The four estates of parliament accepted the formulas known as the 'Västerås ordinances', by which much church property was transferred to the crown, and the jurisdiction of clergy over laymen was drastically curtailed and subjected to royal supervision. Thus, in contrast to what happened in Denmark, the

4 B. Olsson, 'Bibeln på svenska', in *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, 3, pp. 238–48. For the peasant revolts see E. Österberg, 'Bönder och centralmakt i det tidigmodern Sverige. Konflikt – kompromiss – politisk kultur', *Scandia*, 55 (1989), pp. 73–95; K. Katajala (ed.), *Northern Revolts: Medieval and Early Modern Peasant Unrest in the Nordic Countries* (Helsinki, 2004).

Swedish church lost its economic, political and judicial immunity a decade earlier. The king, who was not a particularly religious man, was conspicuously uneasy with the finer points of doctrine of the new faith: his church policy was determined by the wealth of the Catholic church rather than by Luther's teachings. Thus he in many respects resembled Henry VIII of England.<sup>5</sup>

As a domain state, Sweden's main problem was to transform the crown's income, which was paid in minerals and agricultural produce, into hard cash. Consequently, attempts at forcible centralisation, direct administration and a transition to a monetary economy became the characteristics of the king's economic policies. It is illustrative of the extent to which Gustav Vasa was prepared to disregard the church and its traditional values if they did not further his financial and administrative aims that he was prepared to have beautiful, ancient, ecclesiastical parchment manuscripts torn up and used as covers for his bailiffs' account books.

Gustav Vasa and his advisors managed to avoid committing themselves to any definite religious position. By 1529, however, it had become evident that this approach was untenable and a national synod met in Örebro in February in order to try to find a solution to the religious question. A compromise was reached, which was what Gustav Vasa wanted, but it satisfied nobody and could be positively interpreted by Catholics as well as Protestants. It only served to antagonise the hard-line evangelicals, and disturbances immediately broke out in Stockholm among the influential German population.

In contrast to what happened in Germany, popular rebellions and upheavals in Sweden and Finland, particularly in the countryside, were nearly all to preserve the 'old religion', in addition to airing economic and social grievances. In the spring of 1529, a new Catholic revolt, the *Västgöta* rebellion, broke out in south-west Sweden. The king managed to contain the danger only by promising to leave the religion of the kingdom unchanged. Undoubtedly, the rebels had been encouraged to take action by recent developments in Germany, where the Diet of Speyer in February 1529 had called a halt to further evangelical reforms.<sup>6</sup>

5 S. Kjellerström, 'Västerås ordinantia', *Scandia*, 26 (1960), pp. 41–98. For Gustav Vasa see L.-O. Larsson, *Gustav Vasa – landsfäder eller tyrann?* (Stockholm, 2002); R. Ringmar, *Gustav Eriksson Vasa – kung, kamrer, koncernchef. Återblick på en monark av Guds nåde* (Stockholm, 2002).

6 L.-A. Norborg, 'Västgöta



In the Reformation period an evangelical minister-theologian was primarily a preacher. Also, in Sweden and Finland it was believed that correct doctrine and the proper ability to express oneself constituted a real preacher. Olaus Petri, through his writings, brought about a gradual transformation of the liturgy and the acceptance of services in the vernacular. In 1531 he published *The Swedish Mass*, but he also worked more energetically than anyone else to promote evangelical preaching in Sweden. Stockholm led the way in introducing the vernacular into the liturgy. Already in May 1529 the town council had decided to allow the use of both the Latin and Swedish mass, but by August the following year only mass in the vernacular was permitted, and the clergy was ordered to obey the instructions of Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae. Stockholm had in effect become an evangelical city.<sup>7</sup>

A new Lutheran archbishop, Laurentius Petri, was appointed in 1531. He was the younger brother of Olaus Petri and had studied in Wittenberg, notably under Melanchthon, whose humanist, educational and pedagogical ideas appealed to him. Yet Laurentius Petri's Protestantism appears to have been closer to that of Luther and his brother Olaus than to that of Melanchthon. His interest in practical ecclesiastical matters and ritual were inspired by Johannes Bugenhagen and another Wittenberg reformer, Johannes Brenz. However, Laurentius Petri's views were probably closest to those of the English reformer, Thomas Cranmer, who likewise had to deal with an almost tyrannical ruler.

Sweden – and, to an even greater extent, Finland – experienced a princely reformation with very limited popular involvement. Step by step, the archdiocese of Uppsala became the national Swedish church, independent of any foreign authority. In the early 1530s, it still had room for Lutheranism, Christian humanism and Reformed Catholicism. It gradually developed in the Lutheran direction, but within it there remained more Catholic elements than in any other Lutheran church. The Holy See, for its part, did not give up hope of re-catholicising Sweden. In 1533 Johannes Magnus was anointed in

7 Å. Andrén, 'Den liturgiska utveckling i Sverige under reformationstiden', in I. Brohed (ed.), *Reformationens konsolidering i de nordiska länderna 1540–1610* (Oslo, 1990), pp. 327–50; C. Palmblad, *Mässan på svenska. Den reformatoriska mässan i Sverige mot senmedeltida bakgrunden* (Lund, 1998), pp. 35–42. For Olaus Petri see B. Hasselmann (ed.), *Samlade skrifter av Olavus Petri* (Uppsala, 1914–17); S. Ingebrand, *Olavus Petris reformatoriska åskådning*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1 (Uppsala, 1964); C. Gardemeister, *Den suverene Gud. En studie i Olavus Petris teologi* (Lund, 1989).

Rome as a Swedish archbishop – the same position to which he was elected in Sweden in 1523 before leaving the country.<sup>8</sup>

The reformers thought that education would advance the Protestant cause by banishing ignorance and implanting knowledge of the truth. Schools were still controlled by the church, which, although it had lost its traditional monopoly of higher education, retained a considerable influence on Swedish and Finnish schooling. Yet the University of Uppsala had been closed since 1515 and there was nowhere that the clergy could be properly educated. Gustav Vasa did not value higher education, but he believed that the parishes should have clergymen and the crown civil servants who were able to read, write and count. As for high culture, the break with Rome resulted in a restricted horizon. After the introduction of the Reformation, the social composition of the clergy also changed. An ecclesiastical career, which had already become considerably less attractive to the nobility in Sweden and Finland towards the end of the fifteenth century, was no longer to be seriously considered by members of this class. The end of clerical celibacy led to great changes too. Now the priests were allowed to marry and have a family and this brought about a change in the social structure of their class. Through the married clergy, a special culture gradually developed, which was to influence the material and spiritual life in Sweden and Finland in a lasting fashion. The reformers paid special attention to nurturing a new kind of evangelical clergyman, who was supposed not only to be well educated, but also morally blameless. His work was ‘to study, to preach and to pray’. The reality, however, did not always correspond to these high ideals, and the Swedish and Finnish clergy was faced with accusations of drunkenness, greed and sometimes even manslaughter. On the intellectual level, daily life was still largely characterised by traditional patterns of thinking and behaviour.<sup>9</sup>

The Reformation constitutes a watershed in the history of healthcare and poor relief in Sweden and Finland. Many charitable Catholic institutions were faced with serious economic difficulties before the Reformation – especially those belonging to the mendicant orders. According to canon

8 O. P. Grell, ‘The Catholic Church and its Leadership’, in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation from Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 103–13.

9 Kouri, ‘The Early Reformation’, p. 69; K. Pirinen, *Suomen kirkon historia*, 1 (Porvoo, 1991), pp. 362–4; G. Malmstedt, *Bondetro och kyrkotro. Religiös mentalitet i stormaktstidens Sverige* (Lund, 2002). See also R. Askmark, *Svensk prästutbildning fram till år 1700* (Stockholm, 1943); S. Lindegård, *Ämbetsbrott av präst. En kyrkorättslig studie från medeltid till nutid* (Lund, 1999); S. Ingebrand, ‘Predikan under reformationstiden’, in *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, 3, pp. 249–59.

law, they should either have amalgamated with or have been taken over by their nearest sister-institutions. Instead, they became the main targets for the reformers. Since the crown portrayed itself after the Reformation as God's representative on earth, in order to justify its sequestration of most of the estates and income belonging to the Catholic church, it might be expected that these charitable Catholic institutions would have been included in the crown's takeover, which began in 1527. This, however, was not the case, for Gustav Vasa specifically excluded and protected these institutions.

A series of statutes, ordinances, decrees and bills were promulgated to regulate the care of the poor, the sick and the elderly. They reflect not only the way the authorities viewed the poor who depended on charity, but also the religious, social and political rationale behind the structure and organisation of care and relief. From Olaus Petri's statutes of 1533 for the hospitals in Stockholm to the legislation for poor relief and healthcare provision of the late sixteenth century, there is a significant shift away from a primary concern for care of destitute and suffering members of the Christian community towards a concern for greater social control of the poor. The enthusiasm for care and Christian commitment evident in Olaus Petri's statutes was difficult to maintain for more than a generation, especially as the new Protestant – and locally accountable – system of relief came under additional pressure from a society in flux.<sup>10</sup>

During the 1520s, relations between the king and the reformers remained close and confidential. Laurentius Andreae played an important part within the administration. The rebellion of 1529, however, signalled the end of his career within the government. The rebels had singled Andreae out for criticism. They saw him as the architect of Gustav Vasa's anti-monastic policies. Similar hostility towards Olaus Petri was also increasingly expressed, not least because of his prominent position as the kingdom's leading evangelical writer. From now on the king became more cautious and was unwilling to make any changes to doctrine or ritual. In 1531 Laurentius Andreae lost his seat in the council and his chancellorship passed to Olaus Petri. By November 1532 Andreae was removed from virtually all political influence. Within a year Olaus Petri experienced a similar fate.

In the late 1530s, Gustav Vasa repeatedly attacked Laurentius Andreae and Olaus Petri for failing to teach obedience towards secular authority.

<sup>10</sup> E. I. Kouri, 'Health Care and Poor Relief in Sweden and Finland, c. 1500–1700', in O.P. Grell and A. Cunningham (eds.), *Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe, 1500–1700* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 167–203.

The tensions culminated at the parliament in Örebro in December 1539, where the king took the necessary measures to secure full royal control over the church. New instructions were issued and the Swedish and Finnish churches finally experienced a princely reformation in church government. In Örebro, legal proceedings were instituted against the two reformers. Although they were condemned to death in January 1540, the reformers were immediately pardoned by Gustav Vasa. Until his death in April 1552, Laurentius Andreae lived quietly in Strängnäs; and in 1542 Olaus Petri was appointed school inspector in Stockholm and was given the rectorship there the following year.<sup>11</sup>

The more radical tendencies of the evangelical movements in Germany may have fuelled Gustav Vasa's suspicions of the loyalty of the evangelical leaders in Sweden. Furthermore, in 1536, a conspiracy was discovered to blow up the king with gunpowder and hand over Stockholm to the Hansa. Among the conspirators were the master of the royal mint and several of the town's German merchants. Gustav Vasa's position remained vulnerable, until the 1540s at least, since he faced internal revolts and his rule was little recognised at a time when dynastic ideas were becoming increasingly dominant.

The political situation of the Swedish church changed gradually in the wake of the peace treaty with Lübeck in 1536. At the synod held in Uppsala in October, it was decided that the evangelical mass and manual should be introduced throughout the country, and celibacy was officially abolished. Gustav Vasa gave his silent consent and the break with the Catholic church was complete. The Swedish church had become a national, evangelical church. The developments in Denmark were even more radical. When in 1536 Duke Christian, the later King Christian III, had emerged from the civil war victorious, he had imprisoned the Catholic bishops and summoned a parliament to put its seal of approval on the creation of a Lutheran state church in Denmark. The full Reformation was achieved in the following year, when the king signed the Church Ordinance and seven new Lutheran superintendents were ordained.

By that time an important change had taken place in Sweden. Gustav Vasa's church policy started to resemble that of the German territorial princes or even that of England's Henry VIII. Having tired of the

<sup>11</sup> S. Kjällerström, 'Gustav Vasa och reformatörerna', *Scandia*, 36 (1970), pp. 1–16. For the political thought of the Swedish reformers see E. I. Kouri, 'Staatsmaktstänkandet i början av nya tiden', in E. I. Kouri, *Historiography, Politics and Religion* (Jyväskylä, 1990), pp. 237–92, esp. pp. 262–7.

independent tendencies of Swedish reformers, he recruited in 1538 the former Habsburg councillor, Conrad von Pyhy, as his chancellor, and on the recommendation of Luther and Melanchthon, the Pomeranian theologian, Georg Norman, was invited to Sweden in 1539 to advise the king on church affairs. Norman drafted a Church Ordinance influenced by Melanchthonian theology in 1540, but it was never completed. He also recommended that Melanchthon's *Loci communes* be used in training new priests. Like the Swedish reformers, he paid attention to educational institutions, starting with elementary schools.<sup>12</sup>

Gustav Vasa's more positive interest in the efforts to change the Swedish church in an evangelical direction partly arose from his ambitions to join an important Protestant alliance, the League of Schmalkalden. In 1538 Denmark was accepted as a member, but Sweden was not. In early 1541 Sweden tried again, with the support of Luther, to become a member of the league, but once more was unsuccessful.<sup>13</sup>

The so-called succession parliament was summoned in 1544 to meet at Västerås, partly in order to deal with the most serious and long-lasting of the revolts of Gustav Vasa's reign, which had broken out in southern Sweden in 1542. As so often before, the revolt was caused mainly by economic and social grievances, but the Catholic priests used the opportunity to have the old faith reintroduced. Even the German emperor and other foreign potentates demonstrated an alarming interest in this rebellion. All this made it clear to Gustav Vasa that a complete break with Catholicism and the establishment of a hereditary, national monarchy was in the interest of the crown.<sup>14</sup>

At the synod of Örebro in 1529, it was decided to keep Catholic rituals as long as they were not contrary to the Bible. During the parliament of Västerås in early 1544, however, the clergy, on the recommendation of Gustav Vasa, debated the ecclesiastical ceremonies and agreed to remove some ancient rites which made no sense in an evangelical Lutheran church:

- 12 I. Svalenius, *Georg Norman. En biografisk studie* (Stockholm, 1937); T. Nyberg, 'Das religiöse Profil des Nordens', in M. Asche et al. (eds.), *Dänemark, Norwegen und Schweden im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung* (Münster, 2003), pp. 270–2.
- 13 E. I. Kouri, 'Die diplomatisch-politischen Beziehungen zwischen den Protestanten in Deutschland und Schweden 1527–1547', in E. I. Kouri, *Historiography, Politics and Religion* (Jyväskylä, 1990), pp. 181–213. See also S. Lundkvist, 'The European Powers and Sweden in the Reign of Gustav Vasa', in E. I. Kouri and T. Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe: Essays for Sir Geoffrey Elton* (London, 1987), pp. 510–11.
- 14 I. Montgomery, 'The Institutionalisation of Lutheranism in Sweden and Finland', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation from Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 145.

the adoration of saints was to be stopped, as was the use of holy water and incense. Furthermore, requiem masses and a number of Catholic holidays were no longer to be celebrated.

After the death of Laurentius Andrae, Georg Norman and Olaus Petri in the early 1550s, Archbishop Laurentius Petri became the leading figure in the Swedish church. He had already played a leading role in translating the Swedish Bible, as well as helping to print the revised editions of *The Swedish Mass* and *The Manual* in 1541. In the following years he was active in publishing important pastoral works.

In the early Reformation period, the Swedish and Finnish reformers thought that the Scriptures provided the only guiding principle that was necessary for salvation. Accordingly, there was no need for additional confessional statements. Archbishop Laurentius Petri's first proposal for an evangelical Church Ordinance in 1547 was rejected by the king. The second proposal, made in 1561, did not meet with his immediate approval either. It was not until ten years later that this proposal was ratified by the parliament of Stockholm. Finally, in 1593, at the Uppsala assembly, the Scriptures as the source of doctrine were supplemented by three creeds of the early church and the *Confessio Augustana*. Thus Sweden became the most heterogeneous of the Scandinavian countries, dithering between Catholicism and various forms of Protestantism throughout most of the second half of the sixteenth century.

From the beginning Gustav Vasa, like most European rulers, was worried about the possible negative effects of the more radical forms of Protestantism. In 1550 the Swedish government issued an edict forbidding foreign 'spiritualists and heretical, false teachers' to enter the country. Three years later, when the king heard about the expulsion of the Dutch exiles from Denmark, he ordered the bishop of Växjö to make sure that such people did not settle in Sweden. However, in the mid 1550s the Swedish immigration policy towards heterodox Protestants, particularly highly skilled foreign craftsmen, changed radically. This new Erastian policy was recognised even in Geneva. In 1559 Calvin dedicated his commentary on the minor prophets to Gustav Vasa and Crown Prince Erik. Gustav Vasa, for his part, had chosen reformed tutors, Dionysius Beurereus and Jan van Herboville, for his sons.<sup>15</sup>

15 E. I. Kouri, 'La Consolidation du luthéranisme en Scandinavie', in J. Miller (ed.), *L'Europe protestante aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1997), pp. 173f. For the religious developments under Erik XIV see S. Kjällerström, *Striden kring kalvinismen i Sverige under Erik XIV. En kyrkohistorisk studie* (Lund, 1935).

When Gustav Vasa died in 1560, Sweden was confronted with a number of difficult national and international problems. The king had remained firmly in control of the church until the end, but the lack of any firm doctrinal foundation for the new evangelical church was to cause serious difficulties during the reigns of his sons. They, unlike their father, were well educated and interested in theological questions. Each of them, however, wanted to shape the church according to his own preferences, which served to unsettle the church for decades.

When Erik XIV (1560–8), Gustav's eldest son, succeeded his father, his church policy was a tolerant Protestantism. In the early part of his reign Calvinist ideas gained considerable ground in Sweden. For example, the Huguenot Dionysius Beurreus, the Swedish ambassador to Queen Elizabeth of England and at one time Erik's tutor, was asked to encourage reformed refugee craftsmen from the Dutch and French exile communities in London to go to Sweden. In March 1561 Erik even issued a charter offering religious toleration for reformed Protestants. As so often in this period, politics largely determined the permitted or official religious doctrines. At this time, Erik was pressing his offer of marriage to Queen Elizabeth through the offices of his brother Johan, duke of Finland, who spent some time in London. The Erastian policy adopted by the Vasa dynasty started to reap its due rewards by the early seventeenth century: it made possible the necessary economic and political conditions for Sweden's emergence as one of the leading European powers.

Erik XIV was not the only Protestant prince to make an offer of marriage to the English queen. His efforts to marry her can be seen in a wider context. They also show that in the period discussed here the Scandinavian powers started to play a greater role in international relations, diplomacy and commerce. Religious and ideological considerations can also be seen. In Counter-Reformation Europe as a whole *les deux protectorats* were widely recognised: that of England over Continental and Scandinavian Protestants and that of Spain over the Catholics. Queen Elizabeth's policy towards her fellow Protestants was characterised by Protestant ideology and religious terminology, but she was primarily interested in national security, defence and commercial considerations. The role of the northern countries was, therefore, largely determined by the balance of power in Europe and they were used by the English to diminish the political pressure against England. English diplomats were not unknown at Danish and Swedish courts and there were occasionally Danish and Swedish diplomats in London.<sup>16</sup>

16 E. I. Kouri, *England and the Attempts to Form a Protestant Alliance in the Late 1560s: A Case Study in European Diplomacy*, *Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae*, Ser. B, 210

Erik's liberal policy, politically and commercially advantageous though it was, soon became vulnerable to the more vociferous proponents of Lutheran doctrine. The reaction was led by Archbishop Laurentius Petri, a noted critic of Calvinism. The king found himself forced to take measures against the unorthodox and to ensure some semblance of unity, though the measures were always formulated with moderation. For example, in 1563 foreign Calvinists were forbidden to proselytise among the native population and in 1565 Calvinist doctrine on the Eucharist was condemned, but in both cases the heretics were allowed to worship in their own fashion.

Initially, the Swedish and Finnish Protestant writers were not so aggressive as their German counterparts: they were less concerned with maintaining a particular confessional standpoint and they treated sensitive theological questions individually. Furthermore, they did not express anti-Semitic ideas and made no ideological attacks on Islam. Like their fellow Protestants of the south, the northern theologians shared the values and prejudices of the world about them. In so far as they used German and other sources, they admixed the ideas they found there with their own and applied them to their own problems and native experiences.

From the 1570s, however, the 'Gävle School' determined to a great extent the religious character of late-sixteenth-century Sweden. Gävle, a town about 100 miles north of Stockholm, became the centre for a strict Lutheran orthodoxy, under the leadership of the superintendent of the diocese, Martinus Olai Gestricius. The new school opposed Calvinism on the one hand and Roman Catholicism on the other – this was later important when Johan III tried to introduce liturgical changes of catholicising tendency.

For the ruling House of Vasa, and consequently for the Swedish-Finnish church, the 1560s was a critical decade. Erik's brother Johan, duke of Finland, married a Catholic, Katharina Jagellonica, the Polish king's sister, and conducted his own foreign policy. Erik eventually attacked the duchy, took the castle of Turku (Åbo) and brought Johan and his wife as prisoners to

(Helsinki, 1981), *passim*; E. I. Kouri, *Elizabethan England and Europe: Forty Unprinted Letters from Elizabeth I to Protestant Powers*, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Special Supplement 12 (London, 1982); E. I. Kouri, 'For True Faith or National Interest? Queen Elizabeth I and the Protestant Powers', in E. I. Kouri and T. Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe: Essays for Sir Geoffrey Elton* (London, 1987), pp. 411–36; E. I. Kouri, 'Die Entwicklung eines Systems der europäischen Aussenpolitik in der Zeit von 1558–1603 aus englischer Perspektive', in F. Beiderbeck et al. (eds.), *Dimensionen der europäischen Außenpolitik zur Zeit der Wende vom 16. zum 17. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2003), pp. 307–36. See also S. Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: A Study of Elizabeth I's Courtships* (London, 1996).



Sweden in 1563. But a revolution in 1569 unseated Erik (who died in captivity in 1577) and his brother ascended the throne as Johan III (1568–92).

Even more than his brother Erik, Johan III wished to determine church doctrine and policy, including all ecclesiastical appointments, personally. He had himself made a deep study of theology, not least during his time in prison. He took the irenical position, which tried as far as possible to reconcile the Catholic and Protestant churches rather than emphasise their differences. In this respect, he was greatly influenced by Georg Cassander (1513–66), who in 1564 wrote his famous *Consultatio de articulis inter catholicos et protestantes controversia*, which was published in Stockholm in 1577. It must be said that Johan's Romanising tendencies partly arose from his hope of getting his hands on the enormous Sforza inheritance through his Catholic wife. But, whether genuine or not, they were not of the sort to gain him political support from Rome, which was dominated by the supporters of the Counter-Reformation, and they had little time for his type of pre-Tridentine Catholicism.<sup>17</sup>

Johan III had in 1575 drawn up the *Nova ordinantia* as a supplement to the Church Order of 1571 drafted by Archbishop Laurentius Petri. It was accepted by the bishops without hesitation. His new liturgy of 1576, *Liturgia svecanae ecclesiae catholicae et orthodoxae conformis*, which from its binding became known as the Red Book, was compiled from a variety of sources: from the Roman Catholic Mass of 1570 and elements of Greek Orthodox practice as well as Olaus Petri's Order of Service and the Anglican liturgy, and it also stressed patristic writings. The liturgy was at first accepted, but the king was soon accused of leanings towards Rome. For his part, the conservative duke of Södermanland, Karl, the king's brother, disliked the new liturgy and would not introduce it into his duchy, which he wished to remain independent in religious as well as political matters.<sup>18</sup>

At the end of the sixteenth century the confessional contrasts had become acute and the Holy See paid special attention to re-catholicising Northern Europe. Efforts were made in particular to exploit the dynastic connection

17 Montgomery, 'The Institutionalisation of Lutheranism', pp. 148–52; L. E. Wolke, *Johan III. En biografi* (Lund, 2004).

18 S. Serenius, *Liturgia svecanae ecclesiae catholicae et orthodoxae conformis. En liturgihistorisk undersökning med särskild hänsyn till struktur och förlagor* (Åbo, 1966); R. Persson, *Johan III och Nova Ordinantia* (Lund, 1973). For the Church Order of 1571 see S. Kjellerström (ed.), *Den svenska kyrko-ordningen jämte studier kring tillkomst, innehåll och användning* (Lund, 1971); S. Heininen, 'Die patristische Argumentation im sogenannten Liturgiestreit (1575–1593) in Schweden', in L. Grane et al. (eds.), *Auctoritas Patrum* (Mainz, 1998).

between Sweden and Poland. Although Johan III preferred a moderate, pre-Tridentine, type of Catholicism – combined with vernacular services, communion in both kinds and married priests – there were good reasons for fearing Catholic influences at court. The Catholic queen had her entourage of Catholic court-priests; and their heir to the throne, Prince Sigismund, was brought up as a Catholic. Indeed, the Roman church tried to press its advantage, and at first all went well. When Pope Gregory XIII sent Laurentius Nicolai Norvegus, a Norwegian Jesuit, to Sweden in 1576, Johan appointed him rector of the crypto-Catholic college, *Collegium Regium Stockholmense*, in the former Greyfriars on Gråmunkholmen (the present Riddarholmen), an important centre of learning after the closure of the University of Uppsala. But Antonio Possevino, at one time secretary general of the Jesuit order, was not successful when he was sent the next year and again in 1579–80 to negotiate Johan's formal conversion to the Roman church. The question of Johan III's conversion to the Catholic faith has been much debated by historians. The only primary source is Possevino's report, according to which the king had said to him in early May 1578: '*Ego amplector te et ecclesiam catholicam in aeternum* [I embrace you and the Catholic church in all eternity].' The most plausible interpretation is that Johan had not meant the Tridentine Catholic church but a future, reunited irenic Christian church, which he had long aimed at.<sup>19</sup>

In 1578 the presence of numerous Jesuits in Sweden became known. There was a surprisingly strong reaction: they were all expelled from the kingdom. At the same time, the Lutherans who opposed the introduction of the Red Book were harassed, and in some cases removed from office by the king. Many of those dismissed had studied at the University of Rostock, in northern Germany, and were influenced by its famous rector, David Chytraeus, a proponent of the Lutheran Formula of Concord (1577). Until that time, Sweden had been relatively free from theological controversy. The Augsburg Confession, later of importance in the church, was only translated into Swedish in 1581.<sup>20</sup>

19 M. Friedrich, 'Johan III. Katholischer Gegenreformer oder protestantischer Ireiker? Ein Hinweis auf eine bislang unbeachtete Quelle', *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, 96 (1996), pp. 115–18. For the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia see O. Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia until the Establishment of the S. Congregation de Propaganda Fide in 1622*, 1–4 (Oslo and Leiden, 1963–92); V. Helk, *Laurentius Nicolai Norvegus S.J.* (København, 1966); O. Garstein, *Klosterlasse. Stormfuglen som ville gjenerobre Norden for katolisismen* (Oslo, 1998).

20 O. Czaika, *David Chytraeus und die Universtät Rostock in ihren Beziehungen zum schwedischen Reich* (Helsinki, 2002), pp. 221–70; O. Czaika, 'David Chytraeus och

On the death of Johan III in 1592, the religious question, with heavy political accent, assumed an even greater importance. There was real resistance to the threat of Counter-Reformation Catholicism; and there was, of course, no lack of people who used the situation in their own interests. Duke Karl, for example, seized the opportunity of self-aggrandisement by having himself made effective head of the Swedish church – the Catholic Sigismund Vasa was obviously disqualified. If Karl could not summon parliament, he could do what was the next best: he could summon a synod. Only two days passed after the old king's death before Karl suggested to the council (*riksrådet*) that a synod be called to decide about doctrine and ceremonial.

The stated aim of the synod, which met in March 1593 in Uppsala, was religious unity. The kingdom should not go the way of France and Holland, where religious strife had brought much havoc, especially in the cities. The 'Uppsala Resolution' established the confessional and doctrinal foundations for the Lutheran church in Sweden and Finland until 1869. Strongly Lutheran in doctrine, the Resolution declared that the faith was defined by the Augsburg Confession and the Church Order of 1571, as well as the Bible and the three creeds of the Early Church. On matters of ceremonial, the Resolution was less strict: elevation of the Host and exorcism at baptism, for instance, were allowed to continue as long as they engendered no superstitious beliefs. In short, the Resolution gave the country that unity and firmness of doctrine that it had for so long badly needed. It was signed by many prominent lay people as well as the clergy to demonstrate the universality of acceptance of the document. Thus a territorial Lutheran church with a written formula of faith was established in the Swedish realm.<sup>21</sup>

Not only was Catholicism strongly condemned in Uppsala. So too were the doctrines of the sacramentarians, Zwinglians, Calvinists and Anabaptists. At the 1593 synod, the discussion revealed considerable influence from the Formula of Concord – even if the Formula itself was not explicitly mentioned – for example, in the idea that ceremonies should be considered part of doctrine. For the first time, the Swedish and Finnish church showed a clear inclination to Gnesio-Lutheranism, which was then the mainstream of Lutheranism in Germany.

hans betydelse för utformningen av en svensk bekännelsekyrka', *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, 104 (2004), pp. 23–30.

21 H. Cnattingius, *Uppsala möte 1593* (Stockholm, 1943); L. Eckerdal et al. (eds.), *Confessio fidei. Uppsala mötes beslut 1593 om Svenska kyrkans bekännelse* (Stockholm, 1993), pp. 141–78; I. Montgomery, 'Uppsala möte 1593', *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, 93 (1993), pp. 13–19.

In August 1593, Sigismund Vasa left Poland for Sweden. While he was waiting for a fleet to carry him over the sea, he had his first experience of the pressures to which he would be subjected in his negotiations with the Swedes. An envoy extraordinary sent by Pope Clement VIII arrived and brought with him a considerable sum of money as a contribution towards the expenses of recovering Sweden and Finland for Rome. In addition, he conveyed the pope's commands that Sigismund must at all costs avoid giving any guarantee of freedom of religion. Although Sigismund was, by the normal rules of succession, entitled to the Swedish throne, and although he had been king of Poland since 1587, he was forced to make terms with the Swedes. Duke Karl insisted on the Lutheran faith for the people, as specified by the Uppsala Resolution. The clergy required a promise that Sigismund's eldest son be brought up in the Lutheran faith, that no more than ten Roman Catholic priests be permitted at court, that the restoration of Uppsala University be confirmed (refounded 1595) and that the election of bishops be free. Sigismund's coronation oath in February 1594 contained no innovations of importance. The only significant document was the accession charter, which fell into religious and secular halves. The religious half was an almost complete capitulation to the demands of the four estates of parliament.<sup>22</sup>

When Sigismund returned to Poland, Duke Karl and the council acted together as regents. At Sigismund's coronation, the estates had given their oath of allegiance freely, since they thought Sigismund's charter contained sufficient guarantees. But Karl limited his oath by the proviso that, in effect, he owed his first loyalty to the Lutheran faith: his duchy was to remain with the Augsburg Confession and the will of Gustav Vasa. In September and October 1595 Karl's opposition to the king at the parliament of Söderköping became open and unambiguous. In November Sigismund sent a message from Poland forbidding parliament to convene and invalidating any decisions that it did make. This only left open the possibility of an assembly called together for religious reasons. Accordingly, Karl again brought up the subject of ceremonies – and did so yet again two months later. He wanted to abolish some of the ceremonies, for example exorcism, and to alter others as having what he called too much 'popish leaven' in them.

The years 1597–9 were crucial in this religious–political struggle. In February 1597 the council was dissolved because of its indecision over religious matters.

22 J. A. Pärnänen, *Le Premier Séjour de Sigismond Vasa en Suède 1593–1594 d'après la correspondance diplomatique du nonce apostolique Germanico Malaspina* (Helsinki, 1933); Montgomery, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, 4 (2002), pp. 16–19.

Tension also grew between Karl and the clergy, who viewed with misgiving the right he claimed to intervene in church affairs. In the summer of 1597, Sigismund landed in Sweden at the head of 5,000 troops. A year later Karl forswore his allegiance to Sigismund on the grounds that he had not fulfilled the promises given at his coronation. In September 1598 Sigismund's army was defeated by Karl and the king secretly left Sweden for good in October. Karl now took upon himself the mantle of Defender of the Faith, justifying his political manoeuvres, after the custom of the time, by reference to religious exigencies.<sup>23</sup>

In July 1599, the estates withdraw their allegiance from Sigismund. At the parliament in Stockholm, they justified their action by saying they had kept loyal to the Vasas. They demanded that in future the sovereign must be a Protestant; and they allowed Sigismund's son Vladislav to become king if he was brought up as a Protestant and in Sweden. Karl became regent. The transformation had been effected by the Uppsala Resolution. *Inter alia*, Duke Karl had used its provisions to call a de facto parliament. Ironically, his claim before these assemblies that Christian faith was necessarily based upon Scripture began to be opposed within the church by the theologians of a Gnesio-Lutheran tendency, who considered that the Bible needed to be supplemented to provide full Christian teaching.

The church regarded the decisions of Uppsala as defining faith, but for Karl their validity was partly dependent on political considerations, in particular on the strength of the Catholic threat. This difference caused friction in itself; and the conflict was worsened by Karl's assumption of power within the church. Consequently, the clergy wished to keep church appointments as purely ecclesiastical affairs and they were not pleased when the duke presented them with his own draft for a new church order, a new manual and a tract entitled *On the Lord's Supper, Baptism and Other Things*. They rejected the proposed changes on the grounds that they had too much of the flavour of Calvinism and sacramentalism. They even defended the retention of exorcism, saying that its abolition would call into question the doctrine of original sin, contrary to the *Confessio Augustana* – the first time the Augsburg Confession was used in Sweden to settle a particular point of doctrine. In 1600 the estates of parliament attempted to dictate their view of religion to the regent,

23 A. Piltz, 'Sigismund och motreformationen i Sverige. Några bidrag till svensk kyrkohistoria mellan Uppsala möte och Söderköpings riksdag', in K. Blücker (ed.), *När enhet gick förlorad. Två bidrag till bilden av reformationen i Sverige* (Uppsala, 1997), pp. 71–107; Kouri, 'La Consolidation du luthéranisme', pp. 179–81.

but, as elsewhere in the Protestant world, the ruler determined faith – as was stipulated at the Diet of Augsburg in 1555.<sup>24</sup>

The new Lutheran church, led as it was from the top, was essentially city-based. In the countryside it only slowly gained ground. The church addressed itself to the problems with great vigour: images of the saints were destroyed, many old customs were banned, and villages were visited every year by members of the clergy to test and instruct the people in the scriptures and other matters of faith. This last measure was evidently necessary, since in Uppsala a note in the minute book of the cathedral chapter dated 1596 to the effect that the common people were so ignorant that they should not take communion, has been preserved. As well as struggling against the remnants of Roman Catholicism, the leaders of the Swedish and Finnish church had to fight against various kinds of magical belief and practice. In 1596 Archbishop Abraham Angermannus made a determined and violent attempt to root out superstition in the sees of Skara, Växjö and Linköping. According to his own assessment, witchcraft was to be distinguished from superstition and predictions, but in fact he dealt with them all similarly and brutally. Serious offenders were handed over to the secular arm and trivial cases punished by flogging.<sup>25</sup>

In early modern times the approach to life was magical-religious. Until the seventeenth century most of the Scandinavian witchcraft trials were concerned, according to the recent interpretation, with sorcery and popular magic. The Swedish and Finnish church leaders did their utmost to extirpate superstitious beliefs, much as their colleagues were doing in Denmark and Norway. In the early seventeenth century, however, the pattern changed: in Sweden and Finland attention was transferred to demonology, Norway soon following suit, and in all three countries the frequency of trials was the greatest in the late seventeenth century.<sup>26</sup>

24 Montgomery, 'The Institutionalisation of Lutheranism', pp. 162–5; Montgomery, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria*, 4, pp. 27–72. See also I. Montgomery, *Värjostand och lärostånd. Religion och politik i meningsutbytet mellan kungamakt och prästerskap i Sverige 1593–1608* (Uppsala, 1972).

25 For Abraham Angermannus see R. Ohlsson, *Abraham Angermannus. En biografisk studie* (Stockholm, 1946).

26 J. C. V. Johansen, 'Faith, Superstition and Witchcraft in Reformation Scandinavia', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation from Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 202–7; H. Sanders (ed.), *Mellem Gud och Djævelen. Religiøse og magiske verdensbilleder i Norden 1500–1800* (København, 2002). In this collection of essays the key issues are the traditional antagonisms: religion and science, religion and magic, popular faith and elitist faith, Catholicism and Protestantism.

## Finland

In the Swedish realm there was a dichotomy: the kingdom (*riket*) and the province of Finland, which in the Middle Ages had been incorporated into Sweden, was considered part of the realm.

In the Middle Ages the Finnish Catholic church had enjoyed the same privileged status in society as the Swedish church. Its bishops and prelates were able men who had studied at foreign universities – mainly in Paris where one of them was even elected a rector – and acquired good theological and philosophical training. The lower-ranking clergy were less well equipped, but there were few of the usual complaints of abuses within the church, and the demand for reforms was not as evident as elsewhere. The bishops exercised both ecclesiastical and temporal power and traditionally played an important role in the realm's foreign policy. As a Catholic bishopric, the Finnish church belonged to the archdiocese of Uppsala, but it also maintained direct contacts with the *curia*. It was only after the Reformation that it became fully incorporated into the Swedish church.

Finland remained under the control of Christian II's supporters when the evangelical reorientation of Swedish church policy began. When Gustav Vasa gained control over Finland in 1523, a new bishop was appointed to the vacant see of St Henry in Turku (named after the Englishman, Henry, who was the first missionary bishop of Finland *c.* 1157). The previous bishop, Arvid Kurki, who, like a number of his predecessors, had received his *magister artium* in Paris, was drowned in 1522 in the Gulf of Bothnia, trying to escape the Danes, who still controlled part of Finland. Shortly before his unfortunate death he had been elected archbishop of Uppsala in place of the pro-Union Gustav Trolle. Kurki's successor in Turku, Erik Svensson (1523–7), had been Gustav Vasa's chancellor.<sup>27</sup>

To a great extent the Reformation in Finland followed the developments in Sweden, but it had its own special character. The doctrinal reform was carried out by young Finnish theologians who had been acquainted with the new religion during their studies at foreign – predominantly German – universities. The first Lutheran canon and later archdeacon in Turku, Pietari Särkilahti, was the son of a mayor of Turku. He had studied for some years in Rostock and in Louvain, where he attended Erasmus's lectures, and also in Wittenberg. In 1523 he returned to his native town and until his untimely death in 1529 he exerted considerable influence over the younger

<sup>27</sup> Kouri, 'The Early Reformation', p. 46.

priests, preaching especially against the worship of saints, celibacy and monastic life. Furthermore, Olaus Petri's activities in Stockholm, together with the close connections between the German colonies there and in Turku, Viipuri (Viborg) and the Baltic cities, where the Reformation had taken hold in the mid 1520s, helped the new faith to spread in Finland. In Viipuri, for instance, the German-born chaplain Johannes Block, held Lutheran worship as early as 1528.<sup>28</sup>

When, in 1527, the frustrated Erik Svensson had obtained permission to resign his bishopric, a pious Dominican and Catholic reformist, Martinus Skytte, who had earlier taught in Naples, was appointed as *electus* to the see of Turku – the first time a bishop was appointed in Finland without papal confirmation. Skytte's decision to send talented young Finnish students to Wittenberg in the early 1530s had far-reaching importance for the Reformation in Finland. The first of them returned in 1536. It was these scholars who introduced the Reformation to the Finnish people. Simultaneously, the Reformation took a sharp evangelical turn. The monasteries, for instance, were closed and their property was confiscated.<sup>29</sup>

It took four years before a successor to Bishop Martinus Skytte, who had died in 1550, was found. Then, however, no fewer than two bishops were appointed. Gustav Vasa, who wanted to emphasise his power over the Finnish church, had decided to divide the country into two bishoprics. Mikael Agricola was elected to the see of Turku, and Paavali Juusten to the newly created see of Viipuri in eastern Finland. Mikael Agricola had been one of the young men upon whom Pietari Särkilahti's preaching had made a profound impression in the late 1520s. He was born around 1510 on the southern coast of Finland, and after attending school in Viipuri he arrived in Turku in 1528, where he later became Bishop Skytte's secretary. In 1536 he left for Wittenberg, where he attended Luther's and Melancthon's lectures. Having received his *magister artium* there, he returned to Turku, where he became headmaster of the Latin school and nine years later an assistant to Skytte. After Skytte's death in 1550 he succeeded to the bishopric, but did not receive

28 E. I. Kouri, 'La Réforme royale en Scandinavie', in J. Miller (ed.), *L'Europe protestante aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1997), pp. 154–6.

29 S. Heininen, *Die finnischen Studenten in Wittenberg 1531–1552* (Helsinki, 1980); J. Nuorteva, *Suomalaisten ulkomainen opinkäynti ennen Turun Akatemian perustamista 1640* (Helsinki, 1997), pp. 150–71; E. I. Kouri, 'Die finnisch-deutschen Kontakte zu Beginn der Neuzeit', in A. Jäntti and M. Holtkamp (eds.), *Finnisch-deutsche Kulturbeziehungen seit dem Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 59–74. For the monasteries see M. Bernström, *Klostren och reformationen. Upplösningen av kloster och konvent i Sverige 1523–1596* (Skellefteå, 2003), pp. 335–62 for an English summary.



the full title of bishop until 1554. In the following year, war broke out between Sweden and Russia. This forced Gustav Vasa to spend more time in Finland. Agricola became increasingly involved in the diplomatic negotiations between the two countries. In 1557 he was sent to Moscow as a peace negotiator and on his way back he fell ill and died on the Karelian Isthmus.<sup>30</sup>

Mikael Agricola is known not only as Finland's reformer, but also as the father of the Finnish written language and literature. The first work to appear in Finnish was his *ABC Book*, which included a Finnish translation of Luther's *Catechism*, published in 1543. The following year his large *Biblical Prayer Book*, a manual for priests, was printed. His translation of the New Testament was published in 1548, and about a quarter of the Old Testament in 1551–2. He also translated the mass and the manual from Swedish in 1549. Only after the publication of these liturgical books did Finnish religious life take on a definitive shape all over the country. By then Olaus Petri's Swedish Mass had been celebrated only in Turku Cathedral (since 1536). It was at this point that the Finnish liturgy transformed the royal reformation into a Finnish reformation. Agricola's substantial literary output consists mainly of translations of Greek, Latin, German and Swedish writings, but it also reflects his cautious reforming activities and his personal thought. Agricola was not a radical reformer, but rather a Melanchthonian traditionalist. In addition to theology, he was interested in history, philosophy, law and medicine.<sup>31</sup>

Mikael Agricola always tried to avoid getting involved in any of the political disputes of his time, a policy which was not continued by his successor, Petrus Follingius (1556–63) from Linköping. The latter immediately involved himself in the quarrels between Gustav Vasa's sons, Erik XIV and Johan, duke of Finland. Johan began to conduct an independent foreign policy with the support of Follingius. Consequently, Erik intervened and conquered the castle of Turku, using the opportunity to remove Follingius from his post. After Follingius's dismissal the king transferred Paavali Juusten to Turku (1563–75). He appointed Knuut Johanneksenpoika (Canutus Johannis) to the see of Viipuri, but the bishop died the following year. Theologically,

30 S. Heininen, *Mikael Agricola. Elämä ja teokset* (Helsinki, 2007), pp. 23–144; K. Tarkiainen (ed.), *Ruotsin ja Venäjän rauhanneuvottelut 1557. Mikael Agricola Ruotsin lähetystön jäsenenä* (Helsinki, 2007).

31 M. Agricola, *Kootut teokset*, 1–4, 2nd edn (Porvoo, 1987); M.-E. Schmeidler, 'Zur Analyse der Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments durch Michael Agricola (1548)', *Studia Fennica*, 14 (Helsinki, 1969), pp. 41–56; S. Heininen, *Mikael Agricola raamatun-suomentajana* (Helsinki, 1999), pp. 274–6. See also B. Moeller, 'Luther in Europe: His Works in Translation 1517–46', in E. I. Kouri and T. Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe: Essays for Sir Geoffrey Elton* (London, 1987), pp. 236, 245.

these men, like many Swedish and Finnish theologians of the period, moved gradually from traditional Philippism towards a mild Melanchthonian orthodoxy.

Paavali Juusten (c. 1520–75) was the son of a wealthy merchant from Viipuri, where he went to Latin school. Later he moved to Turku, where he was ordained in 1540. In the following year he became headmaster of his old school in Viipuri. In 1543 he left for Wittenberg, where he studied under Luther and Melanchthon until 1547, when he returned to Finland. Thanks to the favourable letter of recommendation from Melanchthon, he was in 1548 appointed headmaster of the cathedral school in Turku and six years later he was consecrated bishop.

Juusten worked hard – first in Viipuri and then in Turku – to improve the spiritual and material standards within his diocese. He was also a diligent author and his literary output includes writings of various kinds. His two most important historical writings are a chronicle of all the Finnish bishops and an account of his diplomatic negotiations in Russia in 1569–72, which was later translated into several languages. Juusten's writings reflect his theological thinking. Besides Luther himself, he recommended to the Finnish clergy the study of two other Wittenberg reformers, Melanchthon and Johannes Brenz. His concept of the Eucharist was the same as that of the Swedish Archbishop Laurentius Petri. Juusten died in 1575; and a new bishop was not appointed to the see of St Henry until eight years later. During this period the diocese was in the hands of superintendents who had no right of ordination. The bishopric of Viipuri was administered by Eerik Härkäpää (1569–78), who, like Juusten, had taken his *magister artium* in Wittenberg. He was, in fact, for three years the only bishop in Finland.<sup>32</sup>

A new bishop of Turku, Ericus Erici Sorolainen, born the son of a clergyman in south-west Finland in c. 1546, was eventually appointed. As a student under David Chytraeus in Rostock in the mid 1570s, he moved from Philippistic Melanchthonism to Melanchthonian orthodoxy, which was moderate from a confessional point of view and which stressed the patristic writers. On his return to Sweden he was appointed rector of the Gävle School. In 1583 Johan III elevated him to the see of Turku and made him at

32 P. Juusten, *Catalogus et ordinaria successio episcoporum Finlandensium*, ed. S. Heininen (Helsinki, 1988); I. Kajanto, *The Tragic Mission of Bishop Paul Juusten to Tsar Ivan the Terrible* (Helsinki, 1995). For the Finnish bishops see S. Heininen, 'Biskopsutnämningarna i Finland 1554–1642', in *Reformationens konsolidering*, pp. 240–50; S. Heininen, *Agricolan perintö: Paulus Juustenin elämä* (Helsinki, 2012), passim.

the same time administrator of the diocese of Viipuri. He held the latter position until 1618 and the former until his death in 1625.

Encouraged by Rome, King Johan introduced several Catholicising innovations in Finland too. The introduction of his new liturgy, the Red Book of 1576, passed without problem. He tried to re-establish the monastery at Naantali (Nådendal) and to create a humanist centre at the Latin School in Turku. Other innovations were a Latin mass on special occasions, the use of chasubles and a greater emphasis on church music and the writings of the Fathers. Johan also made overtures to the Greek church. These ultimately proved abortive, but in preparation for the talks Ericus Eriici was asked to translate the liturgy and a catechism into Greek. Ericus Eriici has sometimes been considered an opportunist, but he is probably best understood as a Lutheran humanist, like the Swedish archbishops Laurentius Petri Gothus and Andreas Björnram, who both, incidentally, supported the new liturgy. Ericus Eriici considered ceremonies *adiaphora*, i.e. indifferent to the saving of souls. It is not surprising that he did not get on well with Duke Karl of Södermanland.

The Romanising proclivities of Klaus Fleming, governor of Finland (and of Estonia from 1591) are mostly to be explained as his way of showing some measure of independence from Karl. But they also point to the strength of Catholicism and Catholicising tendencies in Finland, which managed to send only thirteen delegates to the Uppsala synod in 1593. A few months after the proclamation of the Uppsala Resolution, however, the Finnish church held its own synod in Turku, where the Resolution was ratified. As in Sweden, this signalled the end of the theological strife of the Reformation era.

During the prolonged struggle for power between Sigismund and Duke Karl, Finland had remained loyal to the king. As a result, Karl appeared with an expeditionary force at Turku in September 1599. The town was soon in his hands, a number of Finnish noblemen were executed and Bishop Ericus Eriici imprisoned. With Karl's departure in the following month, however, Finnish royalism soon reasserted itself among the clergy too. When the duke came to Finland in 1600, he again imprisoned Ericus Eriici together with twenty Finnish ministers, and brought them back to Sweden to be prosecuted by the chapter of Uppsala. The chapter acquitted the bishop. His opposition to Fleming's Catholicism undoubtedly now stood him in good stead. He was pardoned, but was not reinstated in his office until 1602.<sup>33</sup>

33 P. Laasonen, *Suomen kirkon historia*, 2 (Porvoo, 1991), pp. 15–22; E. I. Kouri, 'Ericus Eriici Sorolainen (1546–1625). Turun piispa, Viipurin administrator, kirjailija', in *Suomen*

Ericus Erci wrote a number of books in Finnish, among others a church manual, which was an almost literal translation of the Swedish manual, two catechisms based mainly on Luther's and other German catechisms and a two-volume collection of sermons on the Gospels based on German sources – coming to 2,200 pages in all. He was also a member of the committee for the translation of the Bible into Finnish. Ericus Erci's writings had great influence on the spiritual life of Finland and also on the Finnish language itself. The bishop tried to base his theological position on the Bible and the common Lutheran tradition, but he also took account of regional differences. During his long episcopate early Lutheran orthodoxy took greater and greater hold in Finland. The Reformation emphasised the national languages and Ericus Erci as well as other Finnish authors made an important contribution to the vernacular literature. Unfortunately, the consequent and ever-stronger 'Swedishing' of Finland by the government in Stockholm soon caused a decline in the use of national language.<sup>34</sup>

In doctrinal matters Finland followed the developments in late sixteenth-century Germany. A good example was Marcus Henrici Helsingius. He took his *magister artium* in Wittenberg in 1594, where Gnesio-Lutheranism had in 1591 ousted Melancthonian Philippism, which inclined to Calvinism. After returning to Turku, as a staunch representative of early Lutheran orthodoxy, he published in 1603 an anti-Calvinist *Elenchus* – a book which was one of the sources of Ericus Erci's large catechism. Of course, other Finnish authors contributed to the renaissance of Finnish religious literature. For example, the first Finnish hymn-book was compiled and published in 1583 by Jacobus Petri Finno, the head of the Latin school at Turku. This was later extended to

*kansallisbiografia*, 2 (Helsinki, 2003), pp. 623–7; E. I. Kouri, 'Ericus Erci Sorolainen (1546–1625). Biskop, administrator, författare', in *Biografiskt lexikon för Finland*, 1 (Helsingfors, 2008), pp. 195–8.

- <sup>34</sup> Ericus Erci, *Postilla*, 1–2 (Stockholm 1621–5; repr., Helsinki, 1988–90). For the sources of Ericus Erci's substantial literary work see E. I. Kouri, *Saksalaisen käyttökirjallisuuden vaikutus Suomessa 1600-luvulla: Ericus Ercin Postillan lähteet* (Helsinki, 1984), passim; E. I. Kouri, 'Der Einfluss der deutschen Gebrauchsliteratur in Finnland im 17. Jahrhundert. Die Vorlagen von Ericus Ercis Postille', in E. I. Kouri, *Historiography, Politics and Religion* (Jyväskylä, 1990), pp. 508–18. For the language policy in the Swedish realm in the early modern period see E. I. Kouri, 'Die politisch-administrative Rolle der finnischen Sprache im Schwedischen und Russischen Reich', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 53 (2005), pp. 338–42; E. I. Kouri, 'Die Stellung des Finnischen als Verwaltungssprache bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in T. Nicklas and M. Schnettger (eds.), *Politik und Sprache im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Mainz, 2007), pp. 138ff.; E. I. Kouri, 'Das Nationale und die Stellung der Sprache im Großfürstentum Finnland', in K. Maier (ed.), *Nation und Sprache in Nordosteuropa im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 2012), pp. 275–7.

a collection of over 200 hymns by Henrik Hemming. Another hymn-book that appeared about this time was that of Sigfrid Aron Forsius, the first Finnish-Swedish hymn-writer. Forsius also had a penchant for astrology and neo-Platonic philosophy. The large collection of songs, *Piae cantiones*, had been published in 1582. The first Finnish (and Swedish) theologian after the Reformation to receive his doctorate of Divinity was Johannes Raumannus (at Marburg in 1604), who was later active as a professor and rector at Uppsala University, refounded by Duke Karl in 1595.<sup>35</sup>

Counter-Reformation Rome put great emphasis on converting young men in Scandinavia to study at Continental Jesuit colleges. In Finland the Jesuits were not slow to take advantage of Johan III's Catholicising policies. Their strength was the renowned Jesuit education. This was something a Finn might choose for his son not just for its excellence or on religious grounds, but also for a curious political reason: Catholic Poland was seen as an ally against Orthodox Russia. This notion gave King Sigismund considerable support in Finland. Bishop Ericus Eriki's only son, for example, was educated at *Collegium Germanicum* in Rome. To this excellent institution he was admitted on the strength of a personal letter of recommendation from no less than King Sigismund himself. Ericus Eriki the Younger spent the rest of his life in Poland. One of the most famous alumni of the Jesuit college in Braunsberg was Johannes Messenius, the author of the monumental *Scondia illustrata* and a smaller history of Finland. He was later removed from the University of Uppsala and died as a prisoner in the castle of Kajaani (Kajaneborg). Johannes Jussoila of Rauma met a similar fate. He went to Rome with the Jesuit diplomat Possevino, returned as a Jesuit and became chaplain to King Sigismund. He, too, was thrown into prison by Duke Karl and died there, apparently in 1604. There was also a feeling against the order at a humble level. In 1584 a Jesuit, Gregorius Clementis, was made head of the Latin school in Viipuri, but such was the local feeling that he was ostracised even by his own pupils.<sup>36</sup>

35 For Johannes Raumannus see S. J. Salminen, 'Johannes Raumannus. Der erste Doktor der Theologie Schwedens nach der Reformation', *Kyrkohistorisk årskrift*, 71 (1971), pp. 80–105; E. I. Kouri, 'Johannes Raumannus (1570–1614). Upsalan yliopiston rehtori, teologian professori, teologian tohtori', in *Suomen kansallisbiografia*, 8 (Helsinki, 2006), pp. 137–9. For Helsingius see S. Heininen, *Marcus Henrici Helsingius* (Helsinki, 1974). The first Finnish university was founded in Turku in 1640, and transferred to Helsinki in 1828. See M. Klinge, *A European University: The University of Helsinki 1640–2010* (Helsinki, 2010).

36 K. G. Leinberg, 'Några tillägg till uppsatsen. Om finske Studerande i Jesuitcollegier', *Historiallinen arkisto*, 18 (1903), pp. 65–72; E. I. Kouri, 'The Life of Ericus Eriki the Younger in Counter-Reformation Europe', in E. I. Kouri, *Historiography, Politics and*

From a consideration of the complex situation which existed in Sweden-Finland at the beginning of the early modern period, it is clear that a large proportion of the writings about political theory was produced by theologians, philosophers and lawyers who had studied abroad. But since the main circle of readers consisted of the clergy, public officials and ordinary people, they contained relatively little of the academic theorising which often characterised Continental literature. Generally speaking, developments in Scandinavia followed those of the Holy Roman Empire. The Swedish reformer Olaus Petri allied himself closely with Luther and in Laurentius Petri's coronation speech (1561) Melanchthonist elements were dominant.

Gustav Vasa and his sons were influenced by theories emphasising the power of the monarch. The reaction came during the time of Johan III and its chief advocates were noble members of the council of the realm, who defended the privileges of the estates. In the crisis of loyalty which followed Johan's death the councillors, in contrast, supported the lawful ruler Sigismund against Duke Karl. Both sides also attempted to justify themselves in theory.

Sweden did not witness the disputes, frequent on the Continent, between representatives of different schools of political thinking. But the changes which took place in the political development of the country were reflected in the literature on the subject. Thus, for example, the neo-Aristotelian Johannes Rudbeckius made an attack on Machiavelli and considered *monarchia mixta* the best form of government.

The Finnish reformer Mikael Agricola, who had studied under Luther at Wittenberg, adopted his teacher's notion of authority. His successors also studied in Germany and on their return usually advocated the ideas dominant there at the time. But in the northern periphery there was also some awareness of how theories of authority were put into practice generally in Europe. For example, Henrik Jösön Careel, a native of Viipuri, translated Franciscus Ragueau's work *Lex politica Dei* (1587) and Nicolaus Magni Carelius, who worked in the same town, composed the *Oratio de optima republica* (1599), in which there was a direct reference also to *pro lege* and *pro grege* thinking. Among the numerous foreign essays concerned with political

*Religion* (Jyväskylä, 1990), pp. 46of.; Nuorteva, *Suomalaisten ulkomainen opinkäynti*, pp. 211–38, 241–54; E. I. Kouri, 'Ericus Erici junior (s. 1580). Käännynnäinen, jesuiitta', in *Suomen kansallisbiografia*, 2 (Helsinki, 2003), pp. 621–3.

theories which were translated in Sweden-Finland was also *Basilikon doron* (*Regium donum*) of James I of England (1599).<sup>37</sup>

## Conclusion

A theme uniting all early modern Scandinavia is the impact of the Reformation, but in the influence of its developments there are differences. Not all the consequences in Sweden and Finland were positive. In contrast to the developments in Denmark, the Reformation heralded a period of cultural decline. This was, of course, partly due to the desperately shrinking economic resources of the church which, to a greater extent than in most other countries, had been the mainstay of learning. Furthermore, communications with the Catholic centres of learning became infrequent or were disrupted altogether. Clergymen with a university education became rarer and scholarly connections were limited to Protestant German universities, above all to Wittenberg and later to Rostock. On the political level too, contacts and co-operation increased with Protestant Europe, and with Germany in particular. This development can also be seen in the writings not only by theologians but also those on philosophy, law and political theory published in Scandinavia.

In Finland – as in Norway – the Reformation, which emphasised the national languages, was important for the formation of a nationality and culture. A rapidly increasing number of vernacular ecclesiastical writings were published, which became the basis of Finnish language and literature. Soon, however, there were ever-stronger indications of the consequent ‘Swedishing’ of Finnish culture and society. The disadvantage of such integration – in particular, language policy – became an increasingly recognised problem much discussed among Finnish clerics and it met various forms of opposition in general.

In Reformation Sweden and Finland the social and economic status of the clergy declined and the status of the church in society changed correspondingly. Its political influence decreased – though at the same time religiously motivated obedience towards the state increased. The growing role of the Old Testament was reflected in a demand for stricter church discipline and

37 Franciscus Raguaeau, *Lex politica Dei* (Frankfurt, 1587), trans. Henrik Jönsson Careel (Stockholm, 1607); James I, *Basilikon doron* (Edinburgh, 1599), *Regium donum eller Konungslig föräring*, trans. Ericus Schroderus (Stockholm, 1606); Nicolaus Magni Carelius, *Oratio de optima republica* (Rostock, 1599), pp. B2–C1.

for severer punishments at the courts of law. Administratively and financially, the church became ever more dependent on the crown, which could use its right to make appointments and its control over economic matters to influence the church's decisions. The clergy became almost a class of civil servants. However, historical episcopacy, theologically trained clergy and ancient Swedish and Finnish self-government at parish level helped the church to retain its own profile. Gustav Vasa's disinclination to make any changes in liturgy and ceremonies, at least during the early Reformation period, also served to encourage a *de facto* independence and it may even be considered a royal acknowledgement of it. In spite of all shortcomings, a territorial church with a genuine Lutheran flavour was established in Sweden and Finland during the reign of Gustav Vasa. Neither later doctrinal fluctuations nor political vagaries of his successors were able to change this course decisively.

The differing political and national conditions in Scandinavia produced two main types of reformation: one Danish-Norwegian and another Swedish-Finnish, though there are several common features. The churches there are still 'national' Lutheran churches to which almost the entire population belongs. There can be no doubt about the national character of the churches created by the Reformation in the different Nordic countries and this has become one of the characteristics of their national identities. In Scandinavia, as in England, it was primarily a matter of royal policy, of from-the-top-down state action, which induced the slow mass diffusion of a new faith.



## Intellectual currents

OLE PETER GRELL

The Reformation in Scandinavia, accompanied as it was by severe social and political upheavals and civil war, initially had a disastrous effect on the intellectual life of these countries in general and the embryonic universities in København and Uppsala in particular. Tertiary education in Sweden had already been in a particularly deplorable state a decade before the evangelical movement began making an impact. The University of Uppsala was closed in 1515 as a result of the political conflict which had begun tearing the country apart. In spite of attempts to revive the university during the reigns of Gustav Vasa's sons, Erik XIV and Johan III, which resulted in a college being established in Uppsala and later a similar institution in Stockholm, these efforts fell well short of what was required to revitalise tertiary education in Sweden. Consequently Sweden remained an intellectual backwater until the university was finally reopened in 1595.

The University of København, founded in 1479, two years after its sister institution in Uppsala, survived the first effects of the evangelical movement, eventually being closed down by the last Catholic bishop of Sjælland in 1531, as a dangerous hothouse of evangelical sedition. The bishop's assessment was probably to the point, bearing in mind that a considerable number of the leading reformers were former teachers at the university. They had been pupils and associates of the university's most prominent teacher since 1519, the Carmelite humanist Paul Helie, before abandoning their mentor and the Catholic church. As opposed to the rest of Scandinavia, Christian humanism made a considerable impact in Denmark in the decade leading up to the Reformation. Its influence was enhanced through the work of scholars like Christiern Pedersen, who while studying in Paris published several important works such as a Latin–Danish dictionary (1510) and the first edition of Saxo's *Historica Danica* (1514), and Christian Torkelsen Morsing who lectured in '*litteris politioribus*' at the university around 1520 and who, according to tradition, was instrumental

in recruiting humanist and reformist scholars, Martin Reinhardt and Matthias Gabler from the University of Wittenberg.

Upon the closure of the university Morsing spent the next six years as tutor to the later Lord High Steward, Peder Oxe, visiting the cultural and scholarly centres of the Holy Roman Empire, France, Switzerland and Italy, taking the opportunity to study anatomy and botany in particular at the universities of Montpellier and Basle. In 1537 Christian Torkelsen Morsing was recalled by Christian III to assist with the reopening of the University of København as a Protestant seat of learning. Morsing had by then received his MD from the University of Basle, where the study of medicine had been transformed during the 1530s on the instigation of Basle's reformer, Johannes Oecolampadius, who had emphasised the value of practical medicine in general and botany in particular. Morsing was appointed professor of medicine and made the new Protestant university's first vice-chancellor. His humanist credentials are strongly evidenced in the lecture list for medical students which he put together in 1537. Here it was stipulated that one of the two professors of medicine would lecture on theoretical medicine, focusing on the original Greek texts by Galen and Hippocrates, while the other would lecture on practical medicine based on more recent Latin authors. Morsing clearly envisaged a radical reformation of the traditional, medieval medical curriculum for the new Protestant university. His aspirations appear to have been at odds with those of Luther's friend and collaborator, Johannes Bugenhagen, who was responsible for drawing up not only the new Danish Church Order in 1537, but also the new University Statutes two years later. Bugenhagen favoured a more cautious and conservative approach with regard to natural philosophy and medicine. Drawing on the Melanchthonian Statutes for Wittenberg, Bugenhagen specifically included the traditional texts by Rhazes and Avicenna, excluded by Morsing in 1537, and made no reference to the original Greek texts by Galen and Hippocrates.

The influence of Lutheran Wittenberg remained paramount in Denmark during the reign of Christian III. The dominant intellectual figure was Melanchthon's disciple and first Protestant bishop of Sjælland, Peder Palladius, whose pastoral and catechetical works proved invaluable for the young Lutheran church. Both Palladius and Christian III were deeply concerned with education. The king and his chancellor, Johan Friis, personally supported Danish students in Wittenberg while providing capital for the Latin schools which were established in many market towns. In spite of such efforts the reformed and re-established University of København remained

a parochial institution until the death of Christian III in 1559. Lacking funds, due to the economic restraints imposed by the costs of the recent civil war, the university only managed to attract few students. Consequently only a small portion of the intentions laid down in the Statutes were realised. It was not until the reign of Christian's son, Frederik II (1559–88), that significant progress was made.<sup>1</sup>

Denmark in particular appears to have benefited from the general economic boom in Europe during the second half of the sixteenth century, not least thanks to a growing demand for Danish agricultural products. Consequently, more money became available for the University. Professorial salaries improved dramatically making these posts more attractive to talented and ambitious individuals. Such improvements gathered further pace when the Seven Years War (1563–70) between Denmark and Sweden drew to a close, liberating finances which had hitherto been swallowed up in the war effort. Thus in 1569 a Royal Trust was founded, providing stipends for a hundred students, modelled – as was more often than not the case in København – on a similar institution in Wittenberg. Likewise the post 1570 decades witnessed an explosive growth in the number of Danish students who matriculated at foreign universities, as part of their *perigrinatio academica* or grand tour. Numbers more than doubled in the period 1571–1600, reaching 1,095, compared with the period 1536–70, when only 528 students matriculated abroad.<sup>2</sup> The pattern of this expansion, however, was not particular to Denmark alone, but was a pan-Scandinavian phenomenon.

The improved economic climate made it possible for the University of København to appoint two professors of medicine for the first time since the Reformation. Morsing's successor, Hans Frandsen, who had been appointed in 1561, was joined by the Paracelsian, Johannes Philip Pratensis, who had just returned home together with his friend and colleague, Peter Severinus, from a six-year study tour to the leading, French, German and Italian seats of learning. The talents of these young men, who had received their MAs from

1 O. P. Grell, 'Caspar Bartholin and the Education of the Pious Physician', in O. P. Grell and A. Cunningham (eds.), *Medicine and the Reformation* (London, 1993), pp. 78–100. See also M. Fink-Jensen, 'Medicine, Natural Philosophy, and the Influence of Melanchthon in Reformation Denmark and Norway', *Bulletin of History of Medicine*, 80 (2006), pp. 439–64.

2 See O. P. Grell, "'Like the Bees, who neither Suck nor Generate their Honey from One Flower': The Significance of the Perigrinatio Academica for Danish Medical Students in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', in O. P. Grell *et al.* (eds.), *Centres of Medical Excellence? Medical Travel and Education in Europe, 1500–1789* (Farnham, 2010), pp. 171–92.

the University of København in 1564, had been quickly appreciated by the government. Their extensive medical studies abroad were sanctioned by royal permission to spend the money allocated for the salary of a second professor in medicine on their education, with the explicit proviso that either or both should later serve the university as professor of medicine. It was not, however, the Paracelsianism of Pratensis, whose tenure within the faculty of medicine was cut short by his premature death in 1576, which proved significant, but that of his friend Peter Severinus, who had been appointed royal physician to Frederik II upon their return. Through his widely read *Idea medicinae philosophicae* published in Basle in 1571, which Severinus had dedicated to his royal sponsor, he became something of a celebrity admired not only by contemporary 'moderate' or eclectic Paracelsians, such as the Basle professor of medicine Theodor Zwinger and the English physician Thomas Moffett, but also by anti-Paracelsians such as the Heidelberg-based physician and theologian Thomas Erastus. As early as 1579 Erastus recommended Severinus's book as the most palatable face of Paracelsianism. Later another influential critic of Paracelsus, the Wittenberg professor of medicine, Daniel Sennert praised Severinus for having clarified and systematised Paracelsus's ideas and in effect created a new, and acceptable school of Paracelsianism which he labelled 'Severinian'.

Peter Severinus placed his version and interpretation of Paracelsianism firmly within the Hippocratic tradition which Renaissance humanism had revived. In doing so he was in agreement with his friends and admirers such as Theodor Zwinger and Thomas Moffett. His eclectic Paracelsianism remained highly critical of scholastic medicine and Galenic pathology. It fitted into the Paracelsian rhetoric of reform, but it had, significantly, been purged of all popular and radical elements. It was a compromise between traditional university medicine and Paracelsianism, as can be seen from the conclusion of the *Idea medicinae*. Here Severinus emphasised that far from rejecting Galenism and traditional medicine outright, he only sought to correct the mistakes which had been allowed to emerge by encouraging physicians 'actively and quietly to explore nature and the conditions which cause cures and from where the vital processes emanate'. Thus Peter Severinus was an early advocate of an open-minded empirical type of medicine. For him natural philosophy was not merely passive contemplation, but first-hand experience. These aspects of his philosophy were undoubtedly his most enduring legacy to Danish medicine and came to characterise the approach of other dominant figures of the next generation, such as Caspar Bartholin, Ole Worm and Thomas Bartholin.

Severinus may not have received his MD from Basle, but the institutional contact between Basle and København, which had been initiated when Christian Torkelsen Morsing received his MD there in the 1530s, and which was to be of such monumental significance for the faculty of medicine in København from 1537 until the second decade of the seventeenth century, also proved of the greatest importance to Peter Severinus. His visit to Basle in 1569 laid the foundation for a long friendship and scholarly exchange with Theodor Zwinger and led to the publication of his *Idea medicinæ* in Basle, the major European publishing centre, two years later. Furthermore, a number of Severinus's friendships and scholarly contacts can be traced back to Basle, such as the friendship with Thomas Moffett which came about when Moffett visited Severinus in København as part of an English embassy in 1582. Moffett had undoubtedly already read *Idea medicinæ* when he was a student in Basle in the late 1570s and probably had heard the Dane mentioned positively by his tutor and professor, Theodor Zwinger. Two years after his visit to København Moffett dedicated his defence of Paracelsus and iatrochemistry to Severinus. Entitled, *De Jure Præsantia Chymicorum* (1584), this work went through many editions on the Continent and served to enhance Severinus's reputation as the period's leading exponent of Paracelsianism.<sup>3</sup>

Peter Severinus was not the only Danish scholar of the late sixteenth century whose fame encouraged learned Europeans to visit København. In 1588, when Josias Mercer arrived in Denmark, as secretary to the English ambassador, Daniel Rogers, he gave a detailed description of his meeting with Severinus, whom he described as a 'great man'. He appears to have met Severinus in the company of the Danish chancellor and historian, Arild Huitfeldt, who some years later published his *magnum opus*, *The Chronicle of Denmark* (1595–1603) and whose interests in natural philosophy and history were well known as was his role as a major benefactor of Danish scholars and scholarship.

Another learned Dane of even greater standing among contemporary European scholars, Tycho Brahe, proved by far the outstanding attraction for foreigners belonging to the international republic of letters. Josias Mercer

3 O. P. Grell, 'The Reception of Paracelsianism in Early Modern Lutheran Denmark: From Peter Severinus, the Dane, to Ole Worm', *Medical History*, 39 (1995), pp. 78–94; O. P. Grell, 'The Acceptable Face of Paracelsianism: The Legacy of *Idea Medicinæ* and the Introduction of Paracelsianism into Early Modern Denmark', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *Paracelsus. The Man and His Reputation: His Ideas and their Transformation* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 245–67. See also J. Shackelford, *A Philosophical Path for Paracelsian Medicine: The Ideas, Intellectual Context and Influence of Petrus Severinus: 1540–1602* (Copenhagen, 2004), *passim*.

provided a detailed description of his and Daniel Rogers's visit to the island of Hven, situated about 1 mile off the coast of Helsingør, where this Danish astronomer had resided since 1580 when his house *cum* laboratory, Uranienborg, had been finished. His observatory on Hven with its many instruments quickly became a major sight for visiting scholars and princes, thus King James VI of Scotland inspected Hven in 1590 during his visit to Denmark.

After nearly seven years' study abroad, Tycho Brahe came back to Denmark only six months before the return of the two Paracelsian physicians, Johannes Pratensis and Peter Severinus, in June 1571. Having matriculated at the University of København in 1559 Brahe had spent the next three years studying the arts before setting out on his *perigrinatio academica* in 1562. During the following three years while officially studying law at the University of Leipzig, Brahe supplemented his day-time studies with secret nightly studies of astronomy. After the death of his guardian and uncle, Jørgen Brahe, in 1565 Brahe abandoned all pretence of studying law, and in 1566 we find him at the University of Wittenberg studying under the supervision of Melancthon's son-in-law and professor of medicine, Caspar Peucer. The years 1567–8 were spent in Rostock where Brahe appears to have been taught by the professor of medicine, Levinus Battus, who was a keen iatrochemist and leading exponent of Paracelsianism. In 1568 Brahe matriculated at the University of Basle eventually spending the last two years before his return to Denmark in Augsburg, learning the secrets of instrument-making from the Hainzel brothers. It was during his stay in the imperial city that Tycho Brahe met the French natural philosopher, Peter Ramus, who had recently suggested a reform of astronomy where all hypotheses about celestial spheres were to be removed and astronomy to be based solely on logic and mathematics, views which confirmed Tycho Brahe in his own approach.

Like Severinus and Pratensis, Tycho Brahe returned from his study-tour as a convinced neo-Platonic and eclectic Paracelsian and during the first years following his return he appears to have been preoccupied with alchemical work rather than astronomy. Brahe's continued interest in alchemy is confirmed by the laboratory he had constructed on Hven. His private research academy, Uranienborg, became the third cornerstone in a neo-Platonist and Paracelsian triangle, which was anchored within the court and its royal physician Peter Severinus, and strongly supported by Pratensis from within the university. Many of the next generation of leading professors at the University of København, such as Christian Sørensen Longomontanus, the first professor of astronomy in København and author of *Astronomia Danica* (1622), the professor of medicine Gellius Sascerides, and the later professor of

theology, Cort Aslaksen, all served Tycho Brahe as assistants during the 1580s and 1590s and were strongly influenced by their master's neo-Platonism and eclectic Paracelsianism.<sup>4</sup>

Without the support of two of the university's leading professors, Hans Frandsen in medicine and Niels Hemmingsen in theology Pratensis, Severinus and Tycho Brahe would probably never have achieved such prominence. Hans Frandsen, like Severinus born and educated in the town of Ribe, where the Latin school produced many of this period's leading intellectual lights in Denmark, appears despite his Galenist orientation to have been keen on promoting young talented students who adhered to neo-Platonist/Paracelsian ideas. He undoubtedly introduced Pratensis and Severinus to Tycho Brahe whom he had already befriended while supervising him as a young student between 1559 and 1562.

The friendship between Pratensis and Brahe blossomed and it was Johannes Pratensis and Tycho's cousin, the recently appointed Lord High Steward Peder Oxé who convinced Tycho Brahe to publish his discovery of the new star in 1572. When *De stella nova* was published the following year it was prefaced by a letter to Brahe from Pratensis while a poem from their mutual mentor Hans Frandsen graced the front of the book.<sup>5</sup>

Hans Frandsen's friend and colleague, the theologian Niels Hemmingsen, who dedicated his famous book, *Syntagma institutionum christianarum*, published in Basle in 1574, to Frandsen – a work which, by the way, caused Hemmingsen to be suspended from his chair in 1579 accused of Crypto-Calvinism – shared Frandsen's 'liberal' views. Like his mentor, Philip Melancthon, Hemmingsen considered astrology to be important. In a letter from 1593 to the nobleman and neo-Platonic natural philosopher, Henrik Ranzau, Hemmingsen admitted that he personally knew little of astronomy and astrology, but he believed 'that all events had their causes, necessary or accidental, and that the exceptionally skilled could read future occurrences from the Book of Nature unto which God had written like a tablet'. When Tycho Brahe gave his lectures on astronomy at the university in 1574–5, which promoted a neo-Platonic natural philosophy and eclectic

4 See H. Kragh, *Fra Middelalderlærdom til Den Nye Videnskab, 1000–1730*, Dansk Videnskabs Historie, 1 (Aarhus, 2005), pp. 219–69.

5 J. R. Christianson, *On Tycho's Island: Tycho Brahe and his Assistants 1570–1601* (Cambridge, 2000). See A. Mosley, 'The Reformation of Astronomy', in B. Heal and O. P. Grell (eds.), *The Impact of the European Reformation: Princes, Clergy and People* (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 231–50; A. Mosley, *Bearing the Heavens: Tycho Brahe and the Astronomical Community of the Late Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2007), passim.

Paracelsianism, Niels Hemmingsen attended the lectures and publicly demonstrated his approval of them. Furthermore it was Hemmingsen who, two years later, made the unusual suggestion to the governing body, that Tycho Brahe, who was not a member of the university, be appointed vice-chancellor.

Similarly six years earlier it was Hemmingsen who in his capacity as vice-chancellor had made sure that Pratensis was offered the second chair in medicine, undoubtedly with the blessing of the leading professor of medicine, Hans Frandsen, and disregarding the opposition to his appointment within the university. In this connection it is far more significant that Hemmingsen was prepared to promote Pratensis than restrictions were imposed on his teaching: Pratensis had to promise to teach fully in accordance with the Hippocratic and Galenic medicine being taught at the universities of Wittenberg and Leipzig. If Hemmingsen had shared any of the religious and philosophical reservations about the eclectic Paracelsianism advocated by Pratensis and his friend Severinus, he would hardly have wanted to promote his candidature. Thus the limitations officially imposed on Pratensis's teaching should rather be considered a politic and prudent move which served to make it difficult for those within the university who opposed his appointment to put up continued resistance to his promotion, rather than a serious attempt to prevent the teaching of Paracelsianism within the university. Not surprisingly the restrictions appear to have had little or no effect. They were disregarded by Pratensis from the outset, and his only concession was to introduce his eclectic Paracelsianism discreetly in the form of a criticism of Galen.

Undoubtedly the strength and influence of the neo-Platonic and Paracelsian camp was somewhat weakened by Philip Pratensis's sudden and unexpected death in 1576 while lecturing to his students. However, the employment of another eclectic Paracelsian Anders Krag – yet another scholar from Ribe – served to fill the gap. Krag, who had received his medical training in Basle, where he published his defence of the philosophy of Peter Ramus, and Montpellier where he was awarded his MD, came to serve the University in København in various professorial capacities from 1586 until his death in 1600. He was a dedicated Ramist and an active iatrochemist. His Paracelsianism was of the moderate Severinian variety which characterised the other Danish neo-Platonists of the age. Writing to his friend the Bamberg physician, Sigismund Schnitzer, Krag expressed how pleased he was that Schnitzer appreciated alchemical drugs as useful for many therapies. Krag added that he personally rated iatrochemical medicine highly, since he daily experienced its usefulness. He pointed out, however, that it was to be used



only with caution and that Paracelsian drugs in general ought to be toned down, while the Galenist approach should not be totally abandoned.

Without the encouragement and support of the kingdom's leading theologian, Niels Hemmingsen, it is doubtful whether the 'liberal' climate would have prevailed within government and university, necessary for nurturing the new ideas and talent which in turn served to produce scholars of international standing. During the early 1570s Hemmingsen remained the most influential member of the university and his eirenic and non-confrontational approach may well have encouraged a similar stance in the batch of neo-Platonist scholars he helped promote. Severinus certainly resonated Hemmingsen's deep concern that 'peace edifies while strife destroys', when he expressed his sympathy for the embattled Hemmingsen in the mid 1570s. Following the publication of Hemmingsen's book, *Syntagma institutionum christianarum* (1574), which had caused the professor of theology to be accused of Crypto-Calvinism, Severinus emphasised that 'Nature loves silence and God curses the quarrelsome.'<sup>6</sup>

Niels Hemmingsen, who achieved considerable fame among late sixteenth century Protestants, had studied in Wittenberg between 1537 and 1542 under Philip Melancthon, whom he constantly referred to as 'my beloved teacher'. Upon his return to Denmark he was made professor of Greek, gradually being promoted within the faculty of arts until he was appointed professor of theology in 1553 only to take over from Peder Palladius as '*theologus primus*' four years later. For more than twenty years Hemmingsen was the most dominant figure within the university, which he served as vice-chancellor on several occasions. Hemmingsen was immensely productive as a theological author publishing a series of works aimed not only at the academic market, but also at the common man and the church. His impact was far from limited to Denmark and Norway. Most of his works were written in Latin and quickly reached an international audience and could be found in most university libraries in Western Europe. Furthermore, many of his works were translated into German and English shortly after they had appeared in Latin. Hemmingsen's considerable international reputation eventually proved a mixed blessing for a scholar who favoured an eirenic approach. Due to his authoritative position Hemmingsen's name was increasingly referred to in theological debates abroad.

<sup>6</sup> Grell, 'The Reception of Paracelsianism in Early Modern Lutheran Denmark', pp. 78–94; Grell, 'The Acceptable Face of Paracelsianism', pp. 245–67.

The Spanish Protestant, Anthony Corro, who had fled to England in 1568 and who served the Spanish Protestant community in London as a minister and taught at the University of Oxford between 1579 and 1586, referred to Hemmingsen's writings in 1574, when accused by English Calvinists of not accepting predestination. Not surprisingly the writings of the Melancthonian, Crypto-Calvinist Hemmingsen appealed to 'liberal' Protestants in England and the Netherlands. Thus, when his friend, the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in Cambridge and Huguenot refugee, Peter Baro wrote to him to express his admiration for his most recent work, *Tractatus de gratis universalis* (1591) he stated that he would like to act as Hemmingsen's co-advocate of universal grace in England, had not opinion within the Church of England lately turned so strongly against such views. Baro, however, was not alone in looking to Hemmingsen for inspiration during the English predestinarian controversies of the 1590s; leading 'anti-Calvinist' figures such as Lancelot Andrews, John Overall and William Barlow also referred to the opinions of the Danish theologian. Whereas Hemmingsen's dogmatic works appealed to 'anti-Calvinists' primarily, his pastoral writings such as his manual for ministers, *The Preacher*, found favour with many Puritans and became an important source for William Perkins's *Prophetica*.

Bearing in mind that it was accusations of Crypto-Calvinism from the Holy Roman Empire which precipitated his fall it is somewhat ironic that most of Hemmingsen's Protestant admirers abroad were 'liberal' Calvinists or 'anti-Calvinist' Protestants.

By the mid 1570s it was no longer possible for the Danish Lutheran church to stay clear of the growing doctrinal strife which was tearing German Lutheranism apart. The most serious episode proved the controversy over Crypto-Calvinism, where the so-called Gnesio-Lutherans accused Melancthon and his disciples of Calvinist tendencies in their doctrine of the Eucharist. Undoubtedly there was some justification for such an accusation in the case of Hemmingsen. He had bitterly opposed the tenet of ubiquity in his *Demonstratio* of 1571, which was an integral part of the teaching of the Gnesio-Lutherans. Three years later when he published his general exposition of the Christian doctrine, *Syntagma institutionum christianarum*, which can be considered his major *opus*, his teaching on the Eucharist was unmistakably Calvinistic.

It proved an unfortunate moment to publish such views and the question of Hemmingsen's orthodoxy quickly acquired international significance. In the Holy Roman Empire passions ran high and the strife was exacerbated by

the fact that the Religious Peace of Augsburg in 1555 had, apart from Catholicism, only legalised Lutheranism as expressed in the Augsburg Confession (1530) within the Holy Roman Empire. Accordingly Hemmingsen's views might be considered not only theologically heterodox, but also a political crime which might affect those princes who tolerated it.

The year Hemmingsen chose to publish his *Syntagma* also proved to be the year when the Elector August of Saxony, married to Frederik II's sister, became aware that most of his theologians in Wittenberg consisted of Crypto-Calvinists. He proceeded to have them removed from church and university, while they emphasised their orthodoxy by pointing to the famous Danish theologian, Niels Hemmingsen, who shared their views. The elector reacted by sending his brother-in-law a copy of Hemmingsen's *Syntagma* advising him to restrain this dangerous heretic. August of Saxony also took the opportunity to remind Frederik II that Calvinism was considered politically subversive.

The pressure from Saxony eventually bore fruit in 1576 when Frederik II forced Hemmingsen publicly to retract his statements in *Syntagma*. Finally the matter seemed settled. However, the elector of Saxony and his wife were not yet satisfied and when in 1578 a new edition of *Syntagma* was published in Geneva, it mattered little that Hemmingsen had not been involved. The protest letters from Saxony were now supplemented by objections from Frederik II's mother-in-law, Duchess Anna of Mecklenburg and Hemmingsen was suspended from his professorship in June 1579. This amounted to a de facto dismissal since he was never reinstated. However, since his suspension had been dictated primarily by foreign policy considerations, Hemmingsen's reputation remained untarnished and he continued to be held in esteem at home and abroad. He retained his canonry in Roskilde where he now resided and continued his studies in peace. The government of Frederik II continued to use him in connection with ecclesiastical legislation. Hemmingsen was heavily involved in drawing up the substantial Marriage Act of 1582, which made divorce and remarriage possible in Denmark. Evidently unworried about possible risks of further accusations of Crypto-Calvinism Hemmingsen drew heavily on Calvin's Genevan Church Ordinance on this occasion. However, Hemmingsen abstained from further setting out his views in print until the electoral couple of Saxony, who had caused him so much grief, died in 1585.

Together with Peter Severinus and Tycho Brahe, Niels Hemmingsen retained his place among the intellectual lights foreign dignitaries wanted to meet when they visited Denmark. During his engagement-visit of 1590

King James VI of Scotland travelled to Roskilde in order to discuss theology with Hemmingsen, bringing the 77-year-old theologian a golden drinking cup as a present. Without the presence of these men the last three decades of the sixteenth century would hardly have developed into the golden age it became for a new neo-Platonic, experimental natural philosophy, centred around the court, the University of København and Tycho Brahe's Uranienborg, encouraged and nurtured by the 'liberal', eirenical Melanchthonian theology espoused by Niels Hemmingsen.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> T. Lyby and O. P. Grell, 'The Consolidation of Lutheranism in Denmark and Norway', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 114–43.

## The crown and the aristocracy in co-operation in Denmark and Sweden (the 'aristocratic regime')

HEIKKI YLIKANGAS

### The dissolving of the Kalmar Union

The post-medieval period in the Nordic countries was marked by competition for power involving several institutions and groupings. The main contest was between the crown and the nobility (especially the upper nobility), but the result was largely, if not conclusively, dictated not by the church or the lower estates of society, although they played an important role, but by an outside commercial and political power factor: the Hanseatic League. It gradually became apparent that Lübeck, the most powerful city of the League, lost its grip on domestic policies in the Nordic countries as the influence of the trading cities of the Netherlands and gradually England began to be felt and as the focus of trade began to shift from the Baltic Sea to the Atlantic, as a result of the new discovery voyages.

In the fourteenth century the principalities in northern Germany constituted a threat to the Nordic countries. Albrecht of Mecklenburg was crowned king of Sweden in 1364. Queen Margrethe's troops defeated Albrecht in 1389, which was the prelude to the Kalmar Union. Against this background there was scope for a range of shifting alliances.

This period in the history of the Nordic countries began with a process which was decisive for the later political development of the region. The Kalmar Union of the Nordic kingdoms, founded on a dynastic basis in 1397, was dissolved in 1523. Only the political connection between Denmark and Norway remained until 1814. Sweden with Finland as an integral part left the Union for good.

The meaning expressed in the Kalmar Union Charter 1397 was that the Nordic realms should each remain sovereign. The elected common king had as his primary task to be responsible for the foreign policy of the Union with the approval of the councils of the realms. Most of the Union regents did not

observe the contents of this Charter. They tried to strengthen the power of the regent in every respect in accordance with the interests of Denmark.

What led to the dissolving of the Kalmar Union? The reasons are obscure in so far as Sweden for a long time had striven to rid herself of Danish domination from the 1430s. This had been the case earlier, indicated by the election of Karl Knutsson to the throne of Sweden on three occasions between 1448 and 1470. During the later stages of the Union (1470–1523) Sweden was ruled, with only brief interruptions, by a regent (*riksföreståndare*) of the Sture family. Despite this, Sweden did not ultimately separate herself from the Union, i.e. Denmark. This was not only caused by Sweden's military weakness in relation to Denmark, but was mainly a result of internal strife. The upper nobility throughout the Nordic regions had large areas of private landed property in various parts of the Union. In both Denmark and Sweden members of the aristocracy were eager to gain possession of the enfeoffed so-called castle districts, which were profitable not only in yielding tax revenue to their holders but also by facilitating the acquisition of private property.<sup>1</sup>

To more or less the same extent as the Union was beneficial for the leading noble families regardless of country, it had negative repercussions for other social groups. Sweden's lower nobility, the burghers of Stockholm and the commoners in particular were prone to reject, or at least be suspicious of, both Danish rule and the political connections of the Union. However, the church was most clearly an agent for the dissolving of the Union, despite the fact that its own power had gradually waned over a long period. Owing to resistance from the secular nobility, the ecclesiastical code was left out of Sweden's oldest law of the realm laid down by Magnus Eriksson (c. 1350). Erik of Pomerania (1412–39/40), the strongest monarch of the Union period, had successfully interfered in episcopal and archiepiscopal elections and had demanded contributions to be paid from the church to the crown's war funds.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the Union period a growing pressure was put on the church, as recurrent military operations demanded more and more funds.

- 1 E. Lönnroth, *Från svensk medeltid* (Stockholm, 1959), pp. 48ff.; J. Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1: *Tiden före 1718* (Stockholm, 1964), pp. 296, 299; E. Albrechtsen, *Danmark-Norge 1380–1814*, 1: *Fællesskabet bliver til, 1380–1536* (Oslo, 1997), pp. 190–7; D. Harrison, *Sveriges historia. Medeltiden* (Stockholm, 2002), p. 312; H. Ylikangas, *Suomen historian solmukohdat* (Juva, 2007), pp. 29, 39–43.
- 2 V. Etting, *Kalmarunionen. Fra fælleskap til blodbad 1397–1520* (København, 1998), pp. 197–203; Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, pp. 269ff.

Victory could only be obtained with the aid of mercenaries. This called for funds, which were borrowed but repaid through increased taxation, in turn leading to rising restlessness in society. Deriving his political power from the lower estates, Sten Sture the Younger as regent of Sweden was not able to cover his costs in any appreciable way through taxation, and he was therefore obliged to levy payments from the church in a heavy-handed manner. When the church defended itself under Archbishop Gustav Trolle, Sten Sture took a decisive step in 1517, dismissing Trolle from his high post and confiscating his fiefs. Sten Sture took this action based on a decision by an assembly of estates, which he had convened. Rome reacted sharply, and Sten Sture and Sweden were declared to be under excommunication.

King Christian II of Denmark, the last Union monarch, decided to take advantage of the situation and to renew the Union. He succeeded in a military conquest of the rural areas of Sweden and in persuading Stockholm to surrender by promising a general amnesty to his opponents. At his coronation in November 1520, King Christian broke his promise by placing over a hundred members of the Sture party under arrest and putting them before an estate tribunal appointed by himself. The tribunal, the first modern political court in Sweden, condemned the accused to death as heretics, and Christian II had the executions carried out immediately. The executed persons included high-ranking members of the council but also especially many burghers of Stockholm, who had loyally supported Sten Sture the Younger in his struggle against the leading families of the council of the realm and the Danish king.<sup>3</sup>

The Stockholm massacre of 1520 became a turning point in Scandinavian history. It gave the opponents of the Union an excellent propaganda advantage. Relying on the Catholics and Rome in such a bloody venture was a political error, especially at a time when the Reformation was already progressing in Germany. Christian II had, however, committed an even greater mistake. He opposed the Hanseatic League, a course that had already been fateful for his predecessors. Despite this, he made entreaties to Lübeck from time to time, but then decided to crush the Hanseatic League with the aid of the Dutch and the English, and finally with his own towns and cities. He wanted control over trade and planned a 'Nordic Trading Company' to co-ordinate trade and related activities.

<sup>3</sup> Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, p. 343.

With these actions he made Lübeck a supporter of Swedish sovereignty and one of the gravediggers of the Union.<sup>4</sup>

In 1521 Gustav Eriksson Vasa took the lead in the rebellion against King Christian II. A few castles and fortresses in the rural areas were taken by the conscripted rebel army, but the Danes had supreme naval control and manned the strong coastal forts, which were defended by experienced mercenaries. Without naval vessels and mercenaries these obstacles could not be overcome.

Gustav Vasa obtained the means for victory, with the assistance of Lübeck and Danzig. This help was not given cheaply. It resulted in an immense debt of 120,000 Lübeck marks to Lübeck, in addition to which Sweden's foreign trade remained the monopoly of Lübeck.<sup>5</sup> The Danes were nevertheless driven out of Sweden and in 1523 Christian II lost the throne of Denmark to Duke Frederik of Schleswig (Frederik I).<sup>6</sup> In 1521 Gustav Vasa was first declared regent of Sweden, and two years later he was elected as king.

What dissolved the Union? The rise of Gustav Vasa to become regent and ultimately king did not yet seal the fate of the Kalmar Union. A decisive change was that the Hanseatic League, as the factor that had hitherto disturbed political developments in the Nordic region, had become weakened. Lübeck followed the same policies in both Denmark and Sweden. Its objective was to obtain as extensive trading privileges as possible in order to protect its commercial activities from competition by the Dutch, Denmark-Norway and Sweden. This was likely to provoke Denmark, Sweden and Holland to join forces against Lübeck, which in fact happened in the so-called Count's War 1534–6. With assistance from the Dutch, the allies fought Lübeck so thoroughly that it never recovered its former status. It was in the Dutch and English interest to keep the straits of Denmark free for shipping. A united Scandinavia would have threatened freedom of trade, as had been the case during the reign of Erik of Pomerania.<sup>7</sup>

4 T. K. Derry, *A History of Scandinavia: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland* (Minneapolis, 1995), pp. 82f.; J. Danstrup and H. Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 5 (København, 1963), p. 294.

5 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, p. 369.

6 A. Holmsen, *Norges historie*, 1: *Fra de eldste tider til 1660* (Oslo, 1949), p. 482.

7 The development of early capitalism in northern Italy and the appearance of the first free town leagues in the thirteenth century from Italy along the river Rhine as far as the Hansa in the north had many consequences. One of these was the long-drawn-out political dissolution in the market region of the leagues (Italy, The Holy Roman Empire, the Netherlands, the states around the Baltic and at least the Nordic countries). Outside this market region the towns were forced to ally with political



## The victory of the aristocracy in Denmark

The church and the aristocracy, as the early power groupings seeking to obtain benefits, had a special relationship with the crown. On the one hand, they wanted the crown to extend its powers, for without legitimised decision-making at the national level no benefits or gains could be obtained or effectively defended. On the other hand, there was the risk that royal power would expand and threaten the elite itself. These conflicting objectives had conflicting effects: a marked growth of royal authority in Denmark during the Middle Ages, the strengthened position of the church and nobility vis-à-vis the peasantry and burghers, and the increased importance of the council (*rigsråd*) as an institution keeping royal power under control. Royal power thus rose at first, and then waned – in relation to the aristocracy.

Strong royal authority in Denmark at an early stage was one reason why feudalism gained a solid foothold in this country at an early stage in comparison with the rest of Scandinavia. Erik of Pomerania began to issue actual charters of privilege. In practice, only those who could produce such a document were regarded as belonging to the nobility. In time, the aristocracy became limited to a power-grouping of some 250 families.<sup>8</sup> In Sweden the nobility began to be reduced as a group during the reign of Erik XIV (1560–8), but finally the rise of cavalrymen into this estate was prevented under Johan III. This happened after the nobility obtained its first written privileges from the king in connection with the change of monarch in 1569. In Denmark, the strong position of the nobility led their tenant farmers (*fæstebønder*) into some form of serfdom (*vornedskab*). By the close of the Middle Ages, only one out of every eight Danish peasants was a freehold farmer. The corresponding proportion in Sweden was 50 per cent, and in Norway 25 per cent.<sup>9</sup> In reality, the theory of 'the free Nordic peasant' had a dubious basis in all parts of Scandinavia, but most markedly in Denmark.

In Denmark, the political power of the nobility was to a great degree concentrated in the hands of the council around the beginning of the post-medieval era. Shortly before Christian II ascended the throne in 1513 the council declared itself the true ruler of the country. It rejected the very suggestion of a hereditary monarchy, also the goal of the rulers of

power, which promoted the rise of the big state formations (France, England, Austria, Poland-Lithuania, Russia). Ylikangas, *Suomen historian solmukohdat*, pp. 44ff.

8 J. Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, 1: *Från stenåldern till nyare tid* (Malmö, 1946), p. 146.

9 Derry, *A History of Scandinavia*, p. 65.

Denmark, as an attempt at subjugation. The king was defined only as 'protector of the realm' (*riksförvaltare*).<sup>10</sup> In his royal pledge given in 1513, Christian II agreed to leave the judiciary under the control of the nobility and to refrain from the crown purchase of holdings that had been granted exemption from crown rent and taxes in lieu of service. He was allowed to grant titles only with the consent of the council. The castle districts as fiefs remained the monopoly of the aristocracy.<sup>11</sup>

This course was maintained after the council had ousted Christian II. Regulations restricting the authority of the crown were tightened, particularly since Christian II had planned a law for the whole realm restricting serfdom, for example by forbidding the sale of peasants etc.<sup>12</sup> In his royal pledge of 1523 and in later proclamations Frederik I endorsed the rights of the aristocracy in many ways. It ensured that the aristocracy – the upper nobility – would have sole rights to the highest positions in the service of the crown. The nobles were entitled to decree the nature and extent of labour services provided by their tenant farmers without regard to any official regulations. Control and supervision by the crown were weakened even further. As early as 1513 the members of the council were awarded the so-called king's share (i.e. one-third) of all fines levied on their tenant farmers. In 1523 this right was extended to the nobility as a whole, and in 1527 ecclesiastical fines were included under this right. The aristocracy also exercised manorial jurisdiction (*hals- og håndsret*) with its extensive rights over the tenant farmers, although the crown disputed the right of the former to do so.<sup>13</sup> In 1523 the trading monopoly granted by Christian II to the towns was revoked, which thus granted the nobility (and in principle the peasantry) and the Dutch the right to engage in trade in Denmark without interference from the Hanseatic League. Aristocratic rule as such is traditionally regarded as having started in Denmark with the ascension of Frederik I to the throne.<sup>14</sup>

King Frederik I died in 1533. The country was in turmoil. Rebellion against the nobility was spreading among the peasantry and the burghers. The Hanseatic League and the Netherlands vied for control of trade in the Baltic, offering assistance to whichever party appeared to need it. Alliances changed quickly. In 1531 Christian II, operating from Norway, tried to regain the

10 Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, 1, pp. 147f.

11 Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, 1, pp. 149f.

12 Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 5, p. 397.

13 K. Hørby and M. Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', in A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Danmarks historie*, 2:1 (København, 1980), p. 294.

14 Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 273, 288.

crown, soliciting the support of the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and promising to defend the Catholic faith. Not only the Norwegian aristocracy but also the clergy, burghers and peasants rallied to Christian's cause, for a variety of reasons. The burghers of København and Malmö allied themselves with the peasants and the new Lutheran leaders of Lübeck to rebel against Catholicism and the council of Denmark, which favoured the Dutch trading towns. Lübeck hired Count Christoffer of Oldenburg to lead the allied army, which proceeded to invade Denmark. Accordingly, the conflict was named the Count's War. The peasants took up arms in many parts of Denmark, assuming their strong ally would help them against their own superiors.<sup>15</sup> For this reason, and because the urban burghers supported the peasants, these events are also known as (Denmark's last) civil war.<sup>16</sup> In extent the conflict corresponded to the so-called Club War in Finland (1596–7).<sup>17</sup>

In 1534 the council deemed it necessary to accept both the Lutheran faith and Christian (Christian III, died 1559), son of Frederik I, as king of Denmark. Jürgen Wullenwever's government in Lübeck was overturned in 1535. The rebels were finally defeated in København and Malmö in 1536.<sup>18</sup> Lübeck and Denmark agreed on peace in the same year.

The war had major immediate effects. The urban middle class waned in importance, and the status of the peasantry deteriorated even further.<sup>19</sup> The only way to rectify the economic situation was to carry out an immediate confiscation of church property. The crown was not the only party to benefit from this; the nobility (just as in Sweden) gained possession of landed property which could be proven to have been originally in its ownership. The consolidation of aristocratic rule, as these events have been traditionally described in earlier Danish historiography,<sup>20</sup> became evident in the increased power of the council. A different interpretation has recently gained ground. Following the Count's War (1534–6) and the overthrow of the Catholic bishops (1536), sovereignty was divided between the king and the council.<sup>21</sup> In this connection, however, it should be kept in mind that in reality all

15 Cf. e.g. Holmsen, *Norges historie*, 1, p. 486.

16 Derry, *A History of Scandinavia*, p. 88; D. Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie* (København, 1989), p. 67; Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 302.

17 H. Ylikangas, *Klubbekriget. Det blodiga bondekriget i Finland 1596–97* (Stockholm 1999), pp. 402–11.

18 Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 306–18.

19 Derry, *A History of Scandinavia*, p. 90.

20 Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 319.

21 R. Fladby, 'Gjenreisning 1536–1648', in K. Mykland (ed.), *Norges historie*, 6 (Oslo, 1977), pp. 12f.; Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 93f.

rulings and decisions were made by the unanimous council, consisting of the members of the highest aristocratic families.

The year 1536 is regarded as marking the birth of the modern Danish state. In October Christian III assembled the diet, summoning both the peasants and the burghers but not the clergy, because the objective was to oust the Catholic bishops. The king obtained official approval for his 'complaint' against the bishops and for the 'constitution of the realm' (*rigets konstitution*), containing regulations on joint government by the king and the council. This document made no mention of the estates, which were not summoned to convene on rare occasions. The council now 'represented' the people as a whole, and assembled its 'diet' at least once a year. From now on, the official pledges of the king of Denmark included a regulation whereby the king could not decide new laws without the consent of the council. The council, however, endorsed the appointment of Frederik II, the two-year-old son of Christian III, to succeed his father on the throne. This was a step in the direction of a hereditary monarchy.

The council of Denmark kept its traditional power, inclusive the granting of taxes and the ratification of laws and statutes. The council's consent was also required for declaring war.<sup>22</sup> The council of Denmark also ruled over Norway, from where there are mentions from the thirteenth century onwards of a council sometimes referred to as a parliament in the Danish manner. As Danish rule was consolidated in Norway, the Norwegian 'parliament' dwindled away and finally ceased to exist (1536). In a less severe manner, this was also the case in Iceland, where the *Alþingi* assembly had wielded considerable powers. Norway was formally punished by abolishing her rights of self-government, because Christian II had used Norway as his base and area of support when trying to reinstate his rule in Denmark. Norway was almost completely incorporated with Denmark. It became one of the Danish provinces, and could no longer be called a kingdom.<sup>23</sup> Only a few remnants of Norway's former independence existed. The chancellor of Norway supervised the country's judiciary, and in 1572 the holder of the fiefdom of Åkershus Province was given the title of governor of Norway. It was not until 1604 that

22 H. Gamrath and E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', in A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Danmarks historie*, 2:2 (København, 1980), p. 482.

23 Norwegian historians still debate the position and status of Norway in this period. Holmsen, *Norges historie*, 1, p. 88; Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 94; E. Jutikkala, *Pohjoismaisen yhteiskunnan historiallisia juuria* (Porvoo, 1978), p. 98; Derry, *A History of Scandinavia*, p. 89; W. H. Hubbard, *Making a Historical Culture: Historiography in Norway* (Oslo, 1995), pp. 132ff.

it was explicitly noted that Norway was subject to the sovereignty of the Danish crown and under the authority of the council.<sup>24</sup>

Norway, including the Føroyar Islands, and Iceland were governed from København, and Danish governors were responsible for the local administration. In 1583 France and England recognised Danish rule in Greenland. In practice the council of Denmark replaced other forms of political representation in both Denmark and Norway, and held supreme power until the period of absolutism.

The monarch, however, was not left completely without authority. He appointed the members of the council and the high officials who assisted him in government and the administration of justice. Following the imprisonment and dismissal of the Catholic bishops the king was able to appoint to the council members of the higher nobility whom he himself preferred. The role of the council was restricted by the fact that it convened only once a year to so-called diet sessions. The councillors governed the administrative districts, with responsibility for the judiciary, taxation and military affairs.<sup>25</sup>

When King Frederik II ascended the throne in 1559, the aristocracy was again able to strengthen slightly its political role at the national level.<sup>26</sup> The other estates were not summoned to hear the monarch's solemn pledge of office, which in practice, and in keeping with established custom, endorsed the demands for privilege voiced by the aristocracy. The elected nature of the monarchy was underlined again, and freedom of trade for the nobility was ensured. The private landed property of the aristocracy came under legal and economic protection. The monarch made headway in only one issue. The aristocracy no longer had the right to refrain from participating in war conducted beyond the borders of the realm.<sup>27</sup> Royal authority was also emphasised by the fact that the king was not only the party to summon the council but also the one with the right to present motions at its sessions and the council could only reject or endorse royal propositions.<sup>28</sup>

After the death of Frederik II in 1588, Denmark was governed by a regency selected by the council until 1596, when Christian IV, son of Frederik II, was declared to be of majority age and accordingly elected to the throne (1596–1648). This period was the heyday of the upper nobility in Denmark. The lower nobility tried to improve its position in relation to the higher

24 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 386f.

25 Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie*, p. 68.

26 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 453.

27 Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 6, pp. 316–18.

28 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 452f.

aristocracy, but failed. The council and the administrative provinces granted as fiefs remained solidly in the hands of the twelve highest-ranking families; the 282 other noble families (between 1536 and 1560) remained more or less sidelined from central political authority and lucrative positions such as the possession of administrative provinces as fiefs. According to contemporary accounts, the fiefdoms were the 'best means of obtaining private landed property'.<sup>29</sup> The proportion of the aristocracy represented in the council in relation to the nobility as a whole continued to grow (46 per cent in 1650), because the poorest families died out, and new titles were not conferred.<sup>30</sup> From around the 1580s and onwards the conferring of titles increasingly took into account the candidate's education, which was usually acquired abroad. This marked the beginning of the gradual transformation of the nobility from a military and land-owning estate into an estate defined by high office.

*The hereditary Vasa monarchy: the rise of the ståndriksdag*

The weakening of the power of Lübeck was an essential precondition for the continuation and consolidation of Gustav Vasa's political power. In 1522 and 1523 Gustav Vasa paid to Lübeck one-third of the debt which had been incurred when he had been raised to the post of regent and defeated the Danes. The payment was made at the expense of the church. The Count's War of 1534–6 offered Gustav Vasa an opportunity to break free of Lübeck. This could be done by supporting Denmark through military action, diplomacy and loans. Denmark's pro-Dutch policies had opened her to attacks by Lübeck. Gustav Vasa seized the opportunity to demand the repeal of the privileges enjoyed by Lübeck. When the latter refused to comply, Gustav Vasa levied duties on goods from Lübeck. The Hanseatic city retaliated, which led to Gustav Vasa confiscating property owned by Lübeck in Sweden. The united front of Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden was too powerful for Lübeck, which was now defeated. In 1537, after the defeat of Lübeck, an agreement was signed between it and Sweden. In practice, Lübeck had now lost its monopoly on Sweden's foreign trade.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 462.

<sup>30</sup> E. Österberg and S. Sogner (eds.), *People Meet the Law: Control and Conflict-handling in the Courts. The Nordic Countries in the Post-Reformation and Pre-industrial Period* (Oslo, 2000), pp. 11–16; Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 463.

<sup>31</sup> Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, pp. 372–4.

When discussing the reasons for the continuation of Gustav Vasa's political power it must be established from where he obtained the funds for paying back the debt to Lübeck while the latter was still powerful and for financing his own position by maintaining a sufficiently large body of mercenaries in Sweden. The answer to these questions is clear. In 1522, Gustav Vasa, like the preceding regents of the Sture family, began to tax the rich church of Sweden. The reason cited for this was payment of the debt to Lübeck. At first, the matter was described as a loan which was to be repaid to the church. In 1526 the state began to interfere in the tithes, the most profitable source of taxed revenue for the church, which after the Reformation came to the aid of the monarch.

Gustav Vasa's stronger position in comparison with the Danish monarch became evident in the 1520s, even before the restitution of church property. For example, at the famous *riksdag* of Västerås the king forced compliance to his will by threatening to abdicate. This could only be done by a monarch who had some kind of solid support and had freed himself of the control of the aristocracy.<sup>32</sup> It is hard to avoid the conclusion that this support came from the lower estates, who saw the king as a counterweight to the political power of the upper estates. For the former the *riksdag* was a forum, where they could express their position.

Crushing the power of the bishops both weakened the council of the realm and improved the finances of the crown and the king himself. Again following the example of the previous regents, Gustav Vasa obtained for himself a considerable amount of landed property: some 5,000 holdings, of which half were confiscated church property. After the confiscation of church property the nobility owned 22 per cent of all holdings, the freehold farmers (*skattebönder*) approximately 50 per cent, and the crown (including the king's personal property) 28 per cent.<sup>33</sup>

The differences between medieval and post-medieval concepts of royal authority are evidenced by the dispute in the 1520s and 1530s between Gustav Vasa and Olaus Petri, the former royal chancellor and Reformer of the faith in Sweden. Olaus Petri adopted the Protestant ideology in Wittenberg and became an enthusiastic supporter of Gustav Vasa, who started to implement the Reformation in Sweden. Olaus, however, changed his views when the monarch set out to confiscate church property and brutally quelled all rebellions against his rule. Olaus Petri wrote his well-known instructions to

32 P. Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 4th impr. edn (London, 1979), p. 213.

33 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, I, p. 380.

judges in order to criticise Gustav Vasa's autocratic rule. The gist of Olaus Petri's position was expressed in his claim that 'unless there were malefactors we would not need government' (that is, the king).<sup>34</sup> The duty of the monarch was to maintain peace, justice and the true faith, but in other respects he was not to interfere with the lives of his subjects.<sup>35</sup> Gustav Vasa responded to this criticism by having Olaus Petri tried and condemned to death by a court, which he had appointed himself, where he formulated the charges and acted as prosecutor, and where he based the verdict on his 'own law' (will), 'which is also right'. The king later spared Olaus Petri's life after the city of Stockholm had paid a high fine on his behalf.<sup>36</sup>

### The implementation of hereditary monarchy in Sweden

Electoral monarchy did not imply the same as hereditary rule even when it was decided beforehand that the heir to the throne would be accepted as the next king, as had happened during the Union period and on a regular basis in Denmark in the sixteenth century. After having consolidated his position in the 1530s Gustav Vasa regarded the situation to be ripe for implementing a hereditary monarchy in Sweden. At an assembly of the estates of the nobility and the clergy in Örebro in 1540 the king stepped forth with a drawn sword and his sons Erik and Johan. All present kneeled to pledge allegiance to the king and his 'heirs'. This somewhat obscure ritual was clarified at the *riksdag* in Västerås in 1544 after the quelling of Sweden's last major peasant rebellion (*Dackefejd*). The estate (now including the lower clergy) ratified the order of inheritance by which the crown passed, by the grace of God to the sons of Gustav Vasa, and through them to the Vasa family.<sup>37</sup>

A result of the introduction of the hereditary monarchy was the granting of duchies to Gustav Vasa's three youngest sons. This considerably undermined political power within Sweden, despite the fact that the dukes were forbidden to follow foreign policies of their own or to grant fiefdoms. The duchies disrupted developments in Sweden in a way that was to be felt for a long time. One of the first objectives of King Erik XIV was to eliminate the independent standing of the duchies. For this purpose, he established among

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Rosén, *Svensk historia*, I, pp. 207, 295.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie*, pp. 23ff.

<sup>36</sup> H. Ylikangas, *Valta ja väkivalta keski- ja uuden ajan taitteen Suomessa* (Porvoo, 1988), pp. 7ff.

<sup>37</sup> Rosén, *Svensk historia*, I, pp. 400, 408f.



other institutions a royal supreme court (*höga nämnd*), which was due to tour the country – including the duchies – in the manner of a royal assizes of appeal, administering justice in the name of the king. The court developed into a political tribunal, which also dealt with crimes related to public office. It was mainly used by the king against the high-ranking aristocracy.

The anti-aristocratic focus of Erik XIV's domestic policies resulted in King Johan III (1569–92) dethroning his brother with the support of the nobility, for which the new monarch had to pay by issuing charters of noble privilege in 1560. In these documents, aristocratic titles were dissociated from the former requirement of mounted service to the crown and were made hereditary. The privileges particularly kept in mind the interests of the nobles, who were entitled to collect the so-called king's share of levied fines from their tenants (*landbo*) and to appoint county judges in their fiefdoms.

### The victory of the diet in Sweden and its defeat in Denmark

Originally assemblies of nobles facilitated decision-making in kingdoms where this process had been divided among numerous provincial *ting* assemblies. It was via the latter that political power was wielded by the peasantry. The laws laid down by the king could only come into force after being ratified by the provincial *tings*. In both Sweden and Norway the peasantry also participated in the election of the king at an early stage, but they were not admitted to any other nationwide assemblies, either the more limited council (*riksråd*) or the 'Lords' diet' (*herredagar*) assembly, which had a broader basis. Both were in the hands of the ecclesiastical and secular nobility.

During the thirteenth century Denmark developed the *Danehof* (*herredag*) institution, which is referred to as parliament in documents drawn up in Latin. The monarch invited ecclesiastical and secular notables to become members of the *Danehof*, which began to convene annually from 1282 onwards, but soon lost importance. The *Danehof* met for the last time in 1413. Its main function was to limit royal authority.<sup>38</sup> Also in Sweden the leading nobles assembled at the Lords' Diet (*herredagar*) when summoned. Around the middle of the thirteenth century these assemblies served to lay down Sweden's so-called laws of the King's Peace (*edsörelag*).<sup>39</sup>

38 Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie*, p. 25

39 Inger, *Svensk rätts historia* (Lund, 1988), p. 15

Both the king and the nobles aimed at removing the decision-making process from the provincial *ting* institution and to establish it under royal and aristocratic control at the nationwide level. This proved to be successful – already in the Middle Ages in Denmark but much later in Sweden, ultimately in 1660. In all the Nordic countries, the council became the main organ of political power from the mid-thirteenth century onwards.<sup>40</sup>

From 1435 representatives of the peasantry and the burghers were also summoned to the *herredagar* in Sweden, but it is only from the 1460s that we have information on the more or less independent role of the estates. The roots of the Swedish *riksdag* are in the *herredagar* and in the council, which was expanded under the exceptional conditions of the rebellion of Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson in the 1430s. The largest possible number of representatives of the nobility was first added, followed by some representatives of the towns engaged in trade and some from the peasantry.

This was a political demonstration, a feature particular to Sweden's *riksdag* until the seventeenth century. It was typical of the situation that the regent Sten Sture the Younger had Gustav Trolle dismissed from the post of archbishop of Uppsala in November 1517 through a decision of the *herredagar*. The signatories to the ruling pledged to support and assist each other if they were excommunicated.<sup>41</sup> The rulings of the famous Diet of Västerås in 1527 – which Herman Schück, among others, regards as Sweden's first actual *riksdag* assembly<sup>42</sup> – for implementing the Reformation in Sweden were formulated as statutes. In practice, they implied the confiscation of church property to the nobility and the crown, and an end to the political power of the bishops.

During the sixteenth century the Swedish *riksdag* lost its former right to levy taxes, but grew in importance as an institutional demonstration of political will. The *riksdag*, or more correctly the 'meetings' (*möten*), were summoned only in emergencies, to give support to the regent or the monarch (in connection with the changing of the ruler, or internal opposition etc.). The assemblies were mostly used to attack the aristocracy, and were resorted to particularly often during the reign of King Sigismund (1592–8). Duke Karl relied on the *riksdag* first to bolster his own political position and then to attempt to dethrone King Sigismund, who mostly resided in Poland. The role of the *riksdag* was to steer public opinion against the aristocracy of

40 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, pp. 264–6, 279. 41 *Ibid.*, p. 337.

42 H. Schück *et al.* (eds.), *Riksdagen genom tiderna* (Stockholm, 1985), pp. 36ff.

the council, who in 1587 had pressed King Johan III to approve the election of his son Sigismund to the throne of Poland. The aims of the aristocracy in this matter were precisely the same as in keeping Sweden a member of the Kalmar Union during the Middle Ages.

The support of the *riksdag* however, was not sufficient for Duke Karl, whose hands were tied by the council, in turn relying on the king. Moreover, King Sigismund secured his own position by appointing royal governors to various parts of Sweden with considerable powers. The most significant of these was Claes Fleming, Earl Marshal of the Realm and governor-general (*statthållare*) of Finland and Estonia (since 1591). The existing conflict gave the peasantry – impoverished by taxes for war, the billeting of soldiers and the provision of wages for the military – reason to expect success, through outside support from Duke Karl if they were to refuse any further dues and defend themselves with arms. In Finland this situation led to a rebellion equal to a peasant war, namely the Club War (Finnish *nuijasota*, Swedish *klubbekriget*) waged in 1596–7. This conflict resulted in the killing of 3,000 peasants and farmers and the sacking of the areas that had rebelled.<sup>43</sup> When Duke Karl subsequently conquered Finland by arms in 1599, he resorted to administering similar political justice as had Christian II. Some fifty supporters of Sigismund and officers who had been closely involved in the Club War were put to death. The sentences were issued in estate tribunals appointed by Duke Karl, which represented the *riksdag* in miniature and where the duke himself was prosecutor. Justice could be administered politically only where this occurred in the immediate presence of a leading political figure.

#### *Administrative and fiscal modernisation*

During the early Middle Ages, the provincial *ting* assemblies, originally of peasant character, were a significant institution. They were established in Finland by the church, whereas elsewhere they derived from the period of the 'provincial kings'. By the fourteenth century at the latest, the assemblies began to lose importance, most rapidly in Denmark and Finland. During this period, the medieval system of administration came to an end and a different type of administrative apparatus was established, or there were at least

<sup>43</sup> Ylikangas, *Klubbekriget*, passim; H. Ylikangas, 'Från ättemedlem till konungens undersåte. Finska bönder under svenskt välde', in G. Borberg *et al.* (eds.), *Tänka, tycka, tro. Svensk historia underifrån* (Stockholm, 1993), pp. 39ff.

attempts to do so. It was typical of the Middle Ages that royal authority was effectively felt only in the ruler's entourage or *hird* and in the immediate area where the monarch happened to be at the time. In order to even out the costs of being maintained and to control the consolidation of their own power with regard to administration and the judiciary, the kings and their entourages continually moved from one place of residence to another. It was only at a late stage that capitals became the permanent residences of the rulers. Erik of Pomerania declared København to be the capital of Denmark in 1416, while Stockholm did not achieve corresponding status until after the Union period. The kings of Denmark continued to tour the realm until the middle of the sixteenth century.

In the late medieval context power was held by the party in possession of the nation's castles and administrative fiefs, who was the individual who had succeeded, by violent or peaceful means, to have persons in whom he could trust appointed to command the castles and forts. Fees or fiefdoms were awarded upon different conditions. There were, for example, so-called accountable enfeoffed districts (*räkenskapslän*) for which the holder was accountable to the sovereign, payment districts (*avgiftslän*) enfeoffed against payment of a certain sum beforehand, and mortgaged fiefs held in pledge (*pantlän*) as security for a loan. Some of the administrative fiefs, such as Viipuri (Viborg) Province in Finland were awarded in lieu of service (*län mot tjänst*) – that is, on the condition that the commander of the castle in question was to defend the eastern borders of the realm.

The wording of the documents awarding possession of castles implied the granting of a fief for obtaining taxed revenue; the fiefdoms were never hereditary property. They were awarded for the time being or for lifetime possession. The monarchs and regents strove solely to establish so-called account-fiefs to be administered by bailiffs or reeves of low birth appointed by the former. The aristocracy sought to prevent persons of low birth from achieving these positions and wished to reserve the administrative or castle fiefs as pledged or recompensed fees under noble privilege. In Sweden the castellan could be a non-aristocratic bailiff or reeve in the case of an account-fief, but this was extremely rare in Denmark. From 1483 it was officially pledged in Denmark that the administrative fiefs were to be awarded solely to persons of noble birth.

As late as the time of Sten Sture the Elder the account-fiefs were extremely rare in Sweden; a fief in lieu of service was the most common type, i.e. no

accounts were rendered to the crown concerning the fief.<sup>44</sup> During the last years of his reign, King Christian II attempted to convert the existing fiefs into account-fees. He succeeded in this to some degree. During the reign of his father, Hans, there had been forty-three account-fees; Christian raised the number to sixty. The fall of Christian II also marked the end of his attempts at modernisation: the hereditary monarchy, a law of the realm, the increased importance of København, a central bank, a trading society, a state church, restrictions on serfdom etc.<sup>45</sup>

### Administration in Denmark at the beginning of modern times

Denmark preserved largely the same system of administration from the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century. The 'realm' contained a number of provinces (*lande*). The Danish realm was traditionally divided into three regions, each having its own provincial *ting* assembly and its own provincial laws: Jylland, Sjælland and Skåne. But there were also several smaller areas under different types of administration, such as Halland and Blekinge in present-day Sweden, and Langeland and Møn. As late as the beginning of the sixteenth century there was a considerable degree of provincial particularism and very little unity throughout the realm. Denmark included Norway, Iceland, the Føroyar Islands, Greenland, Gotland, Saaremaa (Ösel) in present-day Estonia, and Schleswig as a duchy under the Danish crown and Holstein as part of the Holy Roman Empire. Denmark did not achieve judicial unity at the national level until 1683.<sup>46</sup>

The monarchs strove to develop the chancery into the centre of their own administration. In Denmark, where the aristocracy dominated, there were attempts from the last years of the reign of King Christian II to create, with the assistance of aristocratic officials, a chancery to serve as the core of centralised administration. Qualified personnel for the chancery (mostly with cameral degrees) were engaged, mainly from Germany; that is why the other main department of the chancery was known as the 'German chancery' (*Tyske Kancelli*) in both Denmark and Sweden.<sup>47</sup>

44 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, p. 30.

45 A. Halila, *Tanskan ja Norjan historia* (Helsinki, 1972), pp. 64–6; Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 5, p. 339.

46 Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie*, p. 19.

47 Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 5, pp. 340ff.

In Denmark, the more advanced procedures of the chancery were derived from the Holy Roman Empire via the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein.<sup>48</sup> The chancellor and chancery were for long Denmark's only central governmental department. It handled domestic and foreign official correspondence in addition to preparing acts and statutes to be laid down. In addition the chancellor maintained contacts between the king and the council. The position of the chancellor was significantly strengthened in the sixteenth century, having a permanent office at Slotsholmen in København. A secretary-general managed the daily routines assisted by a number of aristocratic chancellery clerks (*kancellijunkere*), most of whom had university education. One of the most prominent chancellors was Johan Friis til Borreby, who served under King Christian III, and reformed the administrative system of castle and fiefs with the objective to increase state revenue.<sup>49</sup>

Although the chancellor was the Danish king's leading official in a position of trust, he was formally outranked by the chamberlain of the realm. The latter was entitled to act as viceroy and had influence on both domestic and foreign policy. In time, the chamberlain also came to supervise the tax chamber, or board, under the direction of the tax master. Owing to the considerable powers associated with this post, the king kept the position open for long periods, during which the chancellor carried out the duties of chamberlain. The third high position of trust was that of earl marshal of the realm, who was chairman of the council of the realm, albeit in principle the commander-in-chief of the nation's military forces. Later, an admiral of the realm in charge of naval affairs and a chancellor of realm were appointed. The latter was in charge of one of the departments of the royal tribunal.<sup>50</sup>

The king of Denmark enjoyed considerable judicial powers. The text of the royal pledge given in 1513 specifically mentioned the 'king's tribunal', consisting of the sovereign and the council. The king exercised his judicial rights in the court of appeal (*rettertinget*). As long as witnessing under oath was practised and as long as the objective of administering justice was to achieve conciliation, there was no hierarchy of courts of law. Such a hierarchy was not necessary; a case could be tried on the first occasion in any court of law: county or province assizes, assizes, town courts (*byting*) or in the royal court of appeal.<sup>51</sup> The royal pledge of 1536 contained regulations on

48 *Ibid.*, 6, p. 203.      49 Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie*, p. 68.      50 *Ibid.*, p. 69.  
51 Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 6, p. 279.

a set of orders of courts of law which had to be followed. The court of appeal was divided into two departments, for criminal and civil cases respectively. The court was also a special court of law for the aristocracy. In 1551 the keeping of records of verdicts was made compulsory in Denmark (the same happened in Sweden after 1615 when the courts of appeal were founded). This regulation indicates that appeals pertaining to verdicts had been made possible and that the administration of justice by the lower courts came under the supervision of the higher courts. Medieval features, however, survived for a long time. The king was not required to be present at the highest court for the latter to be entitled to give verdicts. Frederik I did not participate in any sessions of the court of appeal, because he could not speak Danish.<sup>52</sup> Even during the reign of Christian IV (1588–1648, of majority age from 1596) the court of appeal often convened in different parts of the realm coinciding with the king's journeys.<sup>53</sup>

The sixteenth century saw a system of justice based on the family with its goal of conciliation giving way to the administration of justice under state control. The courts now began to use evidence to identify guilty parties, who were then punished according to law or custom. The aristocratically dominated administration of the Danish realm was also reflected in the way the lower courts administered justice. During the sixteenth century a provincial judge appointed by the king became the sole officer to deliver verdicts in the provincial courts, without the benefit of a board or jury or any other local representation. For the nobility, the provincial courts became the first level of the judicial system. Juries and duly educated jurists played an insignificant role at all levels of Danish jurisprudence in the sixteenth century.

The spread of the death penalty is demonstrated by a regulation issued in 1551, according to which the holder of a fief was not entitled to deliver the death sentence alone, but had to do so together with a provincial judge (a nobleman). Stricter punishment bolstered respect for the king and the authorities in general. A marked change towards more severe punishment in the criminal code was evinced by a statute (*gårdret*) laid down by King Frederik II in 1562. This was followed a year later in Sweden by King Erik XIV's 'patent' on serious crimes. Both cases demonstrate the beginnings of an appeal to Mosaic law as grounds for making punishments more severe.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

53 Tamm, *Lærebog i dansk retshistorie*, p. 83.

The severity of the consequences of crimes is reflected by a regulation whereby the theft of property at least one mark in value was a hanging offence.<sup>54</sup>

As a law of the realm was lacking – Christian II had planned such a law but the plans had gone with him – the higher levels of judiciary began to give verdicts according to the Law of Jylland (*Jyske Lov*). This law was published in partly modernised form in 1590. From 1536 the king and the council were jointly entitled to lay down legislation, but these powers were used rarely and relatively loosely (the statutes were soon revoked by new ones). The preferred course was to rely on precedents, because they permitted rulings and verdicts that satisfied the upper classes. If acts and statutes had been the basis of operation it would have been easier to come into confrontation with the lower classes, since acts and statutes, unlike court rulings and verdicts, have to be made public by printing. The records of verdicts of the ‘Lords’ Diet’ of the council begin to grow particularly after the year 1600. The council voted on difficult cases, and in such situations the king could make his choice quite freely. The king does not appear to have opposed a unanimous council at any stage.<sup>55</sup> In this manner Denmark adopted modern judicial practices earlier than Sweden.

Beginning in 1536 during the reign of Christian III local administration in Denmark was gradually modernised. This was truly needed, for the situation had developed to the point where the nobility regarded the enfeoffed areas as private property despite the requirement that in principle they were to provide mounted and foot soldiers for the service of the king. At its most extreme, the situation permitted the holder of the fief to rule on civilian and military matters within their fiefs, in addition to issuing decrees, supervising the judiciary and levying extra taxes. The government itself had aggravated its own position by granting fiefs as lifetime pledges or to be inherited as fiefs by the holder’s wife and children. When Christian III ascended the throne in 1534, 93.5 fiefdoms had been enfeoffed as pledges and could not provide crown revenue. Seven fiefdoms were held by bishops, and four by the city of Lübeck. Of the sixty-six main fiefdoms only thirteen could be used by the crown; eleven of these were so-called account-fiefs.<sup>56</sup>

54 Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 6, p. 354.

55 Österberg and Sogner (eds.), *People Meet the Law*, pp. 28ff.; Tamm, *Læreboeg i dansk retshistorie*, pp. 84–7.

56 Danstrup and Koch (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 6, p. 219.



But then a change set in. The confiscation of church property prior to the dissolution of the monasteries increased from 100,000 barrels of grain to 300,000.<sup>57</sup> The monasteries added to revenue obtained from the confiscation of church property. On the part of the fiefs, a shift to so-called payment fiefs proved to be the fastest and easiest way to obtain revenue, but the crown also strove to establish account-fiefs. The number of the latter grew to three-quarters of all fees, while the other conditions applying to the holders of fiefs were weakened and correspondingly the judicial status of the peasantry and the urban burghers was slightly improved.<sup>58</sup> In 1596 there were eighty-nine account-fiefs, fifty fiefs in lieu of payment and twenty-seven fiefs in lieu of service from which the crown obtained no revenue whatsoever.<sup>59</sup>

In 1549 a new form of enfeoffment known as *genant* was introduced, in which the charter laid down in detail the respective proportions of the tax revenue due to the crown and the holder of the fief. In practice, this marked the demise of account-fiefs and fiefs in lieu of payment and the adoption of a salaried system and administration by crown officials. The system was stricter than in the account-fiefs, where the holder himself could decide how much of the income went into his own living costs and those of his officials. The fiefs in lieu of payment and pledged fiefs remained outside the account-fief system and their 'price' was raised – that is, they were defined as corresponding to larger sums than before. The number of small fiefdoms was radically reduced, which increased the proportion of aristocratic holders of fiefs from its already high figure. Marked restrictions were introduced on the possibilities for the holder of the fief to obtain revenue from fines and other exceptional sources. The trading towns, which since 1523 had been enfeoffed to an increasing degree to the nobility, were now separated from the fiefs and placed under the direct authority of the crown. Alongside normal taxes, annual auxiliary taxes known as *landehjælp* were also levied. These reforms made it necessary, on the one hand, to adopt cadastres and, on the other hand, to establish a 'tax chamber' as a separate government department alongside the chancery.<sup>60</sup> For a brief period (1558–9) they provided a considerable surplus of revenue for the crown, which was soon depleted by participation in wars.<sup>61</sup>

57 *Ibid.*, p. 222. 58 Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, 1, p. 174.

59 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 456.

60 Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 323f. 61 *Ibid.*, p. 329.



Map 6.1: Distribution of fiefs (lehen) in Norway

In Norway, which belonged to Denmark, the latter's administrative system was followed where it was found to be applicable. In 1536 the extent of the administrative provinces and their smaller administrative areas were demarcated in detail. Norway had five larger provinces and some twenty smaller

ones; the Reformation added ten smaller districts to this figure. Because the Norwegian administrative districts were mostly enfeoffed to Danish noblemen residing in Denmark, local administration remained the task of hired bailiffs or reeves. In 1600 Norway had a total of fifty-four bailiwicks. The long distance from København resulted in a great deal of variety in administrative matters. Old legal customs were followed alongside later regulations and precedents.<sup>62</sup>

These reforms were mainly implemented by the chancellor's office of the Council of State. They were concerned with necessary modernisation, but not the strengthening of the king's position. Developments in the realm were steered by judicial precedents and statutes (*recess*) issued in the name of the king and the council.

A period of major change in Norwegian local administration began in the 1550s. Accounts now had to be drawn up for each bailiwick; the account-fiefs were made subject to a system whereby only certain separately listed goods and quantities could be used by the holder of the fief and his officials. Customs revenue went solely to the king. Detailed cadastres were introduced in the 1570s.<sup>63</sup> During the sixteenth century the tax burden of ordinary farmers grew fiftyfold. Around the middle of the century this resulted in peasant uprisings in Telemark, Trøndelag and other areas. The rebellions were quelled with arms and harsh judicial measures. Towards the close of the century rebellion was gradually replaced by legal action via the courts.<sup>64</sup>

### Administration in Sweden

In principle, the administrative system of Sweden did not differ from its Danish counterpart. During the early years of Gustav Vasa's reign it was imperative for the monarch to obtain the support of the aristocracy, and especially the upper nobility. Therefore, in the 1520s and '30s he enfeoffed half of all the administrative counties to the aristocracy in addition to all the castles of the bishops. The king required aristocratic support against the church and the peasantry. It was not until the Count's War that the sovereign's policies changed.

The establishment of an efficient chancery began in 1538, when the German-born Conrad von Pyhy was appointed its head. Pyhy was educated in law and had gained experience in the service of Emperor Charles V and

62 Holmsen, *Norges historie*, 1 p. 504.

63 *Ibid.*, pp. 506–8.

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 510–12.

King Ferdinand. The chancery came to have a 'German department' to handle foreign correspondence. A German was also appointed to the post of secretary-general as head of this department. The council was converted into a 'council of government' (*regimentsråd*), which was to serve as the supreme court and administrative body. For the time being it failed to fulfil either function. A more permanent solution was achieved in economic administration. Stockholm came to have a 'rent and accounts chamber' (*ränte- och räknekammare*) as a government office supervising and controlling the collection of taxes and crown finances.<sup>65</sup>

The modernisation of the tax chamber in the 1530s was a result of the implementation of bailiff-based administration throughout the realm, which was divided into bailiwick districts of a few parishes. Crown manors were obtained as bailiff's residences and a modern system of accounting for the bailiwick's revenue and expenditure was introduced. The rent and accounts chamber, with a branch in Turku (Åbo), audited the accounts annually. The bailiffs were of common birth and were assisted by clerks who were also commoners. The network of bailiffs was later reduced to correspond to the existing system of administrative counties. At any rate, these developments created a class of commoners in civil service. Concurrently there were continuous attempts to introduce into this class persons who had held positions of trust in the old peasant system of self-government. One such post, whose holders were elected by peasants at *ting* assemblies, was that of the local sheriff's bailiff or *länsman*. In 1540, the crown appropriated the tax due to the *länsman* as state revenue, and in the following century the ratification of the appointment was removed from the *tings* to the region level of crown administration (that is, the governors). The consolidation of state administration thus marked the weakening of local administration.

No permanent intermediate level was created in sixteenth-century Sweden to operate between the bailiwick districts and central state administration. The duties of the commanders of the castle districts became more and more military in nature. Governors, whose areas of jurisdiction could be as large as the whole of Finland, remained temporary officials with little power. During the reign of Johan III governors began to be appointed quite regularly to various parts of the realm, above all in Finland, to co-ordinate both fiscal and civilian administration, and to represent the king in the administration of justice. The governors, however, were appointed on the basis of positions

<sup>65</sup> Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, pp. 400f.

of trust with varying powers of office; no permanent regulations were laid down for this institution.<sup>66</sup> Therefore attempts to stabilise administration with the aid of local governors failed. It was not until the 1610s and '20s during the reign of Gustav II Adolf that the gubernatorial districts were made permanent, thus establishing a centralised early modern state in Sweden.

### Financial administration in Denmark

Wars in particular spelt major expenses for the monarchs, as conflicts were mostly waged with mercenaries. Standing armies were not introduced until much later. Mercenaries would not accept payment *in natura* but demanded money for their services, which made it necessary to find means for converting crown revenue into cash payments. In most cases, loans were resorted to, followed by taxes to defray interest and repayments.<sup>67</sup> At times other income was also found. From the 1420s onwards the king of Denmark was able to collect revenue for war with customs dues from the Sound. The Sound-Due was interrupted from time to time. Erik of Pomerania tried to introduce a collective tax in coin and to facilitate tax collections. He began to mint copper coinage originally worth the same as marks in silver.<sup>68</sup> At times, as in 1453, the monarchs resorted to the restitution of crown-owned and freehold properties which had been unlawfully obtained by ecclesiastical and secular nobles. This was a politically sensitive course of action in kingdoms dominated by the aristocracy.<sup>69</sup>

After the Count's War a tax on cattle was levied in Denmark and the customs dues of the Sound were arranged on a new basis. The dues were levied according to cargo and no longer according to the vessel concerned. Customs revenue trebled within a short time. The customs of the Sound provided at times up to two-thirds of state revenue (formally the king's income).<sup>70</sup> The Danish state, which was in debt, resorted to a restitution of church property (in Denmark one-third and in Norway almost half of all land was owned by the church) as well as extra taxes levied in rapid succession. The bishops' tithes (one-third of the tithes collected by the church) were converted into the king's tithes and, unlike in Catholic times, were collected

66 Ylikangas, *Klubbekriget*, pp. 51ff.; P. Renvall, *Kuninkaanmiehiä ja kapinoitsijoita Vaasa-kauden Suomessa* (Helsinki, 1962), pp. 101ff.; K. Kiuasmaa, *Suomen yleis- ja paikallishallinnon toimet ja niiden hoito 1500-luvun jälkipuoliskolla*, *Historiallisia tutkimuksia*, 63 (Lahti, 1962), passim.

67 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, p. 301. 68 *Ibid.*, p. 267. 69 *Ibid.*, p. 302.

70 Halila, *Tanskan ja Norjan historia*, p. 75.

in full from the farmers and peasants.<sup>71</sup> In 1539 a large 'peasant tax' was levied, upon the grounds of a considerable state debt. A forced loan of sorts was also collected from the aristocracy. The payments by the nobility, however, remained meager; under Frederik II the aristocracy paid only 1 per cent of all taxes and rent levied by the state.<sup>72</sup>

The necessity of creating more tax revenue, particularly after the Count's War, made it imperative to reform fiscal administration. The result was the 'tax and rent chamber' (*rentekammeret*), which operated as an accounting and auditing department under the chancery. This department was headed by one or several tax masters of noble birth, assisted by tax clerks of the burgher class. The chamber received net tax income from the administrative districts, customs, fines and similar sources of payment. The revenue was recorded in the accounts of the tax master. The king's own chamber received revenue from the customs of the Sound, generally regarded as the monarch's private source of income.<sup>73</sup>

Danish fiscal administration lagged behind its Swedish counterpart in the sixteenth century largely because the enfeoffed nobility of Denmark had a more independent position vis-à-vis the crown. Accounts were not drawn up for all enfeoffed districts. The basis of accounting procedures was already laid down in the thirteenth century during the reign of King Valdemar, when the first regional lists were drawn up according to German models. The lists became more recurrent and diverse in content in the fifteenth century. The available material includes lists of revenue from crown-owned holdings and mortgaged castles, in addition to local cadastres, financial items recorded by the central administration, and accounts of funds forwarded by the chamberlain to the king. At the *herredag* of Odense in 1523, King Frederik I expressed the demand to draw up uniform lists and accounts of crown revenue. This was duly done, with the aid of corresponding lists from the reign of King Hans. Since the objective was to record net income for the crown, these lists were expanded and complemented as account-districts and enfeoffed districts on a payment basis were established. However, it was not until 1602 and 1604 during the reign of King Christian IV that the Danish administration could draw up more or less serviceable nationwide accounts of revenue and expenditure.

71 Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', pp. 293f.

72 Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, I, p. 190.

73 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 391.

These accounts, which included, in principle, customs revenue for the king, listed permanent sources of income and estimates of temporary sources.<sup>74</sup>

Despite severe instances of debt at times and the existence of near serfdom, which naturally eroded state tax revenue, the economy of the Danish state was maintained in functioning order. Denmark was no longer in debt in 1588 when King Frederik II died.<sup>75</sup> This was achieved not only by interfering with fiefs but above all by levying extra taxes, which had been collected in nine separate years by 1550. This course was to be pursued for some time. The economy also followed the rule whereby war depleted finances which were restored in times of peace. For some reason, aristocratic rule in Denmark was considerably less aggressive in terms of foreign policy than its counterpart in seventeenth-century Sweden. One reason for this could have been the extensive involvement of the Danish aristocracy in the nation's economy, making it in a sense an aristocratic burgher estate.

### Fiscal administration in Sweden

In 1523 Gustav Vasa was in an advantageous position in so far as he could rule over almost all the enfeoffed castle districts of the realm. Moreover, Sweden had an advantage in revenue from the mining and metal industry. Gustav Vasa was able to put this sector of the economy – iron, copper and silver production – into full swing in the 1530s, which facilitated his foreign policies, for example the granting of loans to Christian III in the Count's War. Later, the export of forged iron outranked silver exports (the silver mine at Sala was soon depleted) as well as exports of cast iron. Copper production was the last to expand. It was particularly important in this situation that mainly mining revenue permitted the king to keep several companies (*fänika*) of German mercenaries in his service. This power available to him made sure that his main base of operations, i.e. Stockholm, remained in his hands. The city could not be taken by surprise.<sup>76</sup> During the Union period the poor state of the Swedish navy kept Stockholm continually open to possible attacks by the Danes. The king's body of troops was at its largest in the early 1540s, when over 8,000 foot soldiers (*knektar*) were in his service. Military expenditure was also increased by the building of a fleet and the construction of castles

74 B. Odén, *Rikets uppbörd och utgift. Statsfinanser og finansförvaltning under senare 1500-talet*, Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis, 1 (Lund, 1955), pp. 34–6.

75 Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, 1, p. 191.

76 Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, p. 213.

and fortresses. In the 1550s over half of all state revenue was used for military purposes, mainly the hiring of mercenary soldiers.<sup>77</sup>

The finances of the Swedish crown began to deteriorate when a period of war began immediately after the death of Gustav Vasa in 1560. Swedish expansion into the Baltic regions in 1561 led to conflicts which resulted in the Seven Years War with Denmark (1563–70), immediately followed by the Twenty-five Years War with Russia (1570–95). The Danish conflict ended in defeat for Sweden, while the war with Russia led to victory, but both wars placed considerable strain on the finances of the realm. King Erik XIV (1560–8) still managed by resorting to the royal stores of silver, but his brother Johan III (1569–92) had to decrease the value of money in circulation. This, in turn, led to inflation, and the crown had to resort to recurrently levied additional taxes. These taxes often exceeded the amount of regular cadastre taxes. Despite this, the state budget, which had been introduced, lacked funds. The largest items of expenditure consisted of pay for foreign and domestic mercenaries. The situation led to a change in the crown's policies of enfeoffment. When the period of war began, the enfeoffments of large-scale administrative counties were almost completely abandoned. In 1560 there were thirty enfeoffed districts at least the size of an administrative county; in 1590 only one remained. From then on, fiefs were the size of a parish at the most. In 1590 slightly fewer than fifty parishes had been enfeoffed, in addition to innumerable smaller fees.

As the large fiefs were abolished, the administrative prerogatives of their holders also disappeared, and crown administration also began to manage the enfeoffed areas to an increasing degree. Accordingly, county bailiffs collected the additional taxes from the fiefdoms, which also meant that in this context the crown was the main recipient of rent and taxes. From the reign of Erik XIV onwards, bailiffs' accounts began to include enfeoffed parishes. Annual salaries (*beställningarna*) were paid in the form of enfeoffment first to officials of common birth and later to their aristocratic colleagues. In this manner, the fiefs became solely awards given in return for services rendered to the crown.<sup>78</sup>

From the implementation of a hereditary monarchy by King Gustav Vasa in 1544 and the resulting donation of princely fiefs to his three sons (contrary to the law of the realm), a new principle made itself felt in the policies of enfeoffment followed in Sweden. The duchies in question marked

77 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, I, p. 398.      78 *Ibid.*, p. 449.



the beginning of developments that opened the way for the upper nobility into the administration of the realm and particularly to profitable fiefs. This was facilitated by changes of rulers, in which connection the aristocracy could put a price on its support to pretenders to the throne. Erik XIV awarded a number of supporters the titles of count and baron, but granted the former only fiefs of small size. Johan III issued the first written charter of privilege to the nobility and also indicated fiefdoms for barons. Where King Erik had donated 150 estates to counts and barons, Johan III awarded some 2,000 properties of this kind. The princely fiefs gave their holders extensive powers. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, small donations, areas given into hereditary ownership, grew in number. At first the awarding of fiefs in this manner could not apply to freehold peasant holdings (*skattehemman*), but this restriction was later removed. By the death of Johan III, 19 per cent of all cultivated land in Sweden had been awarded to the nobility.<sup>79</sup> This was not a large figure in view of the fact that in Denmark the number of freehold farmers continued to diminish, to around 5 per cent in the first half of the seventeenth century. At the time half of the 76,000 farms in the country were in the possession of the aristocracy; the rest were in the hands of the crown.<sup>80</sup> In terms of financial administration the first years of Gustav Vasa's reign in Sweden saw similar listings of crown revenue as in Denmark at the same time and in later years. The records omit the larger fiefs. Major reforms of fiscal administration were carried out in 1539–41 with the aid of German experts. The most thorough investigations were made when the duchies were formed and when rulers changed. Two courses were followed. Accounts and their summaries were drawn up in individual bailiwicks, and lists and calculations were applied in estimating expected state income. The wars made it necessary to increase control, as the state was rapidly falling into debt. In 1573 and 1582 extensive accounts of 'all revenue and expenditure' in the Swedish realm were drawn up. These accounting journals at the level of the realm were of a higher standard than the Danish accounts of the early seventeenth century, despite the fact that these included only permanent income and not temporary sources of revenue, as had happened to some degree in Denmark. Sweden thus approached the budgetary procedures for which a model had been created in France in 1523.<sup>81</sup>

79 *Ibid.*, p. 452.

80 J. Thiedecke, *Magten, Æren och Døden. Kampen om Norden 1563–1720* (Valby, 1999), pp. 7–20; Halila, *Tanskan ja Norjan historia*, p. 5.

81 Odén, *Rikets uppboörd och utgift*, pp. 42–57.

*Factors influencing development*

In responding to the question of why royal and central state authority were strengthened to a certain degree in the sixteenth century but were not to rise significantly until the seventeenth century (the reign of Gustav Vasa must be regarded as an exception), the following hypotheses may be considered. The expansion of royal power was opposed most strongly and efficiently by the aristocracy, which wanted to preserve an electoral monarchy at any price, for in almost every instance when the sovereign had changed it had been able to improve its own position. It was afraid of a hereditary monarchy, opposing its introduction with all possible means.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, the weakening of the Hanseatic League in the Baltic was to the advantage of the sovereign. As long as the Hanseatic League was strong, it supported the opposition when the sovereign appeared to gain too much power and threaten its privileges. The League never supported strong Union rulers.<sup>83</sup> Those seeking power always had to assure themselves of support from Lübeck and its allies if they were to succeed in their aims. The Hanseatic League was not broken down by Dutch and English competition alone; the rulers successfully relied on the domestic burghers as well.

The roots of these activities date far back in time; in fact the granting of charters to towns within their own jurisdiction signified the first attempts by Nordic sovereigns to restrict the influence of the Hanseatic League. Support for the capital cities, which came much later, is associated with this course of action. As early as the sixteenth century, Sweden and Denmark began to develop in a direction where finally only the capital was favoured. The roots of these policies are to be found in the Middle Ages. Immediately after defeating Christian I at the battle of Brunkeberg in 1471 with an army assembled from the lower estates, Sten Sture as regent of Sweden repealed the ruling of the Town Law (c. 1350) whereby at least half of the members of town councils were to be Germans.<sup>84</sup> Foreigners were no longer to be admitted to any public positions in the administration of Swedish towns. Although this ruling could not be maintained for very long, it anticipated future developments. After the Count's War of 1534–6, there was no longer any need to fear the Hanseatic League. Applying pre-mercantile policies,

82 The electoral monarchy is underlined in both Sweden's medieval laws of the realm, i.e. those issued by Magnus Eriksson and King Christopher. Cf. Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, p. 296.

83 *Ibid.*, p. 304.      84 *Ibid.*, pp. 317f.

the sovereigns were able to benefit from the burgeoning barter economy and to make the capitals bases of support for their own power.

We must also mention a further factor that speeded the concentration of power in the hands of the king or the council, namely the peasant uprisings, or more precisely their failure (except in Switzerland). In both Union kingdoms of Sweden and Denmark a series of heated peasant rebellions broke out in the 1520s and 1530s. The background to these events were the weakened position of the peasantry, the formation of manors and the success of the aristocracy. The immediate reasons, however, were tax rises and similar unfavourable economic changes, as well as estimates of possible success. The latter factor was associated with power struggles within the Union or its kingdoms, and particularly in Denmark but at times also in Sweden with the support of the towns. From time to time the aristocratic opposition joined forces with the rebels of the lower estates. The peasantry raised its banners and placed its hopes on pretenders to the throne, such as Christian II after he had been dethroned, or on Gustav Vasa when he was seeking the throne of Sweden. Because wars at the time were fought with mercenary troops, which were costly – Christian II paid his mercenaries 17,000 guldens a month in 1522 alone<sup>85</sup> – war always placed the government in debt. The funds for hiring the mercenaries were taken as loans, which had to be paid back through raised taxes and other means. Christian II, followed by Gustav Vasa, also resorted in desperation to lowering the value of currency by minting so-called *klippings*. These, however, only led to rampant inflation and increased the tax burden, which in turn increased the appeal of rebellion.<sup>86</sup>

The uprisings partly benefited the nobility (particularly in Denmark) and the crown (in Sweden) for the simple reason that the rebels were put down. In Denmark, the peasants and burghers who had rebelled during the Count's War were branded by the nobility as 'a pack of mad, raving dogs'.<sup>87</sup> These estates were no longer summoned to the diet. In Sweden, the hereditary monarchy was introduced after the Dacke uprising had been put down. The administrative divisions of the country were changed so that Kopparberg Province, a hotbed of rebellion, lost its former administrative unity, which had facilitated the mobilisation of the revolt. An uprising in Västergötland in 1529 resulted in most of this province being placed under the direct control of

85 Hørby and Venge, 'Tiden 1340–1648', p. 256. 86 *Ibid.*, pp. 292f.

87 Danstrup, *Danmarks historia från äldsta tid till våra dagar*, 1, pp. 168–74.

the crown.<sup>88</sup> In Finland restrictions on peasant self-rule increased after the Club War of 1596–7, while the apparatus and organisation of state administration grew in importance. Typically, the self-rule of peasants and farmers survived (albeit after many stages) in its strongest form in Switzerland, the only country where peasant revolts enjoyed the greatest success.

As the era drew to a close, the Nordic countries had been able to modernise their finances, but not yet their administration. Except for lower-level positions for clerks, administration was still in the hands of persons who had been awarded official positions of trust. Permanent high-ranking civil service positions involving regulations were not established until the seventeenth century. The final stages of modernisation and the so-called judicial revolution took place in the eighteenth century. Judicial praxis was dominated in the sixteenth century by conciliation (*förlikningar*) and evidence based on oath. Punishments, the use of independent evidence and permanent legal procedure were also creations of the seventeenth century, albeit based on royal legal praxis of the Middle Ages.<sup>89</sup> In the sixteenth century 'modern' forms of government and administration of justice only existed in the physical proximity of the ruler (and generally associated with military strength).

One major question of general significance remains. Why was Swedish society more belligerent than its Danish counterpart? Until 1599 the Danish nobility had the privilege of being exempted from war service outside the borders of the realm. In Sweden, on the other hand, the nobility was the most eager estate in society to engage in war. What explains this difference? One possible reason is the relatively weaker standing of the Swedish aristocracy in comparison with Denmark. In Sweden, war especially spelt advantages for the nobility, who received officer's commissions and conquered areas as fiefs. In Denmark, the nobility already had an unshakable position in peacetime conditions and was more closely involved in economic affairs, manorial agriculture and trade than the Swedish aristocracy. War would undermine its position rather than bolster it. Therefore the Danish nobility was explicitly opposed to offensive war, though desirous to engage in defensive measures.

88 Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, p. 392.

89 G. Åquist, *Kungen och rätten. Studier till uppkomsten och den tidigare utvecklingen av kungens lagstiftningsmakt och domrätt under medeltiden* (Lund, 1989), p. 322.

PART II

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MATERIAL EXPANSION AND ITS LIMITATIONS



## Growth and stagnation of population and settlement

ELJAS ORRMAN

From the latter half of the fifteenth century, the greater part of Europe experienced a growth in population which continued well into the sixteenth century. The increase soon began to have an effect on settlement patterns. The large numbers of deserted farms, which were a consequence of the late medieval population catastrophe caused by the Black Death and subsequent plague epidemics, began to be cultivated again, and in some places new colonisation also got under way. However, the positive trend in population and settlement growth occurred with a very variable chronology in the different countries of Europe during the period from the latter half of the sixteenth century to the first half of the following century. Generally speaking, the whole of the seventeenth century in Europe was a period of stagnation and decline from the population perspective.

In the northern parts of Europe too, including the Danish and Swedish kingdoms, the positive trend in population growth asserted itself, but the chronology differed in certain respects from that of the more southerly parts of Europe. In the greater part of this northern region, the positive trend ceased in the first half of the seventeenth century, at the latest, resulting in a period of stagnation, but here and there in this far-flung region the positive trend continued.

For the period up to the mid-seventeenth century, it is not possible to make a trustworthy estimate of the size of the population or a quantitative study of the demographic dynamic of the northern realms, as suitable source material is lacking. This applies to the kingdoms as a whole as well as to more limited regions within them. It was not until 1645 that the clergy in Denmark were enjoined, for military and national fiscal reasons, to keep ministerial registers of all church ceremonies concerning birth, marriage and death. For the northern part of the kingdom, i.e. Norway, a corresponding ordinance was only promulgated in 1685. In the Swedish realm the Church Act from 1686 obliged the clergy to keep ministerial records of their

parishioners and also special population registers according to household. But already from the mid 1630s in Sweden annual lists, known as *mantalslängder*, began to be drawn up for the purpose of levying a new general tax on individuals, and these cover the majority of the adult population and can be used for the study of demographic conditions. Our perception of the changes in population growth in the period before the arrival of country-wide parish registers is based on different kinds of tax records with detailed information of farms, holdings and households, which were the main object of taxation for the crown.

## Norway

Norway, which had been hardest hit of all the Scandinavian countries by the late medieval population decline, underwent the largest population increase in the two centuries from 1520 to 1720. The number of inhabitants within the present day boundaries of Norway has been estimated at 155,000 at the beginning of this period (188,000 if the districts of Jämtland, Härjedalen and Bohuslän, which were later lost in the seventeenth century, are also included), 440,000 in the year 1665 and 512,000 around 1700. For the period 1520–1665, the annual rise in population in the whole country has been calculated as 0.7 per cent to 0.9 per cent, but regional variations were significant. The fastest rise was the annual increase of 1.0 to 1.2 per cent in the southern Agder region, while the rate of growth was lowest, at 0.5 to 0.85 per cent, in north Norway. In the latter part of the century, by contrast, the rate of growth was slow, only 0.4 per cent during the period 1665–1701. Growth was now slowest in the west and the south.<sup>1</sup>

The vigorous population growth in Norway manifested itself strikingly in the form of new settlements, expressed in the number of rural holdings (*gårdsbruk*). At the beginning of the period, in the 1520s, the number of holdings in Norway, within its current borders, was 23,000 to 24,000 (30,000 counting the districts that were later lost). In the period up to the mid 1660s, the number of holdings within the country's borders at that time, and even within its current borders, rose to 57,000 and came close to the level reached during the high Middle Ages; then in the period to 1723 it rose to

1 S. Dyrvik et al. (eds.), *The Demographic Crisis in Norway in the 17th and the 18th Centuries: Some Data and Interpretations* (Bergen/Oslo/Tromsø, 1976), pp. 4f., 14f.; S. Dyrvik et al. (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie 1500–1700* (Bergen, 1979), pp. 19–21; K. Mykland, 'Gennem nødår og krig 1648–1720', in Knut Mykland (ed.), *Norges historie*, 7 (Oslo, 1977), p. 149.



67,000. To an overwhelming degree, the expansion in settlements took place through cultivation of late medieval deserted farms. However, a number of medieval marginal settlements where, as a result of the deteriorating climate, the cultivation of corn was no longer possible or had become very risky, became permanently deserted.

New agrarian holdings appeared as a result of existing named farms (*navnegård*) being divided in two or, less frequently, into a larger number of independent holdings, especially in areas in the west of the country. In the sixteenth century, the farms which were divided were first and foremost those larger named farms which had remained under cultivation throughout the Middle Ages, but in the seventeenth century named farms which had formerly been deserted but which had been revived during the previous century also began to be divided. In some places, there was also some clearing of new land. The growth in population resulted, however, in a social differentiation of the agrarian community through the appearance of a new social class – cottars (*husmen, strandsitter*) – among the actual farmers. Some of the cottars had small parcels of land at their disposal, while many had no land whatsoever. By the mid 1660s the number of cottar households had risen to 17,000.

The development of settlements in Norway during the two centuries from 1520 to 1720 was characterised by regional differences. Recovery from the decline of the late medieval period got under way earliest, during the first half of the sixteenth century, in the western fjord and inland districts like the Trøndelag area, i.e. in districts which had been hit hardest by depopulation during the late Middle Ages. In these areas, the expansion had already slackened off during the seventeenth century, and afterwards it came to a halt almost entirely. In the outer coastal districts, on the other hand, the number of households only began to grow at a later period. The same was true of agricultural districts in the south-east, i.e. in Østlandet, where the reclamation of deserted farms only got under way in the late sixteenth century. There, the expansion culminated during the first half of the following century and then continued during the second half. In north Norway, by contrast, the development was characterised by significant fluctuations. The number of households here grew quickly during the sixteenth century, but afterwards, in the first half of the seventeenth century, a period of stagnation intervened, while a new expansive phase began during the latter half of the century.<sup>2</sup>

2 Dyrvik et al. (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie*, pp. 16–19, 22–6, 33; J. Sandnes, *Ødetid og gjenreisning. Trøndsk bosetningshistorie ca 1200–1660* (Oslo, 1971), pp. 276–8, 281; J. Sandnes and H. Salvesen, *Ødegårdstid i Norge. Det nordiske ødegårdsprosjekts norske undersøkelser*,

## Denmark

In Denmark too, which up to the 1640s and 1650s also included the present south Swedish districts of Skåne, Blekinge and Halland, the population from the beginning of the sixteenth century found itself in a growth phase. The situation as a whole remained the same up to the decades before the mid-seventeenth century, even if here too there were clear regional differences. For the whole of Denmark, including the present districts of southern Sweden, the annual rate of growth of population has been estimated to have been 0.5 per cent even by the middle of the seventeenth century, but the regional differences were significant. The population of Denmark together with the southern Swedish provinces was then around 820,000. The rate of growth of the Danish population was roughly similar to, or slightly slower than, that of the population further south in the Holy Roman Empire, where the annual rate of growth during the sixteenth century, according to different estimates, was 0.55 per cent or 0.8 per cent.

At the same time regional shifts took place. At the beginning of the early modern era, the main centre of population shifted from Jylland to the Danish islands. During the late Middle Ages the relationship between these two areas had been 3:2, but by the mid-seventeenth century they were in balance. After the mid-seventeenth century population growth in Denmark, as in Norway, was characterised by a phase of stagnation which lasted until the beginning of the following century. During the whole of the latter half of the seventeenth century, the population within Denmark's current borders grew by only some 40,000. The annual growth then was only 0.14 per cent. The ravages of war, famine and epidemics during the 1650s actually led to a population decline of close to 20 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

From the beginning of the sixteenth century, the growing population in Denmark produced an expansive phase of settlement. The growth dynamic manifested itself most markedly in north Jylland and in the northern parts of

*Det nordiske ødegårdsprojekt. Publikasjoner*, 4 (Oslo, 1987), pp. 103, 106; Mykland, *Gennem nådår og krig*, p. 177; H. Bjørkvik, 'Folketap og sammenbrud', in Knut Helle *et al.* (eds.), *Aschehøus Norgeshistorie*, 4 (Oslo, 1996), pp. 12f.

3 E. Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund 1500–1700*, *Dansk socialhistorie*, 3, 2nd edn (København, 1980), pp. 51, 55, 72; H. C. Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud 1700–1870*, *Dansk socialhistorie*, 4 (København, 1979), pp. 51, 56; W. Abel, 'Geschichte der deutschen Landwirtschaft vom frühen Mittelalter bis zum 19. Jahrhundert', in G. Franz (ed.), *Deutsche Agrargeschichte*, 2 (Stuttgart, 1962), pp. 138f.; J. Myrdal, '1500-talets bebyggelseexpansion – en forskningsöversikt', *Scandia*, 53:1 (1987), p. 94; K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks historie*, 3: *Tiden 1648–1730*, ed. S. Mørch, *Danmarks historie* (København, 1989), pp. 44f.

the south Swedish provinces. The expansion of settlements also continued longer in these areas than elsewhere, right into the middle of the seventeenth century, but local variations were significant. In the central agricultural districts of eastern Denmark, i.e. on the large islands and in the western parts of Skåne, where there were numerous manors belonging to the aristocracy and the crown, an unambiguous if moderate growth in settlement took place during the sixteenth century, and the number of agrarian households increased to some extent. But as early as the turn of the century, a clear-cut period of stagnation and stability set in. Parishes with manors belonging to the nobility or the crown departed from the general trend in the east-central districts in that the number of farms they contained, far from increasing, sank by several per cent from the middle of the sixteenth century until the latter half of the following century.<sup>4</sup>

The growth in Denmark expressed itself in several ways. In the most northerly part of Jylland, i.e. in Vendsyssel, and in southern Jylland as well as in parts of Skåne, the number of agrarian units of production increased mostly as a result of the reclamation of medieval deserted farms, alongside downright new cultivation. New agrarian households also took shape through the division into two of existing tenant farms, or to a lesser extent through division into a larger number of independent holdings. This form of settlement expansion was most common in Jylland, whereas the division of holdings was unusual on the Danish islands.

As in Norway, the population growth in Denmark during the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century resulted in a substantial increase in the number of households in the countryside which earned their livelihood only partially or not at all from their own production. From the sixteenth century up to the latter half of the seventeenth century, the number of cottar (*husmænd*) households grew very substantially. Small patches of land for cultivation were attached to a number of these cottar holdings, but others (*gadehusmænd*) had no land whatsoever. During the latter half of the sixteenth century, the number of cottar households seems to have gone up to between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of agrarian households, and thereafter the number grew substantially. The proportion varied markedly, however, in different parts of the country. In the 1680s most cottar households were to be found in northern Sjælland, where they amounted to 40 per cent of all households. Cottars with their own patches

4 Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, pp. 55–73.

of land for cultivation were pre-eminent in northernmost Jylland and apparently also in Skåne. The landless cottars, who in practice were farm labourers, comprised the majority of cottars on the islands and in eastern Jylland, regions which were characterised by a large number of aristocratic manors. The rise of these groups signified a social differentiation within the Danish agrarian community.<sup>5</sup>

## Iceland

Iceland too experienced a significant growth in population during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, culminating after the mid-seventeenth century. The population by then approached 55,000, a size that was not reached again until the nineteenth century. Afterwards, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the number of inhabitants sank to 50,000, when the number of settlements on Iceland was around 5,900 farms and 1,700 other households. During the first decade of the eighteenth century, the population of Iceland was affected by a dramatic catastrophe: a devastating smallpox epidemic which raged from 1707 to 1709 and cut the population by almost a third, to 34,000. This was followed by a long period of stagnation in the development of the Icelandic population.<sup>6</sup>

## Sweden

During the first two centuries of the modern period, population and settlement development in the western parts of the Swedish kingdom, i.e. in Sweden proper, differed from that in the eastern parts, i.e. Finland. In the western parts of the kingdom, the population grew significantly during the sixteenth century and into the first decades of the following century. The increase from the first quarter of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the following century has been estimated at 40 per cent to 60 per cent, but in certain northern areas the last decades of the sixteenth century saw a slight, temporary decrease in the population. The population of Sweden within its medieval borders has been estimated at between 500,000 and 600,000 during the 1570s and around 900,000 during the first decades of the

<sup>5</sup> Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, pp. 62–6.

<sup>6</sup> B. Teitsson and M. Stéfansson, *Íslands ödegårdsforskning*, Det nordiske ødegårdsprojekt. Publikasjon, 1 (København, 1971), p. 138; B. Thorsteinsson, *Ísland* (København, 1985), pp. 165, 176–9.

seventeenth century. At the turn of the eighteenth century the population in the same area exceeded 1.1 million, and was roughly 1.5 million within the borders of present Sweden. Even if modern studies of population development in seventeenth-century Sweden are lacking, it is nevertheless clear that the population from the second quarter of the century to the beginning of the eighteenth century grew only slowly. The annual rate of growth during this period of a century has been calculated to 0.3–0.5 per cent.<sup>7</sup>

The trend in Swedish population development also had an effect on the pattern of settlement. In 1571, there were around 84,000 rural households in the country within its medieval borders. In general, the sixteenth century was characterised by a clear increase in the number of rural households. In forested tracts attached to old settlements, the number of farms grew significantly as a consequence of reclamation. In the flatlands with old established settlements, the growth of population led to a division of existing farms. In the south-western provinces, where cattle-rearing was the dominant feature of the rural economy, the annual increase in the number of rural households during the period 1560–1600 has been calculated at almost 0.8 per cent, signifying a fairly substantial rate of expansion. In the arable districts in the central provinces around lake Mälaren and to the south, i.e. in Uppland, Västmanland and Östergötland, there was also a growth in settlement in the sixteenth century, but it seems to have been considerably more modest than in the former areas. In an arc from Småland, across Västergötland and Värmland, and into southern Dalarna, the forested areas, where cattle-rearing was prominent, expanded. Further north, in the areas by the Gulf of Bothnia which, from the perspective of grain cultivation, were marginal in character, i.e. in Ångermanland and Västerbotten, the number of rural households decreased at the end of the sixteenth century but recovered to some extent at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Within this region, however, the northern part of Västerbotten witnessed a growth in settlement during the last decades of the sixteenth century, partly due to migration from Finland.<sup>8</sup>

7 J. Myrdal, *Jordbruket under feodalismen 1000–1700, Det svenska jordbrukets historia* (Borås, 1999), pp. 221f.; Myrdal, '1500-talets bebyggelseexpansion', p. 94; J. Myrdal and J. Söderberg, *Kontinuitetens dynamik. Agrar ekonomi i 1500-talets Sverige*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Studies in Economic History, 15 (Stockholm, 1991), p. 209; J. Myrdal, 'Farming and Feudalism, 100–1700', in J. Myrdal and Mats Morell (eds.), *The Agrarian History of Sweden from 4000 BC to AD 2000* (Lund, 2011), p. 104; E. F. Heckscher, *Hushållningen under internationell påverkan 1600–1720, Sveriges ekonomiska historia från Gustav Vasa, 1:2* (Stockholm, 1936), p. 383

8 Myrdal, *Jordbrukets historia under feodalismen*, pp. 221–4; L.-O. Larsson, *Kolonisation och befolkningsutveckling i det svenska agrarsamhället 1500–1620*, Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis, 27 (Lund, 1972), p. 68; Myrdal, '1500-talets bebyggelseexpansion',

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the provinces of central Sweden and Norrland, i.e. in the areas north of the large lakes Vänern, Vättern and Hjälmaren, there were still vast unpopulated areas of coniferous forest where the soil was characterised by moraine deposits in between those settlements which had arisen in the most recent medieval times. These tracts did not tempt Swedish colonists, but from about 1580 incomers from the east, from central and eastern parts of Finland, began to settle in these uninhabited forest areas, encouraged by Duke Karl, the future King Karl IX, with means such as tax exemptions, already used earlier by King Gustav Vasa. In the seventeenth century, however, the Finnish immigration was based on the initiatives of the migrants from Finland themselves. The new settlers were mostly from the province of Savo (Savolax) and areas to the west of there. Their economy was based on the eastern variant of burn-beating (Finnish *huuhta*), which was particularly well suited for rye cultivation even in the coarse spruce forests which predominated in their former home tracts. In the northern forest regions the new holdings were given the status of freehold farms, while in the south they often became tenant farms of the crown.

The newcomers did not compete directly with the indigenous population for the same areas of cultivation as they carried out their burning on moraine land, whereas the latter had their fields confined only to clayey soil and other fine-sediment soils. To begin with, the newcomers, who were called 'forest Finns', were encouraged by the crown, but fear of a lack of forestry resources for the expanding production of iron led to restrictive decrees in 1647 and later. The result was that immigration from Finland ebbed away around the middle of the century, but the forest Finns and their descendants continued their burning of the soil and also moved to a significant extent between different Swedish provinces. Colonisation by Finns in Sweden advanced westwards during the sixteenth century over the border into Norway, and a number of the colonists emigrated between 1630 and 1650 and even later to the Swedish (later, Dutch) colony of Delaware in North America.

The Finnish colonisation represented a dynamic element in the development of settlement in Sweden, which resulted in the emergence of a stable population in most of the hitherto uninhabited areas between the established settlements south of the sixty-third degree of latitude, as well as in the western border areas. The largest settlements of Finns grew up in west

pp. 86–95; Myrdal and Söderberg, *Kontinuitetens dynamik*, p. 209; Myrdal, 'Farming and Feudalism', p. 104; J. Vahtola, 'Ylisen Norrlannin talonpoikaisasutus 1500-luvulla', *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja*, 86 (1988), pp. 192–4.

Värmland and stretched further west into Norwegian territory. Around the turn of the eighteenth century there was a Finnish population of 5,000 in Värmland, and on the Norwegian side of the border a good thousand. In Hälsingland in the east, there also grew up a large Finnish settlement of around 1,500 persons, i.e. 5 per cent of the province's inhabitants. In several places, compact Finnish settlements arose where the Finnish language and Finnish culture, which were clearly different from that of the indigenous inhabitants, were preserved to a large degree right into the nineteenth century, and in some places as late as the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>9</sup>

## Finland

Settlement growth in the eastern parts of the Swedish kingdom, i.e. in the Finnish provinces, differed in various respects from the growth in the western parts of the kingdom and also in the other parts of the Nordic area. In the late Middle Ages, settlement growth in Finland was marked by an upward trend, and this continued until the latter half of the sixteenth century, when expansion was replaced by decline. From the 1570s until the 1630s, the number of rural holdings sank by a good fifth, from around 36,000 to around 28,000. The result was thousands of deserted farms. Settlement growth during this time, however, cannot be accurately elucidated, as the Finnish agrarian community underwent large structural changes as a result of the long-drawn-out war of 1571 to 1595 between the kingdom of Sweden and Russia, despite the fact that Finnish territory was only to a very slight degree directly exposed to acts of war. The population hardly decreased to the same extent as the number of holdings (according to one judgement, there was no decrease whatsoever), but the landless population's share evidently increased substantially during the regressive phase. The population between 1610 and 1620 has been calculated at around 300,000 to 350,000. The period after the 1630s saw a slow phase of recovery, which lasted until the 1690s. The population then went up to between 450,000 and 470,000, but also higher figures have been presented. At the same time, the number of holdings climbed to around 32,000, to which can be added just about 1,000 cottars' holdings. During the years 1695–7, the Finnish part of the Swedish kingdom

9 Myrdal, *Jordbrukets historia under feodalismen*, pp. 226f.; K. Tarkiainen, *Inflyttarna från Sverige under det gemensamma rikets tid, Finnarnas historia i Sverige*, 1 (Helsinki, 1991), pp. 220, 222–32; G. Bladh, *Finnskogens landsbygd och människor under fyra sekler. En studie om samhälle och natur i förändring*, Meddelanden från Göteborgs universitets geografiska institutioner, 87 (Göteborg, 1995), pp. 64–90, 176f.

was afflicted by an exceptionally severe crop failure and famine, which led to a population decrease of about a third. The first two decades of the eighteenth century were marked by the Great Northern War and a prolonged Russian occupation. Population growth in Finland at that time came to a complete halt.<sup>10</sup>

The southern and western parts of Finland formed the north-easternmost fringe of the European and Scandinavian arable farming area, while the eastern and north-eastern parts belonged to the extensive eastern burn-beating area, which was marked by the burn-beating technique which made possible the cultivation of, primarily, rye in fir-woods. During the period from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth century, the development of settlement in the Finnish farming communities in the south and south-west diverged to a large extent from the development in the burn-beating communities north-east and east of the great lake Päijänne. Whereas settlement in the former areas was already by the mid-sixteenth century showing signs of incipient stagnation, which would later turn into decline, settlement in the eastern burn-beating area at the same time entered an extremely expansive phase.

The burn-beating techniques (*huuhta*), which were employed in the east Finnish provinces of Savo (Savolax) and Karjala (Karelia), were suited to slash-and-burn cultivation in rough coniferous forests and demanded a considerable workforce as well as extensive resources of woodland, since an area prepared in this manner could only be used again for cereal cultivation after thirty to fifty years. An annual sowing of a barrel of grain, i.e. c. 127–56 litres, required – with its long cycles of cultivation – access to forest land of up to 25 to 80 hectares in extent, depending on the different variants of the *huuhta* technique. In the seventeenth century the sowing on an average homestead in Savo, practising burn-beating cultivation, was two barrels per year. The increased population in this province from the last decades of the fifteenth century led to a shortage of suitable forests for this extensive burn-beating.

<sup>10</sup> E. Jutikkala, 'Suurten sotien ja uuden asutusekspansion kaudet', in E. Jutikkala *et al.* (eds.), *Suomen taloushistoria*, 1 (Helsinki, 1980), p. 161, tab. 1; E. Jutikkala, 'Finlands befolkning och befolkande', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, 72 (1987), pp. 363–5; S. Muroma, *Suurten kuolonvuosien (1695–1697) väestömenetykset*, *Historiallisia Tutkimuksia*, 161 (Helsinki, 1991), p. 195; N. E. Villstrand, 'Stormaktstiden 1617–1721', in R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), pp. 139f; O. Turpeinen, 'Suomen väestö 1638–1815 sekä vertailu Viroon', in J. Korpela *et al.* (eds.), *Ihmisiä, ilmiöitä ja rakenteita historian virrassa. Professori Antero Heikkiselle 60-vuotispäivänä omistettu juhlaulkaisu*, *Studia Carelica Humanistica*, 16 (Joensuu, 2001), p. 24, tab. 4.



At the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, the coniferous forest areas in the interior of Finland north of the sixty-second degree of latitude were still to a large extent completely uninhabited, except for a small number of Sami, but were used instead as hunting land. From the last decades of the fifteenth century, there was a slow process of settlement in these uninhabited forest tracts. One factor driving this process was the building of the fortress of Olavinlinna (Olofsborg) in the area in the mid 1470s, which led to increased taxes for the peasants. In order to avoid them, many chose to settle in the wilderness.<sup>11</sup>

Colonisation of the interior of Finland had been largely inhibited by the fact that the wilderness was used for hunting and fishing and was to a large extent in private ownership. From the sixteenth century onwards, the situation changed as a result of measures taken by the crown. King Gustav Vasa declared, on the basis of royal prerogative, that the areas outside the inhabited settlements belonged to the crown and then granted them to those who were willing to establish new settlements in the wilderness. This opportunity was immediately exploited by the burn-beating people of Savo, who quickly spread out over vast areas. In the course of roughly three decades, from 1550 until around 1580, the formerly uninhabited forest areas in the interior of Finland right up to the sixty-fifth degree of latitude received a stable population consisting overwhelmingly of natives of Savo. Most of the newly established farms came to assume the character of freehold farms, thus avoiding becoming crown property. It was a case of an extremely sparse settlement within an enormous territory. In the newly colonised area, which comprised some 60,000 square kilometres, there were in 1580 barely a thousand holdings, i.e. only 1.7 holdings per hundred square kilometres. These thousand homesteads, however, needed in all roughly 500–700 square kilometres of suitable forest land in order to be able to carry on their extensive burn-beating – in addition they needed about 300 square kilometres of forest resources for fuel, buildings etc. Settlement was scattered over the whole of this vast area and in terms of terrain it was to a great extent confined to the shores and neighbourhoods of lakes and larger watercourses. Solitary holdings – which were several or often tens of kilometres from the nearest settlement – were common, as were settlements with a few score

<sup>11</sup> K. Pirinen, *Savon keskiaika, Savon historia*, 1 (Kuopio, 1988), pp. 385–99, 414; A. M. Soininen, *Vanha maataloutemme. Maatalous ja maatalousväestö Suomessa perinteisen maatalouden loppukaudella 1720-luvulta 1870-luvulle*, Historiallisia Tutkimuksia, 96 (Helsinki, 1974), pp. 65–72; V. Saloheimo, *Savo suurvallan valjaissa, Savon historia*, 2:2 (Kuopio, 1990), pp. 209–19, 226.

farms several kilometres from each other. The patches of burn-beat cultivation often lay several kilometres, or not infrequently several score kilometres distant from the dwelling-place. They were often situated on the spruce-clad heights and their higher slopes above the highest ice-age raised beach. The moraine soil there was fertile and also in other ways suitable for the technique of burn-beating in use. Burn-beaten land on the heights was also less exposed to frost than it was on lower slopes and in the valleys. The situation as regards settlement and cultivation in the newly colonised burn-beat area stayed fundamentally the same during the first half of the seventeenth century, but during the latter half of the century there was a tendency to extend the areas given over to fields, which at an earlier date had been very small, and to establish new farms on the heights.<sup>12</sup>

During the seventeenth century the expansion of sedentary settlement in Finland continued in a northerly direction, not only in the areas characterised by burn-beating cultivation. Along the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia and in the large northern river-valleys in the west, agrarian settlement had already reached the polar circle during the Middle Ages. The northern forest and mountain areas (Lapland) were inhabited by Sami who lived by hunting, gathering and rearing reindeer. During the seventeenth century, agrarian settlement advanced into western Lapland between the rivers Muonio-Torneälv and Kerni-Ounasjoki up to the sixty-eighth degree of latitude, with cattle-rearing as the main means of livelihood, supplemented by hunting and gathering. Further east, along the border with Russia, agrarian settlement, which here was concentrated on burn-beating, had only reached the sixty-sixth degree of latitude by the turn of the eighteenth century. The number of rural holdings in the Lappish territories, which comprised an enormous area, rose even at the end of the seventeenth century by only a hundred, and the agrarian population rose to only around 600 to 700. Even so, the small numbers of burn-beat farmers came into competition over the natural resources of the area with the indigenous population, the Sami. The extensive patches of land cultivated by burning drastically reduced the food supply of the wild reindeer, which were the most important quarry of the forest Sami. This led to the latter either assimilating with the newcomers or retreating northwards in order to carry on their traditional hunter-gathering.

<sup>12</sup> E. Jutikkala, *Bonden i Finland genom tiderna* (Helsingfors, 1963), pp. 96–9; K. Pirinen, *Rajamaakunta asutusliikkeen aikakaudella 1534–1617, Savon historia*, 2:1 (Pieksämäki, 1982), pp. 265–99.

The Finnish immigrants to Lapland took up reindeer-herding, and this was still happening on a small scale in the seventeenth century.

### The demographic potential of the Nordic kingdoms

Only from the decades around the middle of the seventeenth century onwards is it possible to get an all-round picture of the population in the Scandinavian kingdoms. During this century, significant changes took place in the territories of both kingdoms. During the 1640s and 1650s, Denmark lost important Norwegian and Danish provinces to Sweden. The Danish monarchy also possessed the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, which in large part included areas belonging to the Holy Roman Empire. The Swedish kingdom, on the other hand, which during the seventeenth century achieved the status of a Great Power, expanded in the first half of that century eastwards along the Baltic and areas bordering to it, and also to the south of the Baltic in northern Germany. As a result both kingdoms had, after the midpoint of that century, quite different territorial dimensions from those they had held at the beginning of the century. Table 7.1 shows the population of the Scandinavian kingdoms including their territorial losses and gains.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Denmark and the south Swedish provinces: Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, pp. 47, 82; Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud*, pp. 51, 55f. Norway: Dyrvik et al., *Norsk økonomisk historie*, p. 18. Jämtland, Härjedalen and Bohuslän: Ø. Rian, *Den nye begyndelsen 1520–1660*, Knut Helle et al. (eds.), *Aschehougs Norges historie*, 5 (Oslo, 1995), p. 222. Gotland: the population was in 1720 about 19,000 persons and the population growth in the seventeenth century is supposed to have been slow, E. F. Heckscher, 'Sveriges befolkning från det stora nordiska krigets slut till tabellverkets början (1720–1750)', in E. F. Heckscher (ed.), *Ekonomisk-historiska studier* (Stockholm, 1936), p. 276, tab. 5. Saaremaa (Ösel): the number of rural households on the island Saaremaa was at the close of the 1630s 20.6 per cent of all households in Estonia and it is supposed that the population on the island corresponded to this percentage. J. Kahk et al. (eds.), *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, 1 (Tallinn, 1992), pp. 282, 475–8, 481f.; H. Palli, 'The Population of Estonia in the Last Decades of the Swedish Period', in A. Loit and H. Piirimäe (eds.), *Die schwedischen Ostseeprovinzen Estland und Livland im 16.-18. Jahrhundert*, *Studia Baltica Stockholmensia*, 11 (Stockholm 1993), p. 196; S. Zetterberg, *Viron historia* (Helsinki, 2007), pp. 178–82, 206, 284; Turpeinen, 'Suomen väestö 1638–1815 sekä vertailu Viroom', p. 24, tab. 4, with considerably higher populations for the Baltic provinces than by other authors. Iceland: Thorsteinsson, *Island*, pp. 165, 177f. Schleswig-Holstein: Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, p. 72. Oldenburg: E. Hinrichs and C. Reinders, 'Zur Bevölkerungsgeschichte des Oldenburger Landes', in A. Eckhardt (ed.), *Geschichte des Landes Oldenburg. Ein Handbuch*, 4th edn (Oldenburg, 1993), pp. 663f. Sweden and the former Danish provinces: Heckscher, *Hushållningen under internationell påverkan*, pp. 382f.; E. F. Heckscher, *Det moderna Sveriges grundläggning, Sveriges ekonomiska historia från Gustav Vasa*, 2:1 (Stockholm, 1949), p. 33; Heckscher, 'Sveriges befolkning', p. 276, tab. 5; according to Heckscher Sweden within its present boundaries had a population of

Table 7.1 *The population of the Nordic kingdoms in the seventeenth century*

Kingdom and region	1640–60	1690–1700	1710–20 <sup>a</sup>
<i>Denmark</i>			
Denmark excl. Southern Swedish provinces	608,000	560,000	*
Southern Swedish provinces	217,000	-	-
Norway	440,000	512,000	-
Jämtland, Härjedalen and Bohuslän	40,000	-	-
Gotland	19,000	-	-
Saaremaa (Ösel)	25,000	-	-
Iceland	55,000	50,000	34,000
Schleswig-Holstein	470,000	*	*
Oldenburg and Delmenhorst	-	66,000	*
<i>Sweden</i>			
Territory before 1645	900,000	*	1,120,000
Southern Swedish provinces	-	*	240,000
Jämtland, Härjedalen & Bohuslän	-	40,000	60,000
Gotland	-	19,000	19,000
Finland (1595 territory)	300/350,000	450/470,000	350,000
Käkisalme province	30,000	50,000	27,000
Ingermanland (Ingria)	*	60,000	*
The Baltic provinces			
Present-day Estonia (excl. Ösel in the 1640s)	95,000	375/400,000	150/170,000
Swedish parts of Latvia <sup>b</sup>	40,000	130,000	*
Territories in Germany			
Bremen-Verden	-	110/120,000	*
Pomerania	-	150/200,000	*
Other smaller German territories <sup>c</sup>	-	10,000	*

<sup>a</sup>Territories ceded by Sweden in the treaties of 1719–21 are not taken into account here.

<sup>b</sup>Corresponding to present-day Latvia excluding Curonia and Latgale.

<sup>c</sup>Wildeshausen, Wismar, Poel and Neukloster.

\*Not available for the period

1,440,000 persons in the 1720s. Jämtland, Härjedalen and Bohuslän: Ø. Rian, *Den nye begyndelsen*, p. 222. Finland and the province of Käkisalme: Jutikkala, 'Suurten sotien ja uuden asutuseksansion kaudet', pp. 150–3; Jutikkala, 'Finlands befolkning och befolkande', pp. 363–5; K. Pitkänen, 'Suomen väestön historialliset kehityslinjat', in S. Koskinen et al. (eds.), *Suomen väestö* (Hämeenlinna, 1994), pp. 36–9; Muroma, *Suurten kuolonvuosien (1695–1697) väestömenetykset*, pp. 179f.; Villstrand, 'Stormaktstiden 1617–1721', p. 140; H. Kirkinen, 'Karjalan historia juurista Uudenkaupungin rauhaan', in H. Kirkinen et al. (eds.), *Karjalan kansan historia* (Porvoo, 1994), pp. 107, 167; V. Saloheimo, *Pohjois-Karjalan historia*, 3 (Joensuu, 1980), p. 62; R. Ranta, *Vanhan Suomen talouselämä vuosina 1721–1743*, *Historiallisia Tutkimuksia*, 130:1 (Helsinki, 1985), p. 82;

During the first half of the seventeenth century, before the Swedish kingdom's acquisitions of land from Denmark and the Holy Roman Empire and accordingly before the Danish kingdom's territorial losses, both kingdoms were, in terms of population, relatively comparable. The Danish kingdom's population rose to c. 1.8 million, while the Swedish kingdom reached 1.4 million. Even after her territorial losses to Sweden and the acquisition of Oldenburg, the Danish realm had c. 1.8 million inhabitants. The Swedish kingdom, by contrast, during the latter half of the century, when she had reached her greatest extent, had a population of c. 2.8 million, but the country's medieval core area accounted for barely half of the population.

### Towns and countryside

Settlement within the whole Scandinavian area had a markedly rural character. The overwhelming majority of the population lived in the countryside. The urban population accounted for only a few per cent of the total number of inhabitants, as emerges from Table 7.2.<sup>14</sup>

Turpeinen, 'Suomen väestö 1638–1815 ja vertailu Viroom', p. 24, tab. 4, with higher figures than by other authors. Ingria: M. Engman, *St Petersburg och Finland. Migration och influens 1703–1917*, Bidrag till kännedom om Finlands natur och folk, 130 (Helsingfors, 1983), p. 65. The Baltic provinces: Palli, 'The Population of Estonia in the Last Decades of the Swedish Period', p. 196; Kahk *et al.* (eds.), *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, p. 308; V. Niitemaa, *Baltian historia* (Porvoo, 1959), p. 238. The German provinces Bremen-Verden, Pomerania and other minor areas: J. Bohmbach, 'Die Kopfsteuerbeschreibung des Jahres 1677 im Herzogtum Bremen', *Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch*, 48 (1976), p. 211; information given by Dr Helge Bei der Wieden, Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv in Stade; the population in the parts of Pomerania belonging to Sweden was in 1764 approx. 83,000 and this area was one-third of the Pomeranian territory belonging to Sweden in the seventeenth century; the estimation for Pomerania at the end of the seventeenth century is based on the development in the Prussian parts of Pomerania where the growth of population was approx. 50 per cent from the 1720s to the 1740s, also taking in consideration war losses in the beginning of the eighteenth century, W. Buchholz, *Öffentliche Finanzen und Finanzverwaltung im entwickelten frühmodernen Staat. Landesherr und Landstände im Schwedischen Pommern 1720–1806*, Veröffentlichungen der historischen Kommission für Pommern, Reihe 5: Forschungen zur pommerschen Geschichte, 25 (Köln, Weimar and Wien, 1992), pp. 78f.; E. Keyser, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Deutschlands*, 2nd edn (Leipzig, 1941), p. 363; the estimation for the minor territories is based on information from later periods.

- <sup>14</sup> S. Lilja, *Tjuvehål och stolta städer. Urbaniseringens kronologi och geografi i Sverige (med Finland) ca 1570-tal intill 1810-tal*, Studier i stads- och kommunhistoria, 20 (Stockholm, 2000), pp. 80, tab. 6:4, 97, 354, tab. 19:1, 358, 404–6, basic tab. 2; S. Lilja, 'Swedish Urbanization c. 1570–1800: Chronology, Structures and Causes', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 19 (1994), p. 282, tab. 2; Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, p. 47, tab. 4; Dyrvik *et al.* (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie*, p. 55; Jutikkala, 'Suurten sotien ja uuden asutuseksansion kaudet', p. 153; Palli, 'The Population of Estonia in

Table 7.2 *The degree of urbanisation in the Scandinavian kingdoms in the seventeenth century*

Kingdom and constituent part	Degree of urbanisation %
The Danish kingdom	
Denmark (1645)	13.9
Norway (1700)	5.5
Iceland	–
The Swedish Kingdom	
Sweden (1690)	c. 10
Finland (1727)	c. 5.6
Estonia (1696)	c. 6

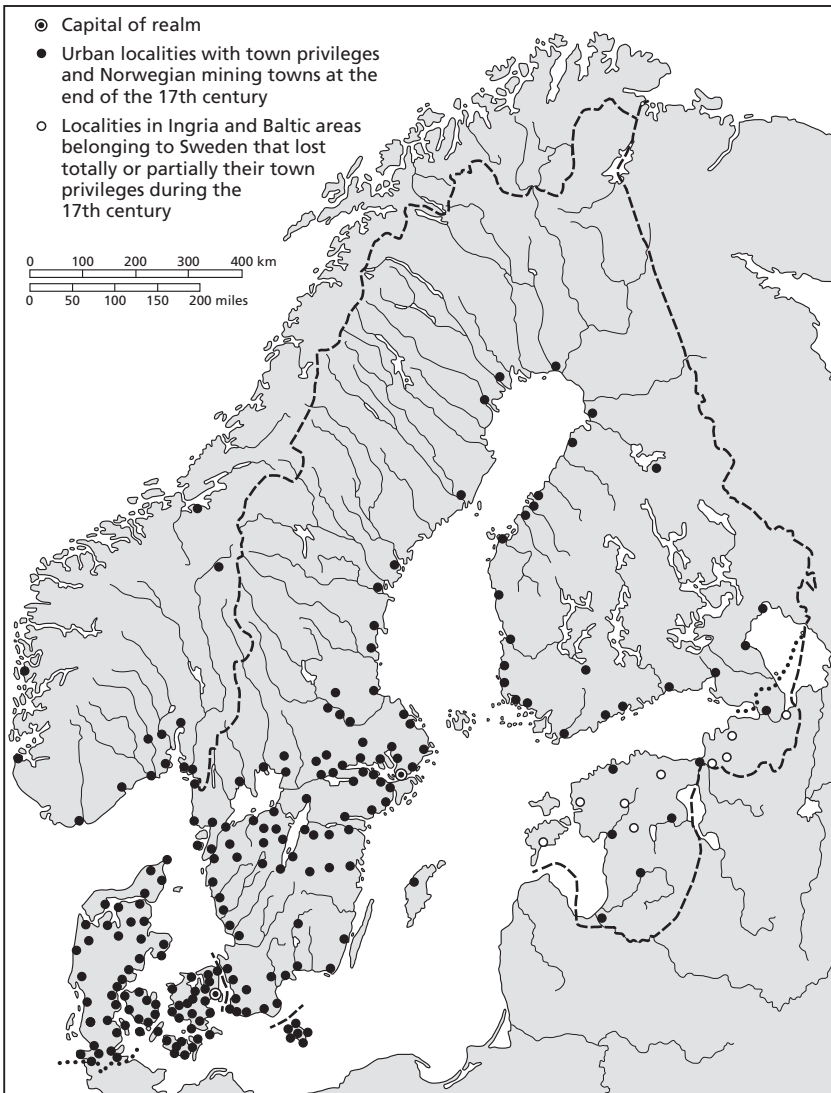
In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the economic policy of the Scandinavian countries was driven by mercantile principles, which manifested themselves, among other ways, in the promotion of towns. During these centuries there were many common features in the development of urban settlement in both Scandinavian kingdoms, but also considerable differences.<sup>15</sup>

In the Swedish kingdom, the mercantile policy from the 1580s up to the latter half of the following century led to the extensive founding of new towns. In Sweden, including the south Swedish provinces conquered from

the Last Decades of the Swedish Period', p. 1996; Kahk *et al.* (eds.), *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, p. 308.

- <sup>15</sup> O. Degn, 'De nyanlagte byer og byudviklingen i Danmark 1600–1800', in G. A. Blom (ed.), *De anlagte steder på 1600–1700-tallet*, Urbaniseringsprocessen i Norden, 2 (Oslo, Bergen and Tromsø, 1979); B. Sogner, 'De "anlagte" byer i Norge', in Blom (ed.), *De anlagte steder*; B. Eriksson, 'De anlagda städerna i Sverige ca. 1580–1800', in Blom (ed.), *De anlagte steder*; S.-E. Åström, 'Anlagda städer och centralortssystemet i Finland 1550–1785', in Blom (ed.), *De anlagte steder*; F.-E. Eliassen, 'The Mainstays of the Urban Fringe: Norwegian Small Towns 1500–1800', in P. Clark (ed.), *Small Towns in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 28; Lilja, *Tjuvehål och stolta städer*, passim, esp. pp. 275–7, 354, tab. 19:1, 404–6, basic tab. 2; Lilja, 'Swedish Urbanization', pp. 286f.; Dyrvik *et al.* (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie*, pp. 54f.; Jespersen, 'Tiden 1648–1730', p. 43; Zetterberg, *Viron historia*, pp. 213–16; M. Laidre, *Schwedische Garnisonen in Est- und Livland* (Tallinn, 1990), pp. 38–190, tab. 3–43; G. Haggrén, *Hammarmeder, masugnsfolk och kolare. Tidigindustriella yrkesarbetare vid provinsbruk i 1600-talets Sverige*, Jernkontorets Bergshistoriska Skriftserie, 38 (Stockholm, 2001), pp. 70–1; N. Ahlberg, *Stadsgrundningar och planförändringar. Svensk stadsplanering 1521–1721*, Acta Universitatis Agriculturae Sveciae, 94 (Uppsala, 2005); P. Bairoch, J. Batou and P. Chèvre, *La Population des villes européennes: banque de données et analyse sommaire des résultats, 800–1850*, Publications du Centre d'histoire économique internationale de l'Université de Genève, 2 (Geneva 1988).

## Growth and stagnation of population and settlement



Map 7.1: Towns and mining towns

Denmark, twenty-nine new towns were established in the period up to the 1690s, and in Finland the number grew by eighteen from the 1550s to the 1650s (this figure includes a couple of towns whose site was shifted). Some of the new towns had already stopped growing during the seventeenth century. One consequence of the arrival of new towns and the growth of population in the

old ones was that the town-dwellers' proportion of the population in Sweden rose from 4 to 5 per cent between 1610 and 1620 to 10 per cent in the 1690s. In Finland, by contrast, the degree of urbanisation remained significantly lower. In addition, many of the over 300 iron works in Sweden and Finland in the seventeenth century grew into considerable population centres. In the 1690s the greatest of them, Lövsta, Österby and Forsmark in Uppland in Sweden, corresponded to small towns with approximately 400–500 inhabitants.

In the Danish kingdom the founding of new towns was on a smaller scale than in Sweden. In both Denmark and Norway, the number of towns increased by ten, and in both countries several older towns lost their town privileges. Nevertheless, there grew up in Norway in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a special category of population centre, loading-places (*ladested*), for the export of timber. There were about twenty of them in the seventeenth century and the largest of them, Bragarnes-Strømsø, had over 4,000 inhabitants and corresponded to a medium-sized Norwegian town. Formally, however, these places were classed as country settlements, although they had certain special rights and in time developed into ordinary towns.

It was characteristic of towns in both Scandinavian kingdoms that most of them were very small. In the approximately seventy-five Danish towns, the average population in the 1670s, with the exception of København, was only about 1,000. In Norway, with its dozen towns, there was at the end of the century only one town, Bergen, which reached 10,000 inhabitants, while none of the others had over 5,000. In the Swedish kingdom, the situation was similar with an average population – Stockholm excepted – of c. 1,000. In Sweden and Finland there were with the exception of the capital Stockholm none that had a population approaching 10,000. The four largest towns besides Stockholm – Falun, Turku (Åbo), Malmö and Göteborg – had only between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants. Of these Turku was situated in Finland.

Most of the towns in the Baltic and German provinces outside the core territories of both Scandinavian realms were small but also the greatest towns of the kingdoms, when the capitals are not considered, were situated in these regions. In the Baltic provinces of Sweden, Riga had a population of 10,000 at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Tallinn one of 8,000. A century later they had 14,000 and 10,000 inhabitants respectively. In the north German Swedish possessions, Stettin (Szczecin) had 12,000 inhabitants at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Stralsund 15,000, but the latter had only 10,000 a century later. In the Danish realm, when the capital is not considered, the greatest town in the second half of the seventeenth century was Altona in Holstein, near Hamburg and acquired in 1640, with



a population of 12,000 at the end of the century. Flensburg in Schleswig-Holstein had 6,000 inhabitants in around 1600.

In the fortified towns in the Baltic and north German provinces of Sweden but also in the core regions of both kingdoms there were considerable garrisons. In the garrison towns of Sweden the garrison troops and their family members normally represented 10–20 per cent, exceptionally one half, of the total urban population, and in the Swedish provinces in the Baltic area the garrisons could amount to a quarter or more of the civilian population. During the last decades of the seventeenth century Riga in Livonia normally had a garrison of 3,000–3,700 men corresponding to 20 or 25 per cent of the civilians.

The capital cities of the Scandinavian kingdoms, København and Stockholm, occupied a special place among the towns. They were royal residences with a fast-expanding central administration for the whole kingdom. By the end of the seventeenth century, København had around 60,000–70,000 inhabitants and had at least doubled in size in the past half century. Its inhabitants made up about a half of the urban population of Denmark. The ratio in Sweden was similar. Stockholm, which at the end of the sixteenth century had only about 6,000 inhabitants, had a population of 57,000 around 1690, representing about 43 per cent of the inhabitants of the Swedish towns, and even if the Finnish towns are included its share was a good 30 per cent.

Population density within the vast area of Scandinavia was very varied. It was at its densest in Denmark, with fourteen to fifteen people per square kilometre around the middle of the seventeenth century. In the islands there were twenty-five to thirty people per square kilometre, while the corresponding figure for Jylland and the south Swedish provinces was barely higher than ten to eleven persons. As far as population density was concerned, the other parts of Scandinavia differed markedly from Denmark. During the latter half of the seventeenth century, population density in Norway, within its modern borders, was *c.* 1.6 persons per square kilometre, in Iceland it was 0.5, in Sweden within its modern borders *c.* 3 persons and in Finland (within its 1920 borders) *c.* 1.5 persons.

The above given figures are misleading to the extent that, in all these areas, there were vast, completely uninhabited tracts or tracts which were inhabited by nomadic or semi-nomadic Sami. In Norway, with its large mountainous spine and only 3 per cent of the land area cultivated until the present day, settlement was confined to certain low-lying communities and to the coast, the banks of the fjords and long valleys in the interior of the country. In the three southern dioceses of Akershus, Bergen and Kristiansand, which broadly speaking comprised the areas south of the sixty-third degree of latitude, there were 2.1–2.5 persons per square kilometre during the latter half



Map 7.2: Bar iron works

of the century, and in Trøndelag – i.e. the area south and north of the Trondheim fjord – there were 1.3 persons per square kilometre.<sup>16</sup> Norway north of the sixty-fifth degree of latitude had by contrast only c. 0.5 persons per square kilometre. The situation was similar in the northern parts of Sweden, but in the central and south-central populated areas the population density was significantly higher. Around lake Mälaren, i.e. in the provinces of Närke, Västmanland, Uppland and Södermanland, there were between five and nine persons per square kilometre in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and in Uppland, with the capital city of Stockholm, perhaps as much as over twelve – in other words, the same level as in the earlier Danish provinces in southern Sweden. In the south-western and southern coastal provinces of Finland proper and Uusimaa (Nyland), which had the highest population density, there were four to six people per square kilometre in the latter half of the seventeenth century, but in the eastern burn-beating area there was only around two persons and further north in northern Pohjanmaa (Ostrobothnia), which essentially includes the area between the sixty-fourth and sixty-seventh degrees of latitude, 0.5 persons. In contrast to Norway and Iceland, together with northern Sweden, the sparse population of Finland was significantly more evenly spread out over the country as a whole.

#### *Ethnic, linguistic and religious relationships*

From a linguistic and ethnic point of view, the Danish kingdom was already clearly distinct from that of Sweden during the Middle Ages. The Danish kingdom was homogeneous to the extent that in all three major parts of the kingdom – Denmark, Norway and Iceland – closely related north Germanic languages were spoken which only during the course of the Middle Ages developed into individual, clearly distinctive languages. Ethnically, too, the people were homogeneous, if one overlooks a strongly German element in the towns. The only clear exception in medieval Denmark was Schleswig. Its southern parts below the river Eider had been Germanicised during the course of the Middle Ages and there was also a small Frisian element in the population. The duchy of Holstein in the south, which belonged to the Holy Roman Empire but was at the same time a possession of the Danish crown, had a purely German population.

The situation was different in the Swedish kingdom. The eastern half, i.e. the Finnish areas east of the Gulf of Bothnia and the Åland Sea, was mainly

<sup>16</sup> Sandnes, *Ødetid og gjenreisning*, pp. 293f.

inhabited by a Finnish-speaking population of Finnish nationality. There was a significant Swedish-speaking minority there which had already come into being through immigration during the high Middle Ages. In the northern parts of Sweden, Finland and Norway, there was a small population of Sami. From a religious perspective both Scandinavian kingdoms were homogeneous during the sixteenth century, as the whole of their populations were Lutheran.

During the seventeenth century, the linguistic and religious situation in Denmark remained largely unchanged. The German element in the population of Schleswig-Holstein came to well over 300,000 during the first half of the century. In the 1660s, the duchy of Oldenburg came under the Danish crown, increasing the German-speaking element in the population by over 60,000.

In the Swedish kingdom, on the other hand, the situation changed significantly from the latter half of the sixteenth century, largely as a consequence of territorial expansion. In the core regions of the realm, Sweden and Finland, however, the situation remained largely unaltered. The Finnish-speaking population of the country's medieval core regions rose at the beginning of the seventeenth century to a good fifth of the population of the whole kingdom. In Finland, the Swedish-speaking minority formed generally compact Swedish settlements along the southern and western archipelago and coastal regions. This Swedish minority, which consisted for the most part of farmers, has been estimated at c. 70,000 at the beginning of the seventeenth century, i.e. a fifth of the population of Finland. As a result of the emigration of Finnish burn-beating settlers to the forested districts of Sweden from the end of the sixteenth century, Finnish minorities sprang up there in the so-called *finnbygderna* (Finnish settlements). The number of forest Finns in Sweden has been estimated at well over 20,000 by the end of the seventeenth century. This figure does not include the significant Finnish population in northern Västerbotten which had already appeared during the high Middle Ages, nor the numerous immigrants from Finland – both Swedish- and Finnish-speaking – in Swedish towns, mining communities and farming settlements, who were integrated into Swedish society. In Stockholm at the end of the seventeenth century, there was a section of the population numbering about 3,000 whose origins were in Finland.<sup>17</sup> From the middle of the sixteenth century, there were

17 Jutikkala, 'Suurten sotien ja uuden asutusekspansion kaudet', p. 151; Heckscher, *Hushållning under internationell påverkan*, p. 396; Tarkiainen, *Inflyttarna från Finland under det gemensamma rikets tid*, pp. 106, 197, 220; Myrdal, *Jordbruket under feodalismen*, p. 227.

## Growth and stagnation of population and settlement



Map 7.3: Map detailing location of forest Finns

gypsies in the Scandinavian countries, as elsewhere in Europe, although they were very few in number.

As a result of territorial gains in the Baltic area, the Swedish kingdom obtained areas where Estonian and Latvian were the dominant languages

among the serf population who were of Estonian and Latvian nationality, while the nobility, the burghers and the clergy were German-speaking and of German nationality. Along the coasts and on several islands of Estonia, however, there was a free Swedish farming population which had come into being during the Middle Ages. Towards the end of the seventeenth century the number of Swedes was around 10,000.<sup>18</sup> The Swedish possessions along the southern shore of the Baltic, on the other hand, were inhabited exclusively by Germans.

The northernmost parts of the Scandinavian peninsula and Finland were inhabited by Sami, who differ ethnically from Scandinavians as well as Finns and speak a language which belongs to the Finno-Ugric language-family and is divided into a number of dialects. During the first half of the sixteenth century the area inhabited by the Sami stretched far to the south, both in the west and the east. In the mountainous and forested regions of the interior, in the borderlands between Sweden and Norway, they ranged as far south as the sixty-first degree of latitude, and since then they have suffered no major displacement. In the eastern parts of Finland and further east in Russian territory there may have been Sami as far south as the sixty-second degree of latitude, but the speedy advance of Finnish colonists forced them to continually move further north or to assimilate. In the 1640s the southern boundary of the Sami's settled area ran along the sixty-fifth degree of latitude, but further west along the sixty-seventh degree of latitude.

Sami culture differed markedly from the agrarian culture of the Scandinavian and Finnish populations by virtue of its nomadism or semi-nomadism. However, there was no question of a homogeneous cultural area; rather, their economy and their culture in general was characterised by major differences in different parts of the area they inhabited. In the east, in the Kemi district of Finnish Lapland, the forest Sami lived by hunting mostly wild reindeer and beavers, as well as by fishing. They moved between three or four habitation-sites, according to a fixed yearly rhythm, and kept only a few reindeer per household, mainly as wild-animal bait when hunting and for transport purposes.

The coastal Sami on the coast of northern Norway fished for a living, even out on the open sea, and hunted walrus, but as early as the Middle Ages they were also keeping sheep and goats and some cattle, and they had reindeer too. The economy of the mountain Sami in the unforested mountain

<sup>18</sup> Kahk *et al.* (eds.), *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, p. 309.

districts, but also in the forests of northern Sweden, was based in medieval times mainly on hunting wild reindeer, using large-scale traps and animals as bait, while the numbers of domesticated reindeer were limited. However, in time the economy of the mountain Sami took a new turn, which led to radical changes. They moved over to large-scale reindeer-herding, which presupposed a nomadic lifestyle following a regular yearly rhythm which included travelling long distances with the reindeer-herds. The mountain Sami also had an interest in coastal fishing and accordingly extended their migrations as far as the Norwegian coast in the north and north-west, where rivalry ensued between the mountain Sami and coastal Sami for natural resources. Individual households' flocks of tame reindeer could amount to several hundred beasts.<sup>19</sup>

Researchers' perceptions of the rise and chronology of reindeer nomadism have been widely divergent. In modern scholarship, however, the dominant perception is that reindeer nomadism developed during the Middle Ages in the Norwegian mountain districts under the influence of Scandinavian coast-dwellers' cattle-rearing, and that it only began to spread towards the end of the Middle Ages. But the actual expansion only got under way during the sixteenth century and then continued during the seventeenth. A significant decrease in the strain of wild reindeer is seen as the major reason for the expansion of reindeer nomadism, but measures taken by the Swedish state and changes in taxation practice were also factors behind this expansion.<sup>20</sup>

The total Sami population, including those living on the Kola peninsula, probably did not exceed 20,000 during the seventeenth century. Within Finland's current borders – in practice, roughly north of the sixty-seventh degree of latitude within an area of around 70,000 square kilometres – there were approximately 1,500 Sami by the end of the seventeenth century. The sparse settlement pattern of the Sami is also well illustrated by conditions in the Torne district of Lapland which was inhabited by nomadic mountain Sami. This area in what is now Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish territory measured lengthwise, from south-west to north-east, *c.* 400 kilometres, and in breadth between 80 and 160 kilometres, and roughly speaking encompassed 50,000 square kilometres. This area belonged to nine Lappish villages

19 I.-M. Mulk, *Sirkas – ett samiskt fångstasamhälle i förändring Kr.f.-1600 e. Kr.*, *Studia Archaeologica Universitatis Umensis*, 6 (Umeå, 1994), pp. 10–14; H. Tegengren, *En utdöd lappkultur i Kemi lappmark. Studier i Nordfinlands kolonisationshistoria*, *Acta Academiae Aboensis, Humaniora*, 19:4 (Åbo, 1952), pp. 122–8.

20 Mulk, *Sirka – ett samiskt fångstasamhälle*, pp. 8f., 195–200, 254–6; L. Lundmark, *Så länge vi har marker. Samerna och staten under 600 år* (Stockholm, 1998), pp. 32–42.

with 91 households in 1553, and 187 households in 1601. At these dates, the number of inhabitants in the villages was c. 500 and c. 1000 respectively.<sup>21</sup>

It was not until the seventeenth century that the Sami population finally converted to Christianity and the doctrines of Lutheranism. However, as a result of the conquest of Käkisalmi (Kexholm) county in Karjala and Ingermanland (Ingria) to the south of it in the decade after 1610, the Swedish state acquired a religious minority, as the people of these areas adhered to the Greek Orthodox faith. There were several waves of refugees as almost 60,000 Orthodox Christians fled to Russia during the seventeenth century,<sup>22</sup> so that the number of adherents to the Orthodox faith fell to a few tens of thousands.

*Factors behind the trends in population and settlement development:  
hunger, epidemics, war, migration and politics*

As elsewhere in Europe, mortality from outbreaks of plague and other epidemics tended to decrease in the Scandinavian countries from the second half of the fifteenth century. This is ascribed first and foremost to immunogenic changes brought about by the fact that the most devastating epidemic diseases towards the end of the Middle Ages and during the first centuries of the modern era became endemic in Europe. The spread of epidemics from the south up to Scandinavia was also inhibited from the latter half of the sixteenth century by the Danish state's preventative measures, i.e. quarantine and a ban on immigration. Successive improvements in living standards even in rural communities in the Scandinavian countries from the sixteenth century led to certain improvements in hygiene, which seem to have reduced infant mortality. Even so, this remained at the high level of 250 per thousand in the period 1675–1750 in Scandinavia – as elsewhere in Europe. The decrease in mortality compared to the late Middle Ages was the cause of the upward trend in population growth.<sup>23</sup>

21 Ø. Vorren, 'Samisk bosetning på Nordkalotten, arealdisponering og resursutnyttning i historisk-økologisk belysning', in E. Baudou and K.-H. Dahlstedt (eds.), *Nord-Skandinaviens historia i tvärvetenskaplig belysning*, Acta Universitatis Umensis, Umeå Studies in the Humanities, 24 (Umeå, 1980), pp. 239–44, especially figs. 2 and 4; Mulk, *Sirkas – ett samiskt fångstamhälle*, pp. 189–90; J. Vahtola, 'Tornion Lapin saamelaiset', in O. Hederyd et al. (eds.), *Jääkaudelta 1600-luvulle, Tornionlaakson historia*, 1 (Malung, 1991), pp. 258–60; Virrankoski, *Pohjois-Pohjanmaa ja Lappi*, pp. 105–7; S. Sogner, 'Krig og fred 1660–1780', in Knut Helle et al. (eds.), *Aschehougs Norgeshistorie*, 6 (Oslo 1996), p. 62.

22 Kirkinen, 'Karjalan historia juurista Uudenkaupungin rauhaan', p. 157.

23 O. J. Benedictow, 'The Demography of the Viking Age and the High Middle Ages', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 21 (1996), pp. 172f.



The positive population growth which manifested itself from the end of the Middle Ages was affected by several different factors which applied with varying force. Partly it had to do with factors which could only to a limited extent be influenced by human action, and partly with factors which were called into play directly or indirectly by human measures.

### Crop failures and epidemics

Most of Scandinavia consisted of areas which were marginal to the agrarian economy. The food supply within this area was overwhelmingly based on local production for the rural population in the context of self-sufficiency. Even small variations in the climate, which had no repercussions further south, could influence population development in the north. Thus, recent investigations show that there was a definite deterioration of the climate in Sweden around 1570, when the average temperature decreased by half a degree. The cold period then lasted until the middle of the following century. In Western Europe as a whole, the coldest period seems to have occurred around the turn of the eighteenth century. In the Swedish provinces bordering the Gulf of Bothnia north of the sixty-third degree of latitude – i.e. in Ångermanland and Västerbotten, which were obvious marginal areas for the cultivation of grain – the population decreased by c. 10 per cent during the last decades of the sixteenth century. In south-west Finland, the size of the harvest decreased from the end of the 1570s until the first half of the following century, apparently as a consequence of this deterioration in the climate. On the other hand, the downward trend in the size of harvests which has been observed in several places in Sweden after the mid-sixteenth century has been ascribed to over-exploitation of the areas under cultivation. During the seventeenth century the increase of grain production in Sweden did not match the growth of population, which led to the need to import grain. The areas conquered during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Baltic lands, in northern Germany and areas in southern Sweden taken from Denmark were grain-exporting zones, and the domestic shortage of grain could be met with imports from these areas.<sup>24</sup>

Recurrent crop failures were a normal phenomenon in Scandinavia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, the number of years

<sup>24</sup> Myrdal, *Jordbruket under feodalismen*, pp. 233–44; Myrdal and Söderberg, *Kontinuitetens dynamik*, pp. 119, 209, 219, 287–92, 433; M. Tornberg, 'Ilmaston-ja sadonvaihtelut Lounais-Suomessa 1550-luvulta 1860-luvulle', in E. Kuparinen (ed.), *Työ tekijäänsä kiittää. Pentti Virrankoski 60 vuotta 20.6.1989*, Turun Historiallinen arkisto, 44 (Tammisaari, 1989), pp. 64–70.

when the crop failed or there was a poor harvest in Finland has been calculated as, on average, two or three per decade. The failure was usually of a more or less local character. But not infrequently there were also clusters of several years with bad weather which caused crop failure or bad harvests, and which often affected extensive areas. The second half of the 1590s and in particular the first years of the following century were exceptionally severe not only in Scandinavia but also in many parts of Europe, such as the Balkans and Russia. The first half of the 1630s, the 1670s and the 1690s were among the most adverse within large areas outside Scandinavia as well.<sup>25</sup>

The worst years of distress caused by crop failure in Scandinavia occurred at the beginning and end of the seventeenth century. With the exception of Denmark, the whole of Scandinavia seems to have been afflicted by exceptionally severe crop failures and famine years from 1601 to 1603, which were also exceptionally poor years in the Baltic area and Russia. But the worst famine years of all occurred in the 1690s. The decade as a whole was marked by crop failures in different parts of the Scandinavian area but also in other parts of Europe. The famine years culminated in 1695–7. Finland and Estonia in the east were the worst affected, while Russia further to the south-east seems to have escaped the crop failure. The population losses in both Finland and Estonia during the famine years of the 1690s have been investigated in detail. The losses for 1696–7 in Finland, within its medieval boundaries, have been estimated at c. 138,000, i.e. 31–2 per cent of a population of c. 450,000. South of the Gulf of Finland, the population losses in Estonia during the years 1695–7 were lower: 70,000–75,000 people, i.e. c. 18 per cent of a population of 375,000–400,000 people. In the western parts of the Scandinavian area, the losses were considerable, but significantly lower, while Denmark seems to have been spared.<sup>26</sup>

25 Jutikkala, 'Suurten sotien ja uuden asutuseksansion kaudet', p. 152; E. Jutikkala, 'The Great Finnish Famine in 1695–7', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 3 (1955), pp. 48–63; G. Utterström, 'Climatic Fluctuations and Population Problems in Early Modern Europe', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 3 (1955), p. 25; W. Abel, *Massenarmut und Hungerkrisen im vorindustriellen Europa* (Uelzen, 1974), pp. 158–67; F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, 1, 9th edn (Paris, 1987), pp. 245–52; C. Goehrke, *Die Wüstungen in der Moskauer Rus'*. *Studien zur Siedlungs-, Bevölkerungs- und Sozialgeschichte*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa, 1 (Wiesbaden 1968), pp. 170–2.

26 Muroma, *Suurten kuolonvuosien (1695–1697) väestönmenetykset*, pp. 179f., 195; E. Jutikkala, 'Massdöd och ödeläggelse under katastrofåren', in H. Ilsoe and B. Jørgensen (eds.), *Plov og pen. Festskrift til Svend Gissel 4. januar 1991* (København, 1991), pp. 101f.; Kahk et al. (eds.), *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, p. 308; Heckscher, *Hushållningen under internationell påverkan*, pp. 403–6; Dyrvik et al., *The Demographic Crisis in Norway*, pp. 12–16; Mykland, *Gennem nøddår og krig*, pp. 153–60.

During the famine years it was not starvation that sent most people to their graves, but the epidemics that raged simultaneously. A recurrent feature during the years of crop failure was the simultaneous occurrence of famine and epidemics. Thus, typhus and jail fever raged during the famine in Finland of 1695–7, and in south-west Norway the after-effects of the catastrophic crop failure were exacerbated by an epidemic. Of the outbreaks that had decimated the population ever since the Middle Ages, on the other hand, the plague epidemics eased off in terms of both strength and frequency during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Scandinavia was last visited by the plague in 1709–11, when the outbreak came from the east, from Russia, but did not reach Norway.<sup>27</sup>

The recovery from the population losses which had resulted from individual years of famine, or even from several years of famine in succession, seems to have happened quite quickly. The birth rate climbed above average after the famine years, and the deserted farms which appeared as a result of the population losses were eliminated within a few years as landless people took over the abandoned properties.

### Wars and their consequences

During the two centuries from the second quarter of the sixteenth century to the first decades of the eighteenth century, lengthy periods of stagnation and regression in the development of population and settlements occurred in Scandinavia too, but in one way or another they were the result of human actions. In the kingdom of Sweden, the period from the 1560s to the beginning of the 1720s was characterised by recurrent war on different fronts, which, before the 1660s, was interrupted by very short periods of peace. Even if the kingdom's core areas of Sweden and Finland were spared direct experience of warfare, with certain exceptions in the east and the south, before the Great Northern War, the state's expansive foreign policy exposed the population to such strains that they suffered long-term effects in terms of population growth and the spread of settlement. During the seventeenth century and the beginning of the following century, the Danish kingdom too was involved in several wars which more than once led to large parts of

<sup>27</sup> Jutikkala, *Bonden i Finland genom tiderna*, p. 209; Jutikkala, 'Massdöd och ödeläggelse', p. 107; Dyrvik *et al.* (eds.), *The Demographic Crisis in Norway*, pp. 11f.; Benedictow, 'The Demography of the Viking Ages and the High Middle Ages', pp. 172–4.

Denmark being transformed into a scene of war, with severe consequences for population and settlement.

In contrast to most other European states, the kingdom of Sweden conducted war for the most part with troops who were drawn for war service from the rural population in the core areas of the kingdom, Sweden and Finland. The massive recruitment of soldiers over long periods had tangible consequences for population and settlement, as has been argued in particular by Sven A. Nilsson. According to an estimate, half a million Swedish and Finnish men perished in military service under the Swedish banners between 1620 and 1719, corresponding to an annual loss of a third of the annual cohort of 20-year-old men. The soldiers generally survived for only a couple of years in military service before succumbing to epidemics during campaigns and on garrison duty – less often on the battlefield. Manpower losses, for the most part in epidemics, rose during the years 1621–2, 1625–9 and 1630–1 to approximately 50,000 men, i.e. c. 4 per cent of a population of c. 1,250,000. During the Great Northern War of 1700–20/21, manpower losses as far as Finland alone was concerned were 35,000 men, i.e. close to 9 per cent of the population at the outbreak of the war.<sup>28</sup>

The massive recruitment of 50,000 men in Sweden and Finland during the five-year period 1625–9 had direct effects on settlement development. During this short period, there was a definite decrease in the number of inhabited farms in certain areas of Sweden and the number of deserted farms increased substantially, which was at least to some extent a consequence of the removal of manpower. The effects of the withdrawal of men for the army is illustrated in a very concrete fashion by the situation in a north Swedish parish, Bygdeå, which has been described in detail by Jan Lindegren. From this parish, which in 1620 had c. 250 households and 1,900 inhabitants, a total of 236 men were conscripted during the period 1621–39 to be soldiers in the infantry. Of these, 215 died, most of them from diseases contracted within a few years of entering military service. The consequence was that from 1620 to 1639 the number of inhabitants dropped by 200 to c. 1,700, and a marked surplus of women ensued with 1.5 women to every man. The number of men in the age-group 15–60 dropped by 40 per cent and many holdings were left without any adult male workforce. The proportion of

28 S. A. Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid. Om Sverige som militärstat och bondesamhälle*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 161 (Uppsala, 1990), p. 167; Jutikkala, 'Finlands befolkning och befolkande', p. 364; Myrdal, *Jordbruket under feodalismen*, p. 229.

female heads of household in the parish rose from 3 per cent in 1620 to 21 per cent in 1639.<sup>29</sup>

The people's tax burden increased as a result of the war effort, and the large-scale conscription of men exacerbated the situation by decimating the productive workforce which had to provide the increased taxes. In areas nearest to the theatres of war, the billeting of friendly troops and the soldiers' insatiable demands for food and other wares were a source of great strain. Such a situation pertained in Finland almost without a break from 1570 to 1595, during the war between Russia and the kingdom of Sweden. All these stresses and strains to a large extent destabilised the rural population's economic base, and led to their being thoroughly unable to pay crown taxes. The consequence, as we saw earlier, was a sizeable decrease in the number of inhabited and cultivated holdings during the last three decades of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the following century. Population growth stagnated, but it has been questioned whether there was an actual decrease in the population.

The horrors of war were not confined to warfare itself and looting by enemy troops or those of one's own side, which in themselves could have consequences for population and settlement development. The concentration of troops both in field-camps and in barracks gave rise to epidemics among the civilian population as well as to shortages of foodstuffs. Large parts of Denmark suffered from all of these afflictions during the 1650s, when, apart from hostile Swedish troops, Danish and allied imperial, Brandenburg and Polish troops fed off extensive swathes of the country. The Poles brought typhus with them to Denmark, which led to a mortality rate of 80–90 per cent among the civilian population in the immediate vicinity of their camps. The mortality then lessened the further one was from the source of infection. As a result, the number of deserted farms grew significantly. At the beginning of the 1660s, 30–40 per cent of farms were deserted, and 5 per cent still were in the 1680s. The disasters which afflicted Denmark during the 1650s led to a drop in population of 15–20 per cent. Yet this was nothing exceptional during the period of warfare in the seventeenth century. In the same way, Poland, for example, lost a fifth of its population

29 J. Lindegren, *Utskrivning och utsugning. Produktion och reproduktion i Bygdeå 1620–1640*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 117 (Uppsala, 1980), pp. 163–7, 176, 257; J. Lindegren, 'The Swedish Military State', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10 (1985), p. 317.

during the war of 1655–60 and the Holy Roman Empire lost far more during the Thirty Years War.<sup>30</sup>

Even when peace reigned, preparations for the next war and the people's certainty that a new war was in the offing affected population and settlement development in the Scandinavian countries in different ways. During the seventeenth century the numbers of troops kept under arms in peacetime went up. In the Danish kingdom, the navy was for a long time by far the most important branch of the armed forces, and by the end of the seventeenth century it had a force of 9,000 men, principally conscripted from Norway. The naval station was at København, and during the whole course of that century 55,000–60,000 men in all were sent there from Norway. The yearly levy, for over half the century, corresponded to 14–18 per cent of all 18-year-old Norwegian youths. The mortality rate was high, and many of the survivors hired themselves out to foreign, especially Dutch, ships. The navy's demand for manpower meant a significant loss of population for Norway. The vast areas which the Swedish kingdom had conquered required large-scale garrisons alongside other troops. In the Baltic, where the garrisons consisted mainly of Swedish and Finnish troops, their size generally varied between 3,000 and 6,000 men, to which must be added the garrisons in the provinces conquered in Germany or acquired from Denmark. For example, in the year 1668, close to 9,000 men were being maintained in the provinces east and south of the Baltic and over 3,000 men in the former Danish provinces. The high death-rate in the garrisons signified a substantial draining of the male population.<sup>31</sup>

### Geographical mobility

The war and its aftermath brought about increased geographical mobility in large areas of Scandinavia, especially during the seventeenth century. Denmark was a case in point. The devastation wrought by war in the southern parts of Jylland was soon overcome in the 1650s by the immigration of peasants and their families from west and north Jylland, but on the other

30 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Krigsødelæggelserne under svenskekrigene', in A. M. Møller (ed.), *Folk og erhverv tilegnet Hans Chr. Johansen*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 189 (Odense, 1995), pp. 52f.; Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, pp. 73–82.

31 Ø. Rian, 'State and Society in 17th-century Norway', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10 (1985), pp. 35f.; Laidre, *Schwedische Garnisonen in Est- und Livland 1654–1699*, pp. 25, 34–7.

hand this led to a shortage of tenants in the areas of emigration and delayed the recovery there. In the Swedish kingdom, on the other hand, the conquests in the east and south-east gave rise to extensive geographical mobility which had a strong element of chain reaction. In the conquered areas of Karjala, i.e. Käkisalme county, together with Ingermanland, the population subscribed to the Orthodox faith, and the intolerance of the Swedish state towards these Orthodox Christians caused a mass flight over the border into Russia. The recurrent waves of Orthodox refugees from both areas have been estimated at altogether 60,000 people for the whole of the seventeenth century. As a result of this exodus huge numbers of farms were emptied of their inhabitants, and land-hungry settlers streamed in from the surrounding areas, especially the nearby Finnish provinces of Savo and Karjala, and took over the deserted farms. Over 20,000 came alone from Finland to Ingermanland and at the end of the seventeenth century three-quarters of the population there, i.e. 45,000 persons, were of Finnish origin.

Another major factor which also attracted people to these areas was that, as in the other conquered territories, there was no conscription for the army. This factor also worked very much in favour of emigration from different parts of Finland to the Baltic provinces, where there were large numbers of deserted farms during the first half of the seventeenth century, after the devastating war which had raged in Estonia and Livonia. Emigration from Finland to the Baltic provinces must have been considerable as Finns made up a quarter to a third of the population in many parts of northern Estonia. Many army deserters from Finland attached themselves to those who were making their way to the newly acquired territories. Altogether, emigration from Finland to the conquered territories south of the Gulf of Finland during the seventeenth century must have involved up to 20,000 or 30,000 people, even if only a portion of the emigrants are visible in the relevant documents.<sup>32</sup>

32 Ladewig Petersen, 'Svenskekrigene og krigsødelæggelserne', p. 53; Saloheimo, *Savo suurvallan valjaisa*, pp. 169f.; Kirkinen, 'Karjalan historia juurista Uudenkaupungin rauhaan', p. 167; V. Saloheimo, 'Inkerinmaan asutus ja väestö', in P. Nevalainen and H. Sihvo (eds.), *Inkeri, historia, kansa, kulttuuri* (Helsinki, 1991), pp. 73–8; Engman, *St Petersburg och Finland*, p. 65; A. Loit 'Invandring från Finland till Baltikum under 1600-talet', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, 62 (1982), pp. 199–202; T. Püvi, 'Invandrare från Finland i norra Estland på 1700-talet', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, 62 (1982), pp. 215f.; Kahk et al. (eds.), *Eesti talurahva ajalugu*, pp. 282, 314; Niitemaa, *Baltian historia*, pp. 238–40. In the estimate, every Finnish immigrant, i.e. head of a household, is considered to correspond to four persons.

There was a fair amount of geographical mobility within the Scandinavian kingdoms during both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; more, in fact, than former researchers suspected. As a result of the high mortality rate, the growth of the towns was dependent upon continual immigration, and this applied particularly to the capital cities which were growing at such a fast rate during the seventeenth century. Internal migration was on such a scale in some places that it led to shifts in the centre of gravity of population and settlement. During the sixteenth century the stream of migration in Denmark flowed from north and east Jylland to the islands. In large parts of west Norway, by the mid-seventeenth century, population growth reached 'an upper limit since the land resources were then being utilised to the maximum', and this led to large-scale migration to those regions where unexploited cultivable land could still be found, e.g. to Østlandet (the diocese of Akershus) in the east. Streams of migrants also headed for northernmost Norway, i.e. Finnmark, especially during the 1650s and 1660s.<sup>33</sup>

This geographical mobility was not restricted to areas within the boundaries of one country. Despite attempts by the authorities in both kingdoms to prevent emigration abroad, it took place on an extensive scale during the seventeenth century. This is especially true of the southern and south-western parts of Scandinavia. The flourishing Netherlands was the goal for numerous emigrants during the seventeenth century, especially in the latter half of that century. There was large-scale emigration from west and south Norway, where the natural resources no longer sufficed for a growing agrarian population, to the Netherlands, where the men found work as sailors and the women as maids. A contemporary estimate from the 1660s that there were 15,000 Norwegian sailors in Dutch service has been judged to be an exaggeration. But that Norwegians were to be found in large numbers in the Netherlands emerges from the fact that in Amsterdam alone the number of married men and women of Norwegian nationality during the seventeenth century amounted to around 8,000, mostly in the latter half of the century. The number of Swedes and Danes who married in Amsterdam in the same period was c. 6,500. That there were lively contacts between Norway and Holland is also borne out by the fact that considerable numbers of

<sup>33</sup> Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, p. 69; S. Dyrvik, 'Historical Demography in Norway 1660–1801: A Short Survey', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 20 (1972), pp. 37–9; Mykland, *Gennem nødår og krig*, pp. 162f.



unmarried mothers from southern Norway made their way to the Netherlands. There was also a stream of migrants from Norway to England.<sup>34</sup>

As far as the Scandinavian kingdoms were concerned, the seventeenth century was not only a period of emigration abroad or to newly conquered areas. Ever since the Middle Ages, there had been immigration into all parts of Scandinavia, with the exception of Iceland, by nobles, burghers and miners, most of all from the Holy Roman Empire. Immigration continued with varying intensity during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For a hundred years, from the middle of the sixteenth century, many foreign noblemen – mostly Germans and Scots but also some Frenchmen and Russians – entered the service of the expanding Swedish state and became assimilated into the indigenous nobility. Many foreign merchants came to the towns in both the Swedish and the Danish kingdoms, and in general soon obtained leading positions in their commercial life. Mostly it was Germans, especially from northern Germany, but during the seventeenth century there was a growth in the number of burghers of Dutch origin. The development of mining and the metal industry in both Scandinavian kingdoms led to experts in these areas being brought in to Norway as well as to Sweden and Finland. In Norway, the 1670s in particular was a period of expansion for the exploitation of mines and many specialists came in from abroad at that time. They were mainly Germans, especially from Saxony, but also Swedes. Ever since the Middle Ages Sweden had obtained experts in metal-refining from Germany, but during the seventeenth century it was mostly Walloons that the Swedes took pains to recruit.

More exact quantitative information about immigration to the Scandinavian countries is lacking. As far as Norway is concerned, it has been estimated that the total number of emigrants during the second half of the seventeenth century amounted to several thousand. The number of Finnish burn-and-beat agriculturists who had come over from the Swedish side to Norway was in the 1680s estimated to be a good thousand people. In Sweden's case the number of Walloon families amounted to probably 1,000–1,200, which taking into account family members meant several thousand individuals.<sup>35</sup>

34 Mykland, *Gennem nødår og krig*, p. 167; S. Sogner, 'Om migrasjon og minoriteter i Norge i tidlig modern tid', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 78 (1999), pp. 68–70; N. E. Villstrand, 'Statsmakt och migration under svensk stormaktstid', *Historisk Tidsskrift för Finland*, 74 (1989), pp. 22f.

35 Mykland, *Gennem nødår og krig*, p. 164; B. Brochmann and K. Kjeldstadli, *A History of Immigration: The Case of Norway 900–2000* (Oslo, 2008), pp. 63–78; Villstrand, 'Statsmakt och migration', p. 19.

## Policies of taxation and privileges

The crown's taxation of the rural population largely took the form of land taxes, with the homestead as the focus of taxation. Farming yield was the decisive factor when the burden of taxation was decided, while cultivation of outlying land and other activities influenced the tax burden little if at all. Generally speaking, taxation fell most heavily on grain-producing farms without possibilities for cattle-rearing on a larger scale or for ancillary occupations, but the burden also varied considerably between different parts of the same kingdom. These variations between different regions often led to regional shifts in settlement development. The best agricultural areas in Trøndelag in Norway experienced a decline in the number of inhabited and cultivated holdings and a decrease in the population, while the peripheral parts of the region were favoured by low taxation. In the eastern parts of northern Pohjanmaa in Finland, in Kainuu, tax-relief for the peasants together with exemption from conscription led to an influx from neighbouring parts.<sup>36</sup>

The deliberate restructuring of existing properties was also in some cases so far-reaching that the general trend of development was disrupted. As a consequence of the establishment of new – and the expansion of old – privileged manors which were run as large landed properties, close on 2,000 tenant farms disappeared in Denmark during the period 1550–1699 through being incorporated into manors (German *Bauernlegen*). In parishes with manors it was common for the number of tenant farms to decrease for this reason, or for their growth to stagnate, in contrast to parishes without such manors. In certain cases, however, the existence of old deserted farms was the reason for setting up new manors. In this way aristocrats tried to make unproductive landholdings yield a profit and benefit from the tax exemptions which applied to manors.

A comparable phenomenon can also be observed in the eastern parts of the Swedish kingdom. In the southern and south-western districts of Finland during the last decades of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the following century, there were plenty of abandoned freehold farms. Persons of non-aristocratic origins who were economic and social leaders of rural society – often lower-ranking soldiers, civilian functionaries and sons of the clergy, but also rich farmers who earned exemption from taxation by serving

<sup>36</sup> Sandnes, *Ødetid og gjenreisning*, pp. 300, 338–42; Virrankoski, *Pohjois-Pohjanmaa ja Lappi*, pp. 19–24, 34f., 621, 628–30; Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, pp. 362–73.

in the cavalry – began to amalgamate a couple or even a number of such abandoned farms into larger units of cultivation, or to a minor extent, having taken over such farms, to rent out their existing homesteads. Several of these large farms came into aristocratic ownership at a later date and were transformed into noble manors. In this way, the decline in productive farms was to a great extent made permanent, even if this process of establishing estates was not itself the primary cause of deserted farms.

Parallel to the creation of large farms on the initiative of the non-noble classes, the nobles also in many cases established privileged manors (*säterier*), though admittedly of modest size, on deserted farms which they had received as hereditary fiefs from the crown. The incentive for these foundations was to make these deserted farms productive. The restructuring of landholdings for this reason led in certain areas of the southern Finnish provinces to a permanent decline in the number of farms.<sup>37</sup>

#### *Household structures and family relationships*

Within the extensive Scandinavian area, which in the south and south-west consisted of regions characterised by arable farming with cattle-rearing, while cattle-rearing and outfield cultivation dominated in the north and extensive burn-and-beat cultivation in the easternmost parts, the size of households and household structures varied considerably in early modern times.

Even if the number of investigations of household structures in Scandinavia are still few in number for the first centuries of modern times, it is clear that rural households, including servants and other resident non-relatives, can be described as small or medium-sized. This was particularly the case in central agricultural areas. In a number of parishes which have been investigated in what until the mid-seventeenth century was Danish Skåne, now in southern Sweden, the average number of people per household in the seventeenth century varied between 3.9 and 6.4. Even in the central Swedish provinces, north and south of the lakes Hjälmaren and Mälaren in the provinces of Västmanland, Uppland and also further north in Dalarna, small households of four to six people were the norm. In the west too, in Iceland, households were of moderate size with an average of 5.6 persons in 1703.<sup>38</sup>

37 Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, pp. 357–9; Jutikkala, *Bonden i Finland genom tiderna*, pp. 130–7.

38 D. Gaunt, *Familjeliv i Norden* (Malmö, 1983), pp. 92–9; L. A. Palm, *Människor och Skördar. Studier kring agrarhistoriska metodproblem 1540–1770*, Avhandlingar från

According to reasonably reliable source material, there were in the seventeenth century, most of all in the north and east but also in other parts of Scandinavia, large areas where households were on average considerably larger than in the south and west. In one parish on the west coast of the Gulf of Bothnia in Sweden – Bygdeå – where the economy was dominated by cattle-rearing and outfield occupations, households in 1621 contained on average 7.8 persons, while in another parish that has been investigated – Valkeala, in south-east Finland, in the transitional zone between arable agriculture and extensive burn-and-beat cultivation – there were 10.9 per household in the 1690s. By contrast, in the south-eastern part of the province of Savo in the eastern Finnish burn-and-beat area there were in 1614, according to detailed estimates, only 6.4 people per household on average; but calculations from a slightly later period point to a larger size of households in this province. In the south-west Finnish archipelago, where fishing was the most important means of livelihood, the average household had eight persons at the end of the seventeenth century. In Trøndelag in central Norway, where there were prominent agricultural settlements, coastal communities with fishing as the economic mainstay and inland areas where outfield cultivation predominated, households in the year 1665 had on average 6.9 persons. A general phenomenon everywhere was that farmers' households as a rule were considerably larger and considerably more complicated in composition than cottars' and crofters' and other rural households. This does not however exclude the possibility that, even among those categories, truly large households sometimes occurred.<sup>39</sup>

Where households were, on average, large, they were also characterised by complex family structures. Apart from the host family, large households usually consisted of several unmarried relatives or one or more related married couples (*extended family households* and *multiple family households* according to Peter Laslett's definitions). The concept *large family* (in Swedish, *storfamilj*) is used, particularly in Finnish research, to describe

historiska institutionen i Göteborg, 6 (Göteborg, 1993), p. 53; C. Lundh, 'Households and Families in Pre-industrial Sweden', *Continuity and Change*, 10 (1995), pp. 40f., tab. 1; E. Wennersten, 'Realarvets sociala regelverk', in U. Sporrang and E. Wennersten (ed.), *Marken, gården, släkten och arvet*, Leksands sockenbeskrivning, 10 (Solna, 1990), p. 117.

<sup>39</sup> Lundh, 'Households and Families', pp. 40f., tab. 1; K.-M. Piilähti, 'Kaskestako perhe kasvoi?', MA thesis, University of Helsinki, 1997, p. 119; Pirinen, *Rajamaakunta asutusliikkeen aikakautena*, pp. 327f.; B. Moring, *Skärgårdsbor. Hushåll, familj och demografi i finländsk kustbygd på 1600-, 1700- och 1800-talen*, Bidrag till kännedom om Finlands natur och folk, 145 (Helsingfors, 1994), pp. 53f.; Sandnes, *Ødetid og gjenreisning*, p. 294.

large and complex households (households with two or more nuclear families with the exception of the so-called *stem families* consisting of a set of parents and a married son or daughter). By contrast, servants were usually few in number per household and their function was to make up for the lack of manpower within the farmer's family. In the south-east Finnish parish of Valkeala in the mid 1690s, extended and multiple family households made up c. 75 per cent of households (the proportion of large families was then almost 64 per cent).<sup>40</sup>

At the same time, the proportion of extended and multiple family households in the south-west Finnish archipelago varied between a good 50 and 80 per cent, and in the province of northern Pohjanmaa, where ancillary agricultural industries dominated, 25 per cent of households were large families, while the proportion in the province of Häme (Tavastland), which belonged to the western Finnish arable area, was only 5 per cent in the 1630s. Even in central Sweden, figures of 42–57 per cent for extended and multiple family households have been claimed, but at a later period evidence from the first half of the eighteenth century points to a significantly lower proportion for these categories of household.<sup>41</sup>

The large family as an institution and complex family structures were not ancient, unchanging societal structures; their frequency and spread were dependent on several different factors. For example, Eino Jutikkala has asserted that, as far as Finland was concerned, the seventeenth century was a period of expansion for the institution of the large family in the Finnish burn-and-beat areas and that this development continued into the nineteenth century. This is well illustrated by the development in Valkeala, where the proportion of large families climbed from 38 per cent in the year 1642 to 64 per cent half a century later. But the famine years of the 1690s led to a steep decrease in the proportion of such households. Generally speaking, it looks as if the trend with regard to size and structure of household from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century was towards smaller and simpler

<sup>40</sup> Here the complex family structures comprise the households belonging to the following categories of Peter Laslett: extended family households and multiple family households, K.-M. Piilahti, *Aineellista ja aineetonta turvaa. Ruokakunnat, ekologis-taloudelliset resurssit ja kontaktinmodostus Valkealassa 1630–1750*, Bibliotheca Historica 106 (Helsinki, 2007), pp. 113–17, 322, appendix 16; K.-M. Piilahti, 'Familjen invid flera gränser. Naturresurserna, ekonomin, hushållet och familjen i Valkeala från 1630-talet till stora ofreden', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, 83 (1998), pp. 622–6.

<sup>41</sup> Moring, *Skärgårdsbor*, pp. 52–4, tab. 5–7; Moring, 'Marriage and Social Change', p. 97, tab. 1; Lundh, 'Households and Families', pp. 40f., tab. 1.

composite households. The development is however characterised by local variations and temporary diversions from the general trend.<sup>42</sup>

There were several factors favouring the rise of large households with complex structures in those regions where they were common. A growing population was a contributing factor but there were also other prerequisites. Large families were also useful for the survival of the families. They were advantageous for activities which required large-scale collective work input. This was the case with burn-and-beat cultivation of the easterly type in eastern Finland, for tar-boiling in the provinces of Savo and Karjala and in Pohjanmaa, for fishing and other forms of hunting in archipelago and coastal areas and for northern regions where agriculture was an ancillary activity. Local customs and rules of inheritance could also promote the rise of large, complex households. Northern Pohjanmaa in Finland was in many places still in a marked phase of reclamation in the seventeenth century. Apart from the usefulness of plentiful manpower on the farms, local custom led to the division of farms between sons so that even after marriage they would remain on the home farm and wait until the amount of land brought under cultivation had grown to the extent that the farm could be divided among the sons. In this way, the prospect of the farm being divided kept the sons on the farm. On the other hand, limited opportunities for the division of farms could force both married and unmarried sons and daughters to remain on the home farm. Legislation and traditional custom could give rise to such obstacles – as could scarcity of cultivable land, which seems to have been the situation in south-east Finland. In other cases the impossibility of dividing farms forced the children to leave the home farm and promoted the dominance of small households.<sup>43</sup>

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, demographic conditions in Europe were characterised by the transition to the so-called 'European family-model', which among other things was distinguished by a rising marriage-age. For women, the average age of first marriage in different parts of Europe was 25 and above, while men married rather later. The new family pattern seems to have been dominant in Denmark as early as the latter half of

42 Palm, *Människor och skördar*, p. 53; Jutikkala, *Bonden i Finland genom tiderna*, pp. 62–4; Moring, *Skärgårdsbor*, pp. 54f; Piilahti, *Aineellista ja aineetonta turvaa*, pp. 322, appendix 16.

43 Gaunt, *Familjeliv i Norden*, pp. 98–100; P. Virrankoski, *Pohjois-Pohjanmaa ja Lappi 1600-luvulla, Pohjois-Pohjanmaan ja Lapin historia*, 3 (Oulu, 1973), pp. 131–3; Piilahti, *Aineellista ja aineetonta turvaa*, pp. 107–13, 144f., 277f.

the seventeenth century, when women in some parishes were on average 26.2 years old when they married, and men were 30.4 years old.

In Sweden, in the province of Västmanland north of Lake Mälaren, the average age of marriage in a number of parishes during the latter half of the seventeenth century was concentrated to between 26.3 and 27.2 for women, and 28.9 and 32.5 for men. A tendency to marry at a later age emerges in this area. Further north in Dalarna, in a couple of villages which have been investigated, women in the last decades of the seventeenth century married on average when they were slightly less than 25.5, and men when they were under 27. In Norway, the average age of marriage at the same time seems to have been 25 for women. In the east, in Finland, by contrast, at least in the areas where complex family structures were common, people in the latter half of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the following century married at significantly younger ages than those further south and west. For example, women in the south-west Finnish archipelago at the beginning of the eighteenth century married on average at 21.6 to 22.5, and men at 22.7 to 24.4. According to research relating to later periods, the ages at which people married in eastern Finland were lower than in the western parts of the country. So half a century later in 1754 in the province of Viipuri (Viborg), then under Russian rule, women married on average at 21.7.<sup>44</sup>

44 Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund till rangssamfund*, p. 88; D. Gaunt, 'Pre-industrial Economy and Population Structure', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 2 (1977), p. 205; Wennersten, 'Realarvets sociala regelverk', p. 147; K. Sprauten, 'Piger, fruer og madamer', in I. Semmingsen *et al.* (eds.), *Norges Kulturhistorie*, 3 (Oslo, 1980), p. 129; Moring, *Skärgårdsbor*, pp. 76, tab. 18, 77, tab. 19, 78, tab. 20; B. Moring, 'Land, Labor and Love: Household Arrangements in Nineteenth Century Eastern Finland – Cultural Heritage or Socio-Economic Structure', *The History of the Family. An International Quarterly*, 4:2 (1999), p. 167, tab. 3a.

## Economic growth and trade

KNUD J. V. JESPERSEN

The economic boom that Europe experienced in the sixteenth century, which was stimulated by renewed population growth and an increased supply of transoceanic precious metals, had an important impact on Scandinavia no less than other parts of the continent, even if the time when that impact made itself felt varied within Scandinavia. The same applies to the sweeping restructuring which affected the fundamental economic pattern of Europe and which became apparent at around the same time.

It became increasingly clear that north-west Europe was in the process of establishing itself as the new economic centre of gravity in Europe and that the Mediterranean region was losing its previous economic dominance. Strong population growth, combined with a rapid expansion of trade and industry in the Netherlands and south-east England, led to a powerful increase in demand for foodstuffs – grain and meat – and for shipbuilding materials. This increased demand was directed not least towards the Baltic area, which had traditionally supplied these types of mass product. As a result, in the course of the sixteenth century the Scandinavian countries more or less acquired the position of providers of foodstuffs and raw materials for high-gear economies of the booming maritime powers. In economic terms, the states of the Scandinavian periphery were virtually reduced to the status of vassals in relation to the maritime powers of north-west Europe.

These developments were greatly accelerated by the dissolution of the Hanseatic League, which had exercised total economic hegemony in the Baltic area during the Middle Ages. The de facto monopoly on Baltic trade which the Wendish towns of the Hansa, headed by Lübeck in particular, had succeeded in maintaining for many centuries crumbled away when confronted with the greatly improved shipbuilding technology of the sixteenth century. These technical improvements now enabled merchants to transport large quantities of goods by sea through the Sound and around the north of Jylland instead of being forced to rely on the difficult and costly route by



river and road across north-west Germany. In reality, this development broke the stranglehold on Scandinavia which the Hansa had enjoyed for such a long time. In a certain sense, it is consequently not unreasonable to say that for the next couple of centuries it was the Netherlands which set the economic pace in Scandinavia. The economies of the Nordic countries became virtually an adjunct of the Netherlands' economy and developed on its terms.

Scandinavia constituted the northern periphery of an economic system which Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein have characterised as the modern European world economy with its centre of gravity in the Netherlands and south-east England. Both scholars were inclined to regard Scandinavia as a homogeneous whole, a single peripheral system, but in so doing they overlooked the fact that they were dealing in reality with a huge area, where the conditions governing material existence varied widely and which was marked by great internal differences. In its physical extent, the Scandinavian area more or less corresponded to Western Europe from north Germany to Gibraltar and it was characterised by enormous differences in climate, topography and types of soil. It almost goes without saying that there were important differences in the speed and the manner in which the various regions of the Scandinavian area were influenced by the new economic world system that gradually took shape in Europe during the sixteenth century.

Nature had divided the Scandinavian area into three fairly distinct economic regions, which also corresponded closely with the political frontiers in place during the sixteenth century. Denmark – which included the fertile plains of the Scanian provinces in the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula until Denmark's defeat in the war with Sweden in 1658 – lay closer geographically to the European centre than the rest of Scandinavia. The flat, low-lying landscape of Denmark provided good conditions for agriculture, but few raw materials that might have given a basis for industrial production lay buried in her soil.

Norway, in contrast, was elongated and mountainous, offering far worse natural conditions for agriculture. However, the preconditions for large-scale timber and mining industries were present, and the long coastline provided rich opportunities for a profitable fishing industry. Norway also enjoyed good maritime communications with Western Europe because of her geographical position.

In comparison with Denmark and Norway, Sweden-Finland lay far from the centre of Europe. The Gulf of Bothnia united Sweden and Finland and

made them in many respects an economic whole on the basis of their natural resources: timber, tar, iron ore, fish, furs and – in some areas – cultivable soil.

Economic development in these three parts of Scandinavia followed fairly different paths both for natural and historical reasons. It is therefore appropriate to discuss each of them separately in the following pages.<sup>1</sup>

### Denmark: an agrarian economy

As we have seen, Denmark included those parts of Scandinavia whose climate and soil most favoured agriculture. It is therefore no surprise that throughout this period agriculture constituted by far the most important form of economic activity in the country. More than 75 per cent of the kingdom's roughly 800,000 inhabitants were peasants, who worked the 60,000 or so farmsteads in the country. The urban population made up only 12 per cent to 13 per cent of the inhabitants, about a third of whom resided in the country's capital, København, which was by far the largest town in the kingdom. The rest lived in the seventy to eighty market towns spread around the country. They were all quite small. Only a few of the regional urban centres boasted more than 4,000–5,000 inhabitants, while the remaining towns usually only had a few hundred residents. The nobility, the clergy and a considerable group of vagrants made up the rest of the population.

These figures clearly demonstrate that agriculture was the overwhelmingly dominant occupation in Denmark. The most important agricultural products were grain and meat, especially oxen. The system of agrarian production was entirely based on estates owned by the crown and the nobility, and both the social structure and economic life in general were organised in relation to this fact.

At least until the end of the seventeenth century, the pattern of land-ownership remained fairly stable. About 94 per cent of agricultural land was owned by the crown and a highly privileged but extremely small group of noblemen. As an estate, the nobility numbered fewer than 2,000 persons or less than 0.25 per cent of the population. After the Reformation in 1536, the

<sup>1</sup> Good general descriptions of early modern economic life in Scandinavia in relation to the emerging 'world economy' are presented by D. Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period: The Baltic World 1492–1772* (London, 1990) and J. P. Maarbjerg, *Scandinavia in the European World-Economy, ca. 1570–1625: Some Local Evidence of Economic Integration* (New York, 1995); M. North, *Geschichte der Ostsee* (München, 2011). The full European context, with emphasis on the development in Scandinavia is given by T. Munck, *Seventeenth Century Europe: State, Conflict and the Social Order in Europe 1598–1700* (London, 1990).

crown held about half the cultivated land in Denmark and the nobility owned about 44 per cent, while the remaining 6 per cent was in the hands of peasant freeholders, a social group that constituted a constantly diminishing minority in Danish society. The background for this stability in the pattern of land-ownership was the inalienability of noble land, which was enshrined in the privileges of the noble estate until the introduction of absolutism in 1660. These privileges forbade the sale of landed noble property to anyone but another nobleman. The country's laws were carefully formulated to support and maintain a structure of production in which the estates of the crown and the nobility were the focal point.

This pattern of land-ownership did not, however, lead in Denmark to a proper system of manorial farming reliant on serf labour, as occurred – for example – in the lands east of the Elbe. In its essential features, the great landed estates of Denmark remained a system based on tenant farming in the sense that the area directly farmed from manors was relatively small and the great bulk of agricultural production occurred on tenant farmsteads. For example, c. 1650 only 5–6 per cent of agricultural land was farmed directly from manors, while the rest was cultivated by the 60,000 or so farmsteads in the hands of tenants or peasant freeholders. This decentralised structure is probably an essential part of the explanation why the Danish peasants, despite all their disadvantages, were never subject to oppression of the kind experienced by the peasantry of Eastern Europe.

Under normal conditions, Danish agricultural production was sufficient to enable the country to feed itself and leave a small surplus for export. In the current state of research, we have only an imprecise picture of the total volume of production, but the most recent research suggests that the total annual production of grain in the seventeenth century was around 6–6.5 million barrels (*tønder*). Of this amount, 5 per cent at most was exported under normal circumstances, especially to the Dutch market, where Denmark played the role of a secondary supplier in comparison with the great grain producers of Prussia and Poland. However, from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, a growing proportion of Danish grain exports went to Norway because of the growing problems that the Norwegian population was experiencing in feeding itself.

It is still impossible to estimate the extent of Denmark's second main agricultural product, oxen, but the account books from tolls suggest that in the mid-sixteenth century between 40,000 and 45,000 living oxen were exported to the Netherlands each year. If we disregard a transient boom in the early seventeenth century prompted by the truce between Spain and the

Dutch Republic, the long-term trend was for exports of oxen to decline. By the early eighteenth century, exports were only half the number of those during the golden age of the mid-sixteenth century. As a result of her favourable location close to the main markets of North-west Europe, Denmark was able to derive the greatest possible benefit from the boom of the sixteenth century, even if she was never able to play more than a secondary role when compared to the great exporters of Eastern Europe in terms of either the quantities exported or the prices that Danish products could command. With the possible exception of Danish oxen, which were in great demand at least from time to time in the Netherlands because of their relatively high quality, Danish agricultural exports never achieved more than a niche in the great West European market throughout this period.

Even so, both the crown and the noble landowners proved able to derive the maximum advantage from growing demand and favourable price trends from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. The country enjoyed a quite considerable surplus of exports over imports until the middle of the following century. Hand in hand with this positive balance of trade, landowners experienced on the whole a series of golden years which lasted – if we disregard certain disruptive episodes arising from production and marketing difficulties in the late sixteenth century – until the 1620s, when the Thirty Years War provoked a prolonged crisis in Denmark's traditional foreign markets. For example, around 1610 grain exports reached the prodigious level of half a million barrels, and exports of oxen also achieved their peak as more than 50,000 oxen passed through Danish toll booths on their way south.

However, as far as we can tell, this represented the absolute high point of Danish agricultural exports in this period. Apart from a fleeting boom in grain exports during the 1630s, when the great war raging in Europe briefly created favourable marketing conditions for large-scale agriculture, the overall trend after 1610 was one of steady decline. As a result, the main economic activity in Denmark, agriculture, fell into a deep and protracted crisis that did not abate until around 1740.

One fundamental reason why the crisis of the seventeenth century had such profound and prolonged effects in Denmark was the weak and uncertain position of Danish exports in the major foreign markets, which made the country particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in the international economic situation. An additional factor was the substantial deterioration in the climate in the middle of the century, the 'little ice age', which significantly worsened the conditions governing agricultural production. However, another

important cause was the rigidity of the Danish system of agricultural production, which was based on communal farming of the fields. In the nature of things, the need for joint decision-making by the peasants of a particular locality inhibited innovation and encouraged a tendency to remain loyal to the main traditional products, grain and cattle, even though the situation in Denmark's export markets might well have made changes advisable.

In other words, the profits from the large surplus of exports over imports during the prosperous decades of the sixteenth century, not least among noble landowners, were only used to an extremely limited extent to improve the methods of agricultural production. Farming in the Dutch fashion remained largely unknown in Denmark until the late seventeenth century. Most landowners, including the crown, preferred to invest their large profits in building manor-houses that enhanced their prestige, luxury consumption and expensive educational tours abroad for their sons. As a result, great amounts of capital were diverted away from productive activity into investments that must be characterised as unproductive from the point of view of the agricultural economy. The obstacles that hindered innovation and rationalisation among the peasantry, along with the reluctance of landowners to invest in agriculture, combined to hold Danish agriculture, and therefore also Danish society as a whole, in a iron grip which it was only able to surmount when the international economic situation turned in the middle of the eighteenth century and again created favourable conditions for Danish agricultural exports.

There was practically no industrial production of any significance in Denmark during this period. Early in the seventeenth century, Christian IV attempted under the influence of mercantilist ideas to encourage the establishment of a number of manufactories, mostly in the immediate vicinity of København. He also encouraged the foundation of several trading companies on the English and Dutch model. Most of these initiatives came to a sad end after a short period of time. The main reasons for these failures were the country's lack of natural resources, the absence of an industrial and commercial tradition and, not least, a chronic shortage of capital. As we have seen, such capital as was available was usually channelled into land and fixed property, the only forms of property that conferred status and social prestige in a country dominated by landowners.

It was not until the late seventeenth century that there was some growth in international trade based on København, which was made possible by changes in the European economic situation caused by war between the larger states of Western Europe. The leading role in this

trade was played by a small group of German and Dutch merchants, immigrants who had come to Denmark in the hope of making their fortune. However, even after this, it must be said that real non-agrarian production and international shipping activity on a large scale were still phenomena that belonged to the future. Denmark was, and remained, throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a decidedly agrarian area on the North European periphery.<sup>2</sup>

### Norway: an expanding economy

In the course of the sixteenth century, Norway eventually overcame the prolonged crisis that had struck the country in the late Middle Ages – a crisis that arose from the appalling population losses occasioned by the advent of the plague in the fourteenth century. After that, the Norwegian economy experienced steady expansion – apart from occasional temporary setbacks. A renewal of strong population growth was a clear indication of this change, especially since it was most marked in those outer parts of the country that had been hardest hit by the plague – the coastal areas, mountainous regions and the north of Norway.

With all the reservations necessary because of the uncertain source materials, it can be estimated that the population of Norway within its present-day frontiers was just over 200,000 in 1500. The census material from later periods suggests that in the second half of the seventeenth century the population of Norway cannot have been less than 450,000 – an unusually high level of growth by any measure. This brought the population of Norway more or less into line with that of Denmark after the loss of Skåne (Scania) in 1658. However, after this, a period of stagnation followed, which was most marked in the western coastal areas and among the small communities in the mountains of Vestlandet and the north of Norway. Part of the explanation for this slower rate of population growth lies in the various crises which struck the Norwegian economy in the late seventeenth century. However, another factor was undoubtedly the

2 Many aspects of the Danish agrarian economy are discussed in the numerous works by E. Ladewig Petersen, of which only two (in English) shall be mentioned here, namely *The Crisis of the Danish Nobility, 1580–1660* (Odense, 1967), and 'The Danish Cattle Trade during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 18 (1970), pp. 69–85. A special view of the old agrarian system is presented by T. Kjærgaard, *The Danish Revolution, 1500–1800: An Ecohistorical Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1994). An overall picture is presented in K. J. V. Jespersen, *A History of Denmark* (London, 2004).

substantial increase in emigration from outer areas of the country by seamen and fishermen to Denmark and the Netherlands, where they served in the rapidly expanding navies of these two countries. It has been estimated that at the beginning of the eighteenth century the population of Norway was around 500,000.

Like Denmark, Norway was predominantly a country of peasants and fisherfolk, which can be attributed to the fact that, in the mid-seventeenth century, only about 25,000 people lived in a mere eight trading-towns. The most important of these, without doubt, was the old Hansa-controlled capital of Vestlandet, Bergen, with approximately 9,000 inhabitants. None of the other trading-towns – not excluding Christiania and Trondheim – had even half the population of Bergen. Add to this the 10,000–15,000 people who lived as townspeople in the many small towns without trading rights along the coast. Despite their small numbers, the Norwegian middle classes achieved a degree of importance during this period which far outstripped the influence of the middle classes in Denmark. This was primarily due to two circumstances which were unique to Norway.

The first was that there was in effect no Norwegian nobility. Almost all the old indigenous noble families had died out as a result of the huge loss of population in the late Middle Ages, leaving behind them a vacuum which was only to a limited extent filled by immigrant Danish nobles. The dual monarchy's royal authority, based in far-away København, was therefore forced, in the sphere of local administration, to rely on prominent burghers who were consequently enabled, with royal blessing, to take up a central position in both social and economic affairs.

The second circumstance is due to the considerable increase in population up to the mid-seventeenth century. This growth was so vigorous that the country's meagre agricultural sector soon found it difficult to feed the population. Accordingly, the country had already become a net importer of foodstuffs by the early part of the century, and by the end of the century it was wholly dependent on extensive grain imports from Denmark. But these imports had of course to be paid for by exports of other products, and this is the background to the fact that the Norwegian economy from an early date had to be based on exchange of goods to a much greater extent than, for example, the commercial life of Denmark. This of course reinforced the standing of the middle classes in the economy as a whole. Those products which Norway was particularly well suited to offer were fish and timber.

The extent to which fisheries and the export trade in fish products blossomed during this period can be attributed to two main factors. Skåne

was under the control of Lübeck. But around 1500, for reasons which are impossible to fathom, the herring deserted the coast of Skåne only to turn up in large numbers in the fishing grounds of the North Sea and along the west coast of Norway, where rich catches in the centuries that followed formed the basis for the blossoming export trade from towns like Bergen and Stavanger. Leaving aside a series of lean years with poor catches at the close of the seventeenth century, the fisheries created particularly good conditions for the towns in south and west Norway, where this industry provided by far the most important source of income.

At the same time, Norwegian fish exports were favoured by economic conditions in Europe. The decline of the Hansa towns had the effect that the once so dominant Lübeck merchants were no longer able to maintain their old monopoly on Norwegian fish exports, which thereafter gradually came into the hands of indigenous Norwegian merchants. In addition, the Dutch War of Liberation from 1568, and later – from the 1650s – the British sanctions on Dutch shipping in the form of the Navigation Acts and, from time to time, open warfare, made it considerably easier for the neutral Norwegians to break into European markets, resulting in favourable consequences for the Norwegian fishing trade.

Besides fisheries, the other large source of riches for Norway was forestry and the timber trade. This industry also benefited from developments in Europe, in which shipping played an ever-increasing role both in wartime and in the sphere of peacetime trade. As a result of these developments there was a powerfully growing demand for timber products. This coincided with a general scarcity of precisely that strategically vital product. Most European forests in coastal districts had been chopped down or had simply disappeared as a result of many years of exploitation. This scarcity created a steadily growing demand for Norwegian wood, and the Norwegian forestry sector – like that of Sweden and Finland – now became a long-term major supplier to the European building and shipbuilding industries, which paid good prices for the wood.

In the first instance most of the felling took place in the coastal areas of west, south and east Norway, where many farmers operated their own privately run sawmills. Around 1600, however, most coastal areas were cleared of forest, and as a result the wood now had to be fetched from deep in the interior of the country, and floated in large quantities down the rivers, after which it was prepared in large sawmill complexes near the river mouths. This process was far more extensive and capital-intensive than the older peasant felling, and the result was that the many small sawmills



gradually became squeezed out by much larger consortia of merchants with plenty of capital behind them and who, in the mercantilist spirit, had often taken the trouble to obtain a royal licence as the basis for their activities. In this way, the sawmill industry became a popular field of operation for an ever-growing class of bourgeois capitalists who also in this way cemented their dominant position in Norwegian society.

Norwegian exports of wood received a major shot in the arm with the Great Fire of London in 1666, which reduced most of the city to ruins. As the Navigation Acts in practice excluded Dutch ships from England, the greatly increased demand for building materials for the rebuilding of the city caused a considerable boom not only in the Norwegian timber-exporting sector but also in Norwegian shipping, which now entered the European transport market in earnest, at the expense of the Netherlands. The Norwegians warmed themselves at the flames of London, as witty souls put it at the time. Exports of large amounts of good-quality timber and a flourishing shipping trade ensured that the Norwegian economy as a whole did well throughout the years of crisis at the end of the seventeenth century, when both agriculture and fisheries were plagued by failure and disaster.

Mining in Norway – for iron, copper and silver – never became as important economically as forestry. But the exploitation of the mines had this much in common with forestry: that it promoted a capitalist form of industrial structure in the country, and thereby laid the foundations for an economically strong middle class, which, in alliance with a mercantilist-orientated monarchy, swiftly developed into the country's leading elite, economically, socially and politically. The industrial infrastructure peculiar to Norway, which developed as a natural extension of the country's existing resources, the fast population growth up to 1650 and favourable economic conditions in Europe, created a social structure which was quite different in character to that of Denmark. Although the greater part of the population in both countries were peasants, there developed in Norway a proto-capitalistic structure with a dominant middle class, whereas Denmark remained for some time a purely agrarian society with basic structures which were clearly feudal.<sup>3</sup>

3 For a good overview of the early modern Norwegian economy, see Ø. Rian, 'Government and Society in Early Modern Scandinavia 1560–1721', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000).

## Great Power politics and industrial development in Sweden-Finland

Thanks to the hand of Nature, Sweden-Finland was blessed with a greater variety of natural resources than, for example, Denmark, whose sole natural resources were cultivable soil and easy access to the riches of the sea fisheries. Fertile agricultural land was to be found especially in the central Swedish plains and in certain coastal regions. But in addition there were rich ore deposits, particularly in Västmanland and Dalarna, where the veins containing ore lay so thickly on the surface of the ground that it was possible with the technology of the time to extract iron, copper and silver in considerable quantities. Moreover, the wood required for the smelting ovens was to hand in most places. Finally, the large continuous forest areas of Finland provided good conditions for the operation of sawmills, and not least for the production of tar and pitch, which became important articles of export in the first golden age of the great wooden ships.<sup>4</sup>

But in contrast to Norway – which otherwise had similar natural resources – Sweden-Finland lay far from the main European markets. The region turned its back, so to speak, on Europe and opened on the Gulf of Bothnia, which was often frozen over for several months of the year and therefore closed to maritime traffic. Only via a narrow passage at the mouth of the Göta river in the Kattegat could Sweden access the normally ice-free navigable waters in the west, and thereby have the possibility of direct contact with international shipping traffic. It was here, in 1619, that the subsequently important town of Göteborg was founded. However, this rather constricted gateway to the west was threatened with closure by the constantly recurring conflicts with Denmark-Norway, as this life-line for Sweden was invariably the Danes' first target. This uncertain situation only improved in 1645 when Sweden managed to take over Halland, and afterwards, in 1658, to further win all the provinces of Skåne from Denmark. With this, the whole of the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula came under Swedish control, and at a stroke Sweden was brought close to the European markets.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, Sweden's situation was one of a rather advanced degree of isolation – economically, and in many

4 S. E. Åström, *From Tar to Timber: Studies in Northeast European Forest Exploitation and Foreign Trade 1660–1860*, Societas Scientiarum Fennicae (Helsinki, 1988); M. Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa. Suomi, metsät ja kansainvälinen järjestelmä 1600–1920* (Helsinki, 1993).

other ways – in relation to the European mainland. To a large extent, all commercial contacts between Sweden and overseas at this time were handled by the Hansa towns, which, with Lübeck at the helm, completely dominated the country's foreign trade. Not until the reign of Gustav Vasa did the Swedes finally succeed in freeing their country from the iron grip of Lübeck and grabbing the economic reins themselves. This achievement, however, had no influence on the basic facts of geography, namely the region's remote situation squeezed in behind rival powers and economies like those of Denmark and Poland.

This situation only changed decisively from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, when Sweden began its methodical and purposeful territorial expansion around the Baltic – in the first instance in the Baltic states, then in Poland and finally in North Germany – which resulted in the fact that, a few generations later, Sweden had reached the status of a North European Great Power with direct access to the most important markets of Europe.

In reality, it is quite reasonable to look at Swedish military expansion around the Baltic not merely from the viewpoint of political security, but also as an appropriate way of breaking the country's economic isolation by pushing its borders nearer to the main European markets and at the same time establishing itself as the controlling middle-man between the extensive areas of Russia and Eastern Europe where raw materials abounded, and the great markets of the West where these materials could be sold. In any case it is a fact that Sweden's war planning and the economic policies of the Swedish state went hand in hand to an unprecedented degree with the early stages of Sweden's rise to Great Power status, which not only made the kingdom a military Great Power but also transformed Sweden into the economically most powerful state in the Baltic region. The history of Sweden's economic expansion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is therefore to a great extent also the story of an isolated peasant economy which with sturdy political guidance was recast and expanded into a significant and integrated link in the European world economy.

Otherwise, its beginnings had been modest enough. The country which Gustav Vasa took control of in 1523 contained fewer than 1 million inhabitants – a cautious estimate suggests 600,000 in Sweden itself and 250,000 in Finland. As in most other places, however, the population increased quite considerably throughout the sixteenth century. Thus, around 1600 there may have been about 1.3 million inhabitants in Sweden-Finland, and at the beginning of the eighteenth century the numbers can be estimated at 1.8 million.

Of these, around 95 per cent were peasants or earned their living from agriculture-related occupations. Only 3–4 per cent can be considered as belonging to the burgher estate, while the nobility and the clergy made up just 1 per cent of the total population. The towns were few in number and small. Stockholm — the capital of the kingdom — had only 6,000 inhabitants in the early sixteenth century, but compensated for this by a vigorous expansion in the course of the Age of Greatness. However, many new towns were founded, not least in the seventeenth century, which speedily became important nodal points in the regional economy.

In contrast to ownership structures in Danish agriculture – but corresponding to conditions in Norway – farming concerns were to a large extent owned by the peasants themselves. In round terms, two-thirds of Swedish farms were peasant-owned, while the rest were divided more or less equally between the crown and the nobility, with a tendency for the crown, especially in the first half of the seventeenth century, to feel compelled to finance its many wars by alienating crown estates. Agricultural production therefore took place almost exclusively on the smaller farms, while actual large-scale production was largely unknown in Sweden-Finland. Under normal conditions the population was able to feed itself. On the other hand, overproduction of food products for export was insignificant.

Since the late Middle Ages, the country's most important exports had been the products of mining, especially iron and copper. Added to that was a not insignificant amount of silver from the silver mine at Sala, which had been opened in 1510, and which gradually came to form the basis of a fairly profitable level of silver production, especially as seen from the point of view of the crown and the state finances. Most important of all, however, were iron exports. In the course of the sixteenth century Swedish iron was in great demand for the manufacture of weapons and other articles in common use.

The Swedish government deliberately sought, by means of a comprehensive policy of regulation, to promote the change-over in iron production from the older, easily worked type of iron known as 'osmund iron' – lumps of iron of variable size and purity – to the much sought-after *stangjern* (bar iron), which was a type of wrought iron hammered out in long bars by bar iron hammers. Production of this type of iron was very much a specialist job and, to this end, considerable numbers of foreign craftsmen – mostly Germans – were imported in the course of the sixteenth century. The degree to which this change in the nature of iron exports actually succeeded can be gathered from the export figures. In 1548 total exports of iron amounted to

c. 42 tons, of which bar iron made up around 5 per cent. In 1604 iron exports almost doubled, but now bar iron comprised in the region of 40 per cent of exports. The large rise in the proportion of refined iron resulted in a much bigger increase in the total value of iron exports than the actual increase in volume would lead us to suppose, as the bar iron could be sold at much better prices than the more primitive product which was osmund iron.

On the whole, the Swedish mining industry underwent a rapid development in the seventeenth century. Swedish iron and copper were at that time among the most sought-after products for the European war-related and building industries. Mining and its manufacturing spin-offs gradually became the most important branch of the Swedish economy. The background to this was, of course, first and foremost that the natural preconditions were in place. There were productive mines and also easily accessible wood in sufficient amounts for smelting and further refining of the products of the mines, and just as important was access to cheap water-power.

To this can be added a series of technological improvements which made the production process more rational and effective, together with a significant degree of immigration of foreign specialists in modern mining. The most famous of these was to be the Dutch industrialist Louis de Geer, who gradually turned himself into a sort of Swedish industrial prince in the sphere of heavy industry – the Swedish Age of Greatness's answer to Krupp in Wilhelmine Germany. More modest in scope but no less significant was the sizeable inflow into Sweden of German and Walloon miners, whose practical knowledge and skills were to make Sweden's mining industry among the most advanced in Europe.

But the real driving factor initially was first and foremost the crown's financial demands. In contrast to the Danish king, for example, the Swedish monarchy was rather hard-up. Crown estates were modest in extent and simply could not finance the many activities of the Swedish state. From an early date, therefore, the crown had to find good external sources of finance in the form of taxes, tolls and customs duties as well as carrying out an organisation, almost on the lines of a planned economy, of that important source of income, the mining industry, in order thereby to maximise income for the crown. The fact that mining was intensified was therefore primarily a result of the crown's deliberate policy of retaining the monopoly and privilege of mining for itself, with a view to maximisation of income.

These tendencies became more and more obvious as they kept pace with the almost permanent state of war from 1560 to 1660, which caused the state's financial needs to rise to hitherto unknown heights. The thoroughly

regulated and intensive mining industry came to bear more than its fair share of the expenses of the wars; but the corollary was that the crown's financial demands also of course had a powerfully stimulating effect on the development of the mining sector. A shining example of this effect is the second redemption of Älvsborg, i.e. the compensation which Sweden had to pay to Denmark after the Kalmar War of 1611–13 for the return of the conquered fortress of Älvsborg. The size of the compensation was set at 1 million *rigsdalers*, to be paid over six years. This gigantic sum corresponded, in round terms, to 25,000 kg of silver. But this huge amount of money was not only a significant economic blood-letting: the production of the many forms of coinage required was at the same time a shot in the arm for the Swedish copper and silver industries, which, subject to the harsh laws of necessity, learned how to crank up the tempo of production even harder.

Stalin, as is well known, once remarked – like Axel Oxenstierna before him – that in order to wage war he needed three things: money, money and money. Sweden's Great Power status was the result of non-stop warfare, and this demanded a constant supply of large amounts of ready cash. The Swedish state was therefore dependent to a rather extreme degree on such injections of money, and this is where mining in particular came to play an important role. Obviously it was the silver and copper industries whose products could be minted straight away and used as means of payment. But no less important was the iron export trade, which brought home great quantities of hard currency to the permanently empty Swedish state treasury. The Great Power that was Sweden rested heavily in more than one sense on the country's mining industry.

Throughout this period Sweden had one of the dominant iron industries in Europe. Only in the course of the eighteenth century, when a forcibly modernised Russia could at last begin to throw large amounts cheap iron onto the market, and the most important country for imports, Britain, simultaneously raised import duties in order to protect its own industries, did Swedish iron lose its dominant position in the market. Nevertheless, Swedish iron exports continued to be competitive in certain areas by force of the high quality of the iron and as a result of the efficiency of its production, which, with help from the government, had been methodically built up during the Age of Greatness.

Putting it simply, Sweden – in contrast to, for example, Denmark – had the advantage of being in possession of natural resources which were in great demand. The many wars of the seventeenth century meant that most European states were forced to maintain a high degree of preparedness for

war. The building up of armies, navies and arsenals of weapons was therefore a priority for most governments. This had the consequence that international demand was concentrated on precisely those goods which Sweden not only had the natural conditions to produce, but also whose production the country's government was actively supporting. The end result of this conjunction of circumstances was that Sweden slowly but surely assumed not only the political but also the economic leading role in the Baltic area, while the old leading power, Denmark, just as inevitably lost ground. The government's deliberate investment in making the country's natural mineral resources the very pivot of their mercantile policies was thus proved to have paid off. By the mid-seventeenth century the country had not only overcome the handicap of its isolated situation but had also established itself as a North European Great Power punching at a significantly heavier weight than its old rival, the Dano-Norwegian double monarchy.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Sweden's transformation from a backward peasant economy to a European great power is most clearly mapped out by K.-R. Böhme, 'Building a Baltic Empire: Aspects of Swedish Expansion, 1560–1660', in G. Rystad, K.-R. Böhme and W. Carlgren (eds.), *In Quest of Trade and Security: The Baltic in Power Politics, 1500–1890*, 1 (Lund, 1994).

## Social consequences

KNUD J. V. JESPERSEN

### The breakdown of the society of estates

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Scandinavian countries, in line with other European societies, underwent a development which turned fundamental aspects of their social structures upside down. Rising prices and the ensuing dynamic trends in the economy, in conjunction with new patterns of trade, created a hitherto unknown movement in the traditional picture of society. Old boundaries between social groups were wiped out and became meaningless. On the other hand, new dividing lines appeared which often cut across old, conventional divisions. The Scandinavian countries were, from a sociological perspective, in a state of flux to a degree that had not been known before. The old social structure in which roles had been strictly allotted was in a state of complete breakdown, and instead society was trying to adapt to the new economic realities.

Like most other late-medieval European societies, those of Scandinavia were functionally divided at the most basic level around 1500, as a result of the prevailing conditions of production and the economic realities. These strata of society can be summed up as the learned class, the military class and the productive class. This indicates the division of labour which people in the Middle Ages believed to be necessary in order that earthly society could be made to function in accordance with the guidelines which God Himself had drawn up.

The numerically small but influential learned class, the priests and other servants of the church – who at the same time were the leading class in society – controlled the intellectual domain, including religion. The equally small military class, the nobility, were society's highly specialised warrior caste, whose task it was to protect the community against external and internal enemies. According to medieval perception, the nobility were the second class in society. But the overwhelming majority of the population



belonged to the productive class – the burghers and peasants – whose task was to create the material basis for the wellbeing of the community. This group's role was to come up with the necessary products and ensure that they reached their intended consumers.

Legislation, which largely consisted of unwritten, customary rules, was intended first and foremost to ensure the continuation of the status quo. Otherwise, the relationship between the individual groups was regulated by means of class-based privileges, which determined their rights and duties in relation to the whole. If pushed, one could argue that the society of estates which we encounter at the beginning of the sixteenth century functioned, first and foremost, by means of this legally enshrined distinction between the different groups in society. Correspondingly, the power of the state was limited in scope — almost invisible — and its major role was to ensure the peaceful, undisturbed continuance of the estates' system.

This essentially static social system functioned perfectly well in circumstances where the economy and other factors were stable or changed only slowly. However, in times of rapid change it was doomed to become unstable and perhaps even to collapse. That was exactly what happened in the sixteenth century. The most important changes in this century can be summed up as three major revolutions, which together brought an end to the traditional stability and prepared the way for a completely new dynamic in every area of life.

The first revolution was in the church. The Reformation brought Lutheranism to Scandinavia and swept away the Catholic church, which had formerly been so powerful. Economically and socially, it brought an enormous wave of radical change in its wake. The church estates, which typically made up around a third of the cultivated land in the kingdom, were confiscated by the state, which either incorporated them into the possessions of the crown or rapidly resold them to aristocratic proprietors. At the same time the clergy lost their status as the leading class in society and became instead almost a class of civil servants, sinking beneath the aristocracy in the social hierarchy to become the second estate. The very fact that such large amounts of property were released at the Reformation was, from an economic point of view, a destabilising factor which gave birth to a strong dynamic.

The second revolution was the military one. The more specific details of the so-called military revolution will not be described here; it will suffice to mention briefly that its most important characteristics were the increased use of hand-held firearms and large armies of infantry, mainly recruited from the

peasant and burgher classes. The most far-reaching consequences of this development, which took off in earnest from the mid-sixteenth century, were, first, that the aristocracy thereby lost their military monopoly and therefore could no longer legitimise their noble privileges by pleading the duties of war service. Groups within the aristocracy had instead to turn elsewhere in order to justify their privileges, and the solution they came up with was the necessity of running their estates and the service of the state – with all the social consequences which this shift entailed.

The other consequence was that the state – now that the aristocracy had lost their military monopoly – more and more had to intervene and finance the new, larger armies. This gave rise to huge financial demands on the part of the state, which the organs of government soon attempted to satisfy by means of unprecedented levels of taxation. Against this background there took place a gradual, but in the long run no less dramatic, transformation in the very nature of the state itself, from being a self-financing crown domain to, in large part, a tax- and customs-financed fiscal state – with all the consequences of an economic and social nature which this entailed in the form of increased control, greater bureaucracy and social unrest as a result of the growing tax burden.

The third great revolution was the price revolution mentioned earlier, by which we mean all the economic changes which turned the formerly static economy based on natural resources into an unpredictable and dynamic money economy, sensitive to the economic situation. The new economic dynamic had an unprecedentedly rapid and unsettling effect on capital assets, circumstances of ownership and income generation and thereby created fertile soil in which social instability could grow to a degree that had never been known before.

But all these changes were minor compared to the dramatic social changes which led to the collapse of the medieval social structure and created the beginnings of modern Scandinavian society. To a large extent, the process of social modernisation meant that the old inflexible class structure, rooted in a medieval system of class privileges, began to crack up in the sixteenth century as it got ever more obviously out of step with the society which was unfolding as a consequence of economic development. Even if there were quite marked differences between the various Scandinavian societies, with regard to both the chronology of this development and its concrete manifestations, the main tendencies were the same everywhere. Under the influence of the new unstable price and market conditions and a steady growth in the money economy, the tendency

towards economic and social differentiation between the individual social classes became more and more evident.

It was perhaps most evident of all within the formerly relatively homogeneous noble classes. Depending on their individual abilities and opportunities to exploit the favourable economic conditions that pertained from the end of the sixteenth century, they can in practice be divided into an economically weak lower section, a prosperous magnate section and a super-rich aristocracy. The social divide between these groups gradually became pronounced, and constantly widened. In reality, all they had in common finally was their noble names and the privileges these entailed.

The same tendency can be seen within the middle class, where new patterns of trade and the state's avowed policy of mercantilism favoured certain leading København businessmen with good international connections, along with well-to-do shipowners and timber merchants in Bergen and Christiania and mining entrepreneurs and manufacturers in Sweden. In this way, an economic upper class was created within the bourgeoisie too, which in terms of lifestyle and social aspirations was not outdone by the property-owning upper stratum of the nobility. Many of these haute-bourgeois merchants ended up in any case being accepted into the aristocracy where they had the good fortune to transcend the class barriers which formerly had been so impregnable.

On the other hand, the distance between themselves and the more humble members of the bourgeoisie – the small-scale traders, the lesser provincial merchants, the craftsmen – widened enormously. In other words, the social gulfs within this class increased dramatically at the same time as the barrier to noble rank was erased.

When one turns to the very large class of peasants, the picture is the same. Many of the peasants – both freeholders and those tied to an estate – profited from the favourable economic conditions of the sixteenth century. A number succeeded in gathering a fair amount of capital, which enabled them to become a local upper class. On the other hand, the enormous population explosion in the country districts had the effect that substantial groups found their circumstances reduced and became marginalised. This also applied to the fast-growing group of smallholders and farm tenants. To a large extent they were forced to live off their labour, and generally speaking that was a poor bargain in times when real wages were falling as a result of price rises and pressure of population. So in other words we can observe within this large section of the population a process of economic differentiation which created new and increasing social gulfs.

Things developed differently with regard to the post-Reformation clergy. In Catholic times the demands of celibacy meant that this class was wholly dependent on constant recruitment from outside. The clerical class was, therefore, in principal open, and the younger sons of the nobility in particular made good use of this opportunity to fashion a career for themselves. But after the Reformation, when priests were allowed to marry and start a family, this brought about a change in the social structure of their class. Even if many of the bourgeoisie and individuals with their roots in the peasantry sought clerical careers and were called to become parish priests and grammar school teachers, there was also a growing trend for self-recruitment. In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries veritable dynasties of priests sprang up everywhere, where son followed father into his clerical offices. In other words, the development in clerical circles was towards a greater exclusiveness at the same time as social mobility otherwise, in society at large, was growing and class barriers were gradually breaking down.

This then was the general picture in Scandinavia, and it does not differ in essentials from the development we can observe in other parts of Europe. Yet within this common framework there were also specific traits in the social development of individual countries, which deserve to be highlighted. These domestic differences can in general be attributed to differences in the economies of the individual countries, which have been stressed above.<sup>1</sup>

### From squirearchy to aristocratic ranks: the Danish nobility in transformation

In an agricultural country like Denmark the circumstances of ownership and the conditions of production within agriculture were naturally decisive factors in social development – the owners and cultivators of the land always made up around 80 per cent of the entire population, and the remainder were strongly dependent on the development of the country's major industry.

<sup>1</sup> The social transformation of the Scandinavian societies is thoroughly discussed in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000). On the modernisation process in general, see G. Rystad (ed.), *Europe and Scandinavia: Aspects of the Process of Integration in the 17th Century* (Lund, 1983), and K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Social Change and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Some Danish Evidence', *The Historical Journal*, 26 (1983), pp. 1–13; M. North, *Geschichte der Ostsee* (München, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, the country's one-sided system of agrarian production revolved around the estates of the crown and the nobility, which together made up almost all of the country's cultivable land. About 44 per cent of this was owned by the nobility – who comprised in all fewer than 2,000 individuals, both men and women. This proportion remained fairly constant until the revolution of 1660, as ownership of land by the nobility was protected, as previously mentioned, by their privileges, which forbade the transfer of free – i.e. noble – landed property to non-nobles. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a veritable Greek tragedy was played out within this exclusive little sector of the population, which first of all split their class economically and socially, and after 1660 actually led to their dissolution as nobility in the older sense.

This lengthy process of dissolution began as far back as the mid-sixteenth century when the nobility, as a result of the military revolution, lost their monopoly on the exercise of military might. In their efforts to find a new basis for justifying their noble status and their traditional rights, many members of the noble class threw themselves with renewed interest into the running of their estates and into their role as well-educated servants of the state. Their adjustment to these new roles precipitated intense rivalry among the individual nobles with regard to property, education and offices. By the end of the nineteenth century the competition for property and education was in full swing – at huge expense in both cases. The real aim of this competitiveness was to concentrate as much property as possible into one's own hands, since ownership of property was the one thing which conferred social status in earnest and at the same time provided an economic basis for defraying one's sons' often highly expensive maintenance and upkeep at foreign universities. Accordingly, from the end of the sixteenth century the market in aristocratic estates was a witches' cauldron of activity characterised by an instability which had been relatively unknown only decades earlier.

One factor which presumably contributed to the dramatic development in the aristocratic property market was that Danish rules of inheritance lacked a statute of primogeniture. According to Danish inheritance law, property, on the owner's death, was to be divided equally among the entire brood of siblings – as women could only inherit a half share – so aristocratic landholdings were in constant danger of being scattered to the four winds, especially if there was a fairly large number of siblings. Determined aristocratic empire-builders tried to counteract the risk of the break-up of estates in two ways: first, by planning suitable marriages for their children; and, secondly, by

amassing as much property as possible during their lifetime to pass on to their children.

The first policy – planned marriages – involved trying to marry off one's children to the wealthy heirs to other property agglomerations, so that new property empires could be founded. It was the amount of land involved, not feelings, that really drove the aristocracy's marriage policies. This caste had its own intrinsic tendencies towards polarisation: rich heirs and heiresses tended to marry among themselves, forcing the poorer participants in the marriage market to fall back on each other's more frugal company. In other words, this method promoted a social divide among the nobility.

The other method – amassing as much property as possible in order to increase the inheritance to be passed on – led, from the end of the sixteenth century, to comprehensive speculation in aristocratic property. This hectic process, which culminated in the 1620s, was triggered off by a large-scale crisis in the corn market in the 1580s. This reinforced the tendency whereby many aristocratic proprietors in the following years attempted to move over to the breeding of bullocks, which was now yielding higher returns. However, this required large amounts of capital, which often had to be raised in the loan market. But when the crisis subsequently spread to the bullock trade too, many of these loans were called in, creating all kinds of opportunities for aristocratic speculators and hard-headed empire-builders with their wallets at the ready.

In the next couple of decades the aristocratic property market moved at almost breakneck speed. Large amounts of property changed hands in the course of a few years, and the net result was that those who had started off prosperous and with their holdings well consolidated became even richer, whereas the less well-off became poorer – all neatly conforming to the principle contained in the Gospel according to St Matthew (Matthew 13:12). In other words it was a question of a powerful process of polarisation which split the nobility into, on the one side, a numerically small, immensely prosperous property-owning aristocracy, who at the same time occupied every important post in the apparatus of government and, on the other side, a numerous noble proletariat whose living conditions were not markedly different from those of the lower social classes. Apart from the fact that both groups bore aristocratic names, there was a whole world of difference between them.

We can cite a few figures to illustrate the strength of this process of polarisation. At the end of the 1580s, the richest 10 per cent of aristocratic property owners owned altogether 23 per cent of all aristocratic property,

while the poorest 10 per cent owned 2.5 per cent. Evened out, this gives the group of aristocratic property owners as a whole a maximum of 27 per cent – which highlights the inequality in the ownership of landed property, in that 0 would represent absolutely equal distribution, while 100 represents utter inequality.

But if we go forward in time from there to 1625, the picture has changed dramatically. By that time the richest 10 per cent owned no less than 42 per cent of the total, while the poorest 10 per cent had to content themselves with a pathetic 0.5 per cent. The maximum adjusted percentage then reached a record level of 45, which – compared with the 27 per cent from the end of the 1580s – says everything about the dramatic strength and effect of the polarisation process.

The winners of the competition for aristocratic properties up to 1625 – about a dozen immensely prosperous and influential families – further secured their position as an exclusive aristocracy in the following decades. They monopolised almost all the well-paid posts in the state apparatus, which of course widened even more the social distance between themselves and the less fortunate members of their class. The inevitable result was that class solidarity took a back seat. The noble estate, which formerly had been so homogeneous, was about to split internally and be dispersed into groupings which in practice had nothing in common.

This of course posed a threat to the nobility's great political influence, one of the preconditions for which had been its very class solidarity. When this finally gave way towards the middle of the seventeenth century, the previously so powerful royal council composed of the nobility became a helpless victim of the alliance between the non-aristocratic estates and a decisive monarch in the shape of Frederik III, who swept it out of the way as part of the revolution of 1660. The government of Denmark by the nobility disappeared, to be replaced by royal autocracy. This event also marked the beginning of the end for the old nobility as a privileged class. To be sure, a noble class continued to exist in Denmark, but the real meaning of the concept altered radically as a result of the sweeping reforms which the new absolutist regime set in motion in the course of the last third of the seventeenth century.

Certainly the old nobility were permitted to continue using their aristocratic names, but the huge privileges they had enjoyed before 1660 – of which exemption from taxation, not surprisingly, was the most highly prized – disappeared like dew in the sunshine. Moreover, the old nobility had to suffer the torment of seeing whole new groups of nobles springing up

alongside them in the shape of ennobled civil servants and business tycoons. These were accompanied by a whole new class of counts and barons whose degree of distinction and privilege far outclassed that of the old nobility.

The regime's intention in implementing these reforms was of course, in the short term, to pull the teeth of the old nobility by weakening their social status. But the reforms also had the wider aim of breaking down the old class structure and replacing it with a system of rank. In this system, every member of society was ranked according to their degree of distinction, with the autocratic monarch as the shining, impregnable zenith. Both policies achieved almost total success. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the old nobility, formerly so powerful and confident, could hardly be distinguished from the new meritocracy, and the old class system was in rapid retreat, to the advantage of the highly developed ranking system, which became an important component of eighteenth-century society.

While the old nobility emerged as the conspicuous loser from the great political, economic and social upheavals of the seventeenth century, there was another group which won out. This was the prosperous bourgeoisie, mostly based in København. Even in the early seventeenth century, an important strand in Christian IV's mercantilist industrial policies had been to promote a well-to-do bourgeoisie who could play an active part in the economic wellbeing of the kingdom. Yet these efforts largely failed; the country lacked sufficient amounts of risk capital, and Danish large-scale trade on an international scale was still in its infancy.

However, this situation gradually changed in mid century – first and foremost, paradoxically, as a result of the many costly wars which the country had to wage at that time against Sweden. Warfare created a national demand for supplies, and it was precisely this that stimulated the growth of a group of government contractors who provided the crown with goods and credit on a grand scale. These government contractors, many of whom were immigrant merchants with good connections to international trading-houses in Hamburg and Amsterdam, were tied to the crown by an economic common destiny. Accordingly, they gave the king loyal support in the implementation of his revolution. Their reward soon arrived in the form of grants of land, noble titles, posts in the central administration and favourable trading privileges.

When, at the end of the century, further favourable trading conditions for Danish international trade and shipping occurred as a result of Louis XIV's wars, opportunities were finally in place for the development of the kind of trading oligarchy of international dimensions which had been unable to put



down roots earlier in an agricultural country like Denmark. A typical member of this exclusive group was the Marselis consortium, whose founder had immigrated from the Netherlands in mid century, set himself up as a government contractor and thereafter acquired extensive possessions in both Denmark and Norway. His success was crowned with the title of count, under the noble name of Gyldenkrone.

The absolutist regime recruited many of its high officials from this narrow group, after the old nobility's monopoly on government posts was broken. The new trading oligarchy, whose actual period of greatness nevertheless only began during the so-called flourishing trade period a hundred years later, came thereby, in many respects, to assume exactly that position of power in the absolutist state that the old noble property-owning aristocracy had occupied in the period from 1536 to 1660. Social status, economic power and political influence continued to go hand in hand. Only the personalities and the outer forms had changed character.<sup>2</sup>

### Norway's new power-elite

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Norway, as mentioned earlier, was to an even greater degree than Denmark a peasant society. But the actual absence of an indigenous Norwegian noble class ensured that Norwegian society, in many ways, developed along different lines from that of Denmark. The lack of such an indigenous power-elite not only had direct significance for the social position of the peasants – which in comparison to the position of the Danish peasant class was stronger and more independent – it also left behind a power vacuum in the collective social structure which was just waiting to be filled. It was the Norwegian bourgeoisie which in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came to fill this empty space. And it was precisely this growth of a strong bourgeoisie, which slowly but surely consolidated itself as an independent force in society, that was one of the most important events in these two centuries of Norwegian history. Herein also lies the background to the fact that the Norwegian state, over time, developed in a more bourgeois-liberal direction than was the case in Denmark, Sweden and Finland.

2 See E. Ladewig Petersen, *The Crisis of the Danish Nobility, 1580–1660* (Odense, 1967), and K. J. V. Jespersen, 'The Rise and Fall of the Danish Nobility 1600–1800', in H. M. Scott (ed.), *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 2 (London, 1995), pp. 41–70, from where also the figures given in the section are taken.

The economic background to the flourishing of the Norwegian bourgeoisie has been explained above. Fisheries, timber products, shipping and mining were the platforms which gave the bourgeoisie a strong position in industrial life and simultaneously brought about the growth of Norway's towns. But only in the last half of the seventeenth century can we observe in earnest just how much the bourgeoisie's position changed from being only a central factor in industrial life to becoming a political factor with considerable weight. It is this feature of their development which shall now be examined.

Socially and politically, the Norwegian bourgeoisie emerged into the light of day in earnest in connection with the proclamation of the hereditary monarchy in 1661, when twenty-one representatives of the eight Norwegian trading towns met to acclaim the new crown prince. They used this opportunity to hand in a petition with a list of specific Norwegian demands, which had an almost programmatic character. The burghers requested that a commercial college be set up in Norway, as well as a high court and an academy, and they wanted indigenous Norwegians to have access to officers' posts in the army. Moreover, they presented a more specialised wish-list the aim of which was to improve conditions for the trading towns, in particular to grant them a monopoly of trade in their immediate surroundings. One way in which the bourgeoisie showed their new self-confidence was that the representatives acting on their behalf demanded exclusive rights to deal in timber – one of the country's main industries.

Despite the fact that these demands could seem exorbitant and strongly biased towards the middle classes, by far the greater part of them were in fact accommodated by the government in København in the years that followed. This was mainly due to the fact that they conformed to a large degree with the government's mercantilist policies, the cornerstone of which was a strong and enterprising middle class. With the goodwill of the government behind them, the way to the bourgeoisie's future key position lay open. This was further cemented by the series of favourable decisions that were to follow.

A decisive factor was that the government gave the citizens of the trading towns the monopoly over the timber trade. This decision was followed in 1688 by the so-called sawmill regulations, whose effects were even more far-reaching. They addressed not only the trade in timber but also the actual manufacture of raw wood products: planks, beams, etc. The key decision in these regulations was that the number of sawmills in Norway south of the Dovrefjeld – because of the threat of over-exploitation and deforestation – should at a stroke be cut by about a half, in order to reduce over-production.

After pressure from influential middle-class sawmill owners, the commission succeeded in reining in the regulations with the result that the reduction would only affect the many small peasant-owned sawmills, while the larger sawmill enterprises owned by the bourgeoisie would be preserved. In this game, in other words, it was the big timber merchants and sawmill owners who drew the longest straw – achieving what in effect was a monopoly and thereby in practice controlling the whole sawmill industry. In this way the ground was laid for the powerful position of the timber patriciate in the eighteenth century. The bourgeoisie had emphatically triumphed over the peasants in a central sector of Norwegian industrial life.

Things followed much the same course in the expanding mining industry. It had been founded originally by Christian IV, who from the 1640s onwards had built up a national mine administration in a mercantilist spirit. The mines required large amounts of capital, and the crown supported them from the very start with large grants and comprehensive privileges, which among other things allowed the mine owners to demand forced labour in the pits from the local peasants. However, from the 1650s control of the mining industry passed into bourgeois hands.

In the first instance it was a group of government contractors from the war years whose large outstanding accounts were made good in the mining industry. From the end of the 1650s, therefore, the Norwegian mines were controlled by middle-class government creditors like Henrik Müller, Joachim Irgens and the brothers Selius and Gabriel Marselis – all of foreign extraction. When, after half a dozen years, these men were ruined economically or had to withdraw from mining for other reasons, middle-class consortia from the larger Norwegian towns were standing ready to take over both the ownership and the running of the mines. With the agreement and goodwill of the authorities, the mining industry thereby ended up in the hands of the Norwegian bourgeoisie, becoming in the process part of the launching-pad for the growth of the new bourgeois ruling class.

The appearance of a genuine haute bourgeoisie in Norway in the second half of the seventeenth century coincided with a corresponding growth in the civil-servant class, keeping pace with the expanding absolutist administration. These two groups – the haute bourgeoisie and the civil-servant class – which together made up the new Norwegian power-elite, had many common traits and mutual points of contact. It was true of both groups that they were descended for the most part from foreign immigrants – Danes, Germans and Dutch – who nevertheless as a rule had taken up permanent residence in

Norway and accordingly, in the course of a few generations, felt themselves to be indigenous Norwegians.

There was also, typically, considerable mobility between the two groups. Many of the haute bourgeoisie had originally come to Norway as officials, but had subsequently taken up a bourgeois occupation. Social and marriage contacts between the two groups were therefore both frequent and common. In reality, the bonds between the haute bourgeoisie and officialdom were so strong that it perhaps makes sense to regard them as one social group and one power elite, which, in the absence of an indigenous nobility, enjoyed the favour and backing of the absolutist government as it steered Norway safely through the eighteenth century.

This numerically small but influential power-elite had by virtue of their origins, position and education a culture of their own, which was clearly distinguishable from the indigenous peasant culture of the majority of the population, with its deep roots in ancient Norwegian traditions. Norway was – as has been asserted – one country, but with two widely contrasting cultures. Not surprisingly, this often gave rise to divisions and rows. But over the deep gulf that separated the power-elite, with their foreign roots and culture, from the common people of Norway, there stretched a common bond that despite everything knitted the two parties together: namely, their common stance on protecting as best they could specific Norwegian interests in the extensive Oldenburg state of which Norway was a part.<sup>3</sup>

### The rise and fall of the Swedish nobility

There is no doubt that Sweden's Great Power policies between 1560 and 1720 weighed heavily on the shoulders of the Swedish-Finnish peasantry. The peasants were not the least of those who had to finance the country's route to Great Power status through their tax payments, and the large numbers of soldiers called up for the wars were mostly recruited from the ranks of the peasants. This constant pressure created major problems, even in the most far-flung peasant settlements, where the permanent absence of so many fit young men forced women, children and old people to take responsibility for the continuation of production to a degree which otherwise was unknown in most other areas of Europe. The peasants were the sector of society who had

3 On social development in Norway see Ø. Rian, 'Government and Society in Early Modern Scandinavia 1560–1721', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000).

to endure the longest, hardest slog during the formation of Sweden as a Great Power. But the most dramatic development that took place as a consequence of Great Power politics is to be found within the nobility.

A few key figures can serve as a starting point for illuminating the dramatic shifts within the ranks of the aristocracy. Throughout the sixteenth century the Swedish nobility comprised only about 500 adult males. This group owned around 20 per cent of the land, which was considerably less than in Denmark. But if we go to the middle of the seventeenth century, the number of aristocratic males had then risen to *c.* 1,000, and this group now controlled about 60 per cent of the cultivable land. Around 1700, however, the picture had changed again; the nobility now consisted of *c.* 2,500 adult males, but their share of the cultivable land had been reduced to around one-third. We are looking, in other words, at a section of the population whose social and economic circumstances had undergone enormous changes.

From a demographic standpoint, the old nobility from Gustav Vasa's time was always able to reproduce itself, but not to meaningfully increase its numbers. The growth in numbers of the nobility which can be observed throughout the seventeenth century is entirely due to the ennoblement of indigenous members of the bourgeoisie, e.g. deserving officers or higher officials, together with the naturalisation of foreign noblemen, e.g. from the Swedish Baltic provinces. Attention must also be drawn to an essential difference between the Swedish nobility and the formerly autocratic noble class in Denmark. The Swedish nobility was to a large extent an open class, while its Danish counterpart was almost hermetically sealed. The explanation for this difference lay partly in the relatively stronger position of the Swedish monarch vis-à-vis the nobility, which allowed him to ennoble newcomers, and partly in the constant requirement during the Age of Greatness for a loyal power elite with such a wide reach that the many wheels of the machinery of state could be kept in motion. A liberal policy of ennoblement was a suitable tool for this end.

The background to the Swedish nobility's relatively weaker position at the outset compared to their Danish equivalents was their lesser degree of land-based wealth. When their position with regard to land-ownership nevertheless changed dramatically, as was the case in the mid-seventeenth century, it had less to do with any newly won strength of the nobility than with the crown's acute financial weakness. From the 1620s onwards this led to huge surrenders of crown lands, which drastically altered the balance of ownership in favour of the nobility.

There followed several golden decades for at least sections of the Swedish nobility, with a distinct inclination for the actual running of large estates, the erection of imposing country seats and clear signs of aristocratic behaviour more or less corresponding to contemporary developments in Denmark. This period was the golden age of the Swedish nobility, not least for those families who in Gustav II Adolf's or Queen Kristina's time had risen to influential positions near the centre of power. It was first and foremost members of these families who benefited from the comprehensive donations of crown lands.

On the other hand it was precisely these people who were the first to be affected when, in the parliament of 1680, the non-noble estates with the backing of the monarch managed to push through a motion for 'reduktion', i.e. the retrieval of all those crown lands which had been given away since 1560. This drastic decision was put into practice in the following years, with the result that the nobility's share of landed property shrank from around two-thirds of the agricultural land to one-third.

The main victims of this decision were first and foremost the nobility of the Age of Greatness, i.e. the actual elite of the estate, who at the same time were so comprehensively thwarted politically that they were in no condition to prevent the establishment of Karl XI's absolutist rule. In the process the Swedish nobility ended up in a position of weakness which was strongly reminiscent of that which the Danish nobility saw itself reduced to after the revolution of 1660. Nevertheless, it would emerge that the Swedish nobility like that of Denmark still had a role to play in the changed circumstances of the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

### Poverty and social welfare

Despite what has already been said regarding economic growth and industrial development, there is no hiding the fact that the Scandinavian societies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were basically societies living permanently on the margin of starvation. In reality, they were subsistence economies in which, under normal circumstances, it was quite possible to produce sufficient foodstuffs to live on and perhaps even achieve a small surplus. But considering the — in comparison with more southerly areas — inhospitable climate and barren soil, it did not take much for catastrophe to

4 See A. F. Upton, 'The Swedish Nobility, 1600–1772', in H. M. Scott (ed.), *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 2 (London, 1995), pp. 11–40.

intervene with poverty and great mortality as a result. A single poor harvest, a failed fishing season or cattle sickness could make all the difference between survival and death by starvation.

And such events occurred with frightening regularity, even if catastrophic instances of hunger were often strongly localised. Poor communications and the isolated situation of many settlements meant that people in one parish could experience famine while at the same time there was a surplus in the neighbouring parish. It was, of course, worse if the cause of the crop failure was more general, in such a way that large areas were affected at the same time. This was the case, for example, with the temporary deterioration of the climate in the mid-seventeenth century, which brought about crop failure, poverty, sickness and famine almost everywhere in Scandinavia. Another contributory factor was the general and rapid growth in the population in the sixteenth century, which brought an unrelenting pressure on resources and thereby also contributed to the fact that the margin of starvation was never out of sight.

In such societies, there must always have been significant groups of poor people who were unable by their own efforts to obtain the necessities of life by lawful means. These groups also of course included those people who for one reason or another had been expelled from society – prostitutes, criminals, vagrants, etc. – and who therefore had been forced to inhabit the margins. These unfortunates comprised an often unsettled proletariat outside the conventional groupings of the class-based society. Even the most humble members of the latter were both lucky and secure compared to this restless, unsettled proletariat.

There are good reasons why we cannot know how many people were involved here. Only a few of them have left traces in the written sources. As far as Denmark is concerned, a reasonable guess would be around 40,000 to 50,000 in the middle of the seventeenth century, or 6–8 per cent of the whole population, and there is no reason to believe that the proportion of poor people would have been significantly different in the other Scandinavian countries. In other words, it was a question of a considerable group within the population which was permanently obliged to survive on public welfare, or by begging or criminality.

In keeping with conditions elsewhere in Europe, the problem of poverty in the Scandinavian area too had been rising steadily, at least throughout the seventeenth century, partly as a consequence of wars and crises, but also as a result of a growth in the population, which could not be wholly absorbed by the methods of production of established society. Added to this was the fact

that the poor, after the Reformation, had become much more conspicuous than formerly.

In pre-Reformation times the churches and religious houses had been natural centres for poor relief, which the Catholic church regarded as one of their essential areas of responsibility. After the Reformation, their responsibility for the administration of poor relief became more fluid. The new church certainly made a well-intentioned contribution; but the confiscation of church property had to a large extent robbed it of the means to do so. The relief of the poor therefore became seen in the first instance as a responsibility of the state; but the basic attitude of the authorities was generally that poverty was as a rule self-inflicted, and therefore at heart a law-and-order problem. For the time being, therefore, they confined themselves to stating the problem and otherwise making a distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor.

The first category included those too old to work, the sick and the crippled, whom the authorities could equip with beggars' badges, which gave them the right to beg openly to keep body and soul together. The second category covered all the others, who were not allowed to beg, but on the contrary were regarded as work-shy criminals. These were therefore locked up from time to time by the authorities and taken to forced-labour institutions, where they had to remain for an unspecified time.

The preferred method of state poor relief – as one might call it – was in other words to render the poor invisible with the help of prohibitions and forced confinement in secure institutions. The basic belief was, as we have said, that poverty was either self-inflicted or it was God's punishment for a sinful life – and accordingly the methods used were repressive and reactionary. An active policy aimed at solving the problem or averting its effects still lay in the future.

We have to move forward in time all the way to the Enlightenment and the beginnings of pietism in the eighteenth century for the strict law-and-order attitude to the problem of poverty to be replaced by humanitarian and socially inclusive points of view. The Danish poor law of 1708 can serve as an example of the changed attitude which began to prevail throughout Scandinavia. This law is often described as paving the way for a genuine poor-relief system in Denmark, because in it, for the first time, the principle of sanctioned begging as the only remedy was abandoned and replaced by an organised welfare system for the poor, regulated and subsidised by the authorities. The state thereby for the first time took an active share of the responsibility for the relief of poverty, even if the law-and-order aspect was



always dominant, and the distinction between the deserving and undeserving poor continued to be made.

It was laid down in the law that the poor in future should apply to a local inspector of the poor, who would decide on behalf of the authorities whether the person in question was worthy of help. If they were, their maintenance would become the responsibility of the local people, either in a poorhouse or in private lodgings. On the other hand, if the decision was that their poverty was self-inflicted, the person would be put to useful labour. In return for these welfare measures, all begging would in future be forbidden.

The means to pay for this new welfare system were to come from voluntary contributions, collected in the poor-boxes in churches, with the addition of a 1 per cent levy on the incomes of all priests and royal officials. These measures which were designed to ward off the worst effects of poverty were supplemented by another, designed to prevent it in the first place: namely, an ordinance regarding improved educational opportunities for the children of the peasantry, which would be achieved by building a number of schools for the common people. This proceeded from an attitude, typical of the period, that better education was an appropriate means by which to avoid poverty.

Of course, the Danish poor law of 1708 failed to get rid of either poverty or begging. Moreover, the measures prescribed were too half-hearted and limited in scope. Yet it was to characterise the era, as the state now for the first time recognised that the problem of poverty was one that concerned society, and demanded the active involvement of the state, and as the law also contained provisions designed to prevent the problem by introducing education and training. Along with corresponding measures taken in the other Scandinavian countries, the poor law thus became one of the stepping-stones on the long road towards the comprehensive social security system which nowadays goes under the heading of 'the Scandinavian welfare model'.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Poverty and poor-relief in early modern Scandinavia are treated with in a European context in T. Riis (ed.), *Aspects of Poverty in Early Modern Europe*, 1–2 (Odense, 1986).



PART III

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THE SCANDINAVIAN POWER STATES



## The internationalisation of the Baltic market

ÅKE SANDSTRÖM

The term ‘internationalisation’ is difficult to use without some consideration of its meaning. As far as human exchange of goods goes, internationalisation can be regarded as a truly original human characteristic. Very few cultures in the past as well as in the present can be described as totally isolated from the rest of the world. This is also true for the Baltic Sea region: although not a well-integrated part of the classical cultures of the Mediterranean, the most northern part of Europe had commercial and other ties to both Greeks and Romans. Implicitly we usually add a quantitative aspect to attribute ‘internationalised’ to a culture or an economy. The regions to become parts of Denmark and Sweden can hardly be described as internationalised in any sensible meaning of the word in the classical age just because Roman glass is found in Scandinavia and amber from the Baltic can be excavated in Italy and Greece. Although there is no shortage of internationalisation theories, there are no generally accepted definitions of what constitutes internationalisation other than the obvious fact that it has to be a process and not a condition. In this chapter some of the main features of the process of how the Baltic market – geographically limited and mainly in contact with other North European regions – was expanded and connected to an international trading community stretching all over the globe will be pointed out.<sup>1</sup> The timeframe will stretch from the late Middle Ages and into the nineteenth century but with an emphasis on the two most crucial centuries in this regard, the sixteenth and seventeenth.

1 The rise and fall of the economic powers in the early modern period is analysed in the classic study of Immanuel Wallerstein: I. M. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system, 1: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1974), and I. M. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system, 2: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-economy, 1600–1750* (New York, 1980). The present chapter can be viewed as a modest attempt to describe the motions made by the Baltic market within the framework described as an emerging economic world-system under Dutch and English leadership.

## The Hanseatic dominion

Up to the sixteenth century the Baltic market was mainly controlled by German merchants. This had been the case ever since the German push to the east along the southern shore of the Baltic Sea began in the twelfth century. The Baltic market, that is to say the goods produced mainly in Russia but also in other areas surrounding the brackish water of the Baltic Sea, must in medieval times be characterised as a North European regional business.

The formation of the Hanseatic League from the thirteenth century confirmed and consolidated the domination of German-speaking tradesmen. Several attempts were made to liberate – or, perhaps more correctly, to take control of – the monopolised trade in the Baltic ports from the league of German trading cities and its merchants. The most violent resistance against the Hanseatic interests in the region was the military campaigns launched by the Danish King Valdemar IV in the mid-fourteenth century. The bold challenge did not pay off and the peace signed in Stralsund in 1370 confirmed and strengthened the position of the Hansa as the major economic power within the Nordic realms.<sup>2</sup>

As the fourteenth century saw a slow but steady decline of the Hanseatic League, it could be assumed that time had come for the union of the Nordic states to replace the Germans as the primary economic force in the Baltic region. This was, however, not the case. The main reason for the unbroken German economic domination was lack of capital but also the difficulties in establishing economic networks of tradesmen to replace the well-functioning trading routes between the Danish, Swedish and German ports without the know-how in a more general sense. Even with a substantial pile of cash, it was not easy to make rational and profitable deals without trustworthy partners stationed in different ports that could provide information on prices, demands, harvest forecasts etc. Like the artisans of the medieval towns and cities, the tradesmen had to rely on their skills and their tools – the latter being not only ready money and credits, but also the network of reliable business associates.<sup>3</sup>

The Hanseatic League as a political and economical institution may have declined towards the end of the Middle Ages but the power of individual

2 P. Dollinger, D. S. Ault and S. H. Steinberg, *The German Hansa* (London, 1970), p. 71.

3 For an interesting view on everyday life of early modern merchants in the Baltic region, see G. Mickwitz, *Aus Revaler Handelsbüchern. Zur Technik des Ostseehandels in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Helsinki, 1938), a study that still deserves to be read.

German merchants and merchant towns in the Baltic region did not, although their position began to be questioned by Dutch and English traders in the fifteenth century. The beginning of the sixteenth century saw in an overall perspective relatively small changes in the composition of the cargoes that were brought on keels across the Baltic, as well as the capital controlling those streams of goods compared to the mid-fourteenth century. Certainly, more and more English and Dutch was heard in the eastern ports of the region, on the fringe of the vast Russian market, but most business deals were still negotiated and closed by German-speaking merchants with their roots in the string of towns along the southern and eastern shores of the Baltic Sea established from the twelfth century and onwards.

### Challenging the German supremacy

It was not an easy task to invite alternatives to the German trading networks, let alone to transfer the trade to domestic Danish and Swedish merchants. The key problems were above all lack of capital, but even with that problem solved, it was hard to participate in any international trade without personal connections to the tradesmen in the foreign ports. The sixteenth-century Swedish King Gustav I (Vasa) tried to solve the problem by raising his royal voice to a level where the international market along with its participators complied out of fear of the monarch. In 1559 the Swedish king tried to take control of the trade in the Finnish town of Viipuri (Viborg), where Germans closed deals with goods from Russia after the old Hanseatic pattern. When the king realised that the poor domestic burghers failed to replace the foreign capital, the king let his bad temper erupt on the unhappy governor of the royal castle in the town:

we cannot see that the trade is of any advantage or for the wellbeing of us Swedes, except for the manure left behind [by the foreign merchants], which the Swedes can use to fertilise their fields.<sup>4</sup>

Although the exclamation of the Swedish monarch can be considered as a vivid exaggeration induced by a much-repeated frustration in the field of foreign trade, his conclusion was not altogether wrong: the domestic burghers had actually often to rely on what could be produced on their

4 I. Gustav and J. A. Almquist (eds.), *Konung Gustaf den förstes registratur*, 29: 1559, 1560 (Stockholm, 1916), p. 261.

fields surrounding their towns. Merchants belonging to a totally different economic and cultural reality ran the foreign trade.<sup>5</sup>

Controlling trade of course not only meant trying to steer the flow of goods into the hands of merchants of the monarch's choosing, but also trying to direct trade to ports controlled by customs officials and other civil servants out of the monarch's own administration. The financial pressure on trade that this implies was steadily growing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in particular the Swedes sought to increase their revenues at the expense of the foreign merchants. It is important to realise that a fully loaded merchant vessel represented an almost astronomic value to the cash-starved early modern rulers. The temptation to reserve as much as possible of it for their royal or personal treasury became occasionally too hard to resist and sometimes overshadowed the threat of scaring the foreign merchants away. When the Swedish King Karl IX received complaints for having doubled the customs duties in the Swedish capital on foreign trade, he snapped angrily and rejected the complaints, declaring that all the burghers had to do was to raise the prices accordingly, leaving the increased cost on their customers and not on themselves.<sup>6</sup> This fiscal eagerness created difficulties regarding the ability to concentrate international trade at a port under the control of an ambitious regent: the reason for trying to lead trade routes to certain ports was the presence of customs officials. One famous Swedish statesman, Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, put it very bluntly: 'When the Crown has no use of it, then it does not matter where the commerce is.'<sup>7</sup> This view of foreign trade as a milk cow, together with the limiting factors of shortage of funds and lack of know-how, made the efforts to gain control over the Baltic market a mighty challenge and, in short, neither Swedish nor Danish monarchs ever managed to do so completely.

The challenge to the German interests in trade in the Baltic was instead carried out by the Dutch and the English, and with them the Baltic market was connected to an international commercial web stretching far beyond such places as Stralsund, Lübeck and Cologne.

5 Å. Sandström, 'Ploughing Burghers and Trading Peasants: The Meeting between the European Urban Economy and Sweden in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in F.-E. Eliassen *et al.* (eds.), *Regional Integration in Early Modern Scandinavia* (Odense, 2001).

6 F. Sleman and F. Lindberg (eds.), *Privilegier, resolutioner och förordningar för Sveriges städer*, D. 4 (1592–1611), No. 163, 4 July 1603 (Stockholm, 1946).

7 A. Oxenstierna, *Rikskansleren Axel Oxenstiernas skrifter och brefvexling*, 1:15, Brev No. 249, 10 May 1636 (Stockholm, 1956).



## The Dutch entry

The Dutch were by no means strangers to the Baltic during the late Middle Ages. In the century between 1350 and 1450 a fundamental change took place in the economic structure of the Netherlands. During this period the Dutch gradually ceased to be self-sufficient in grain and grew more and more dependent on import. The grain-producing hinterlands of the Baltic coastal towns were just one of several sources to cover the Dutch demand for grain, others being more closely situated areas in northern France and western Germany. From the 1470s the importance of Baltic grain for the Dutch started to rise, and from the 1520s the increase was very sharp.<sup>8</sup> Although the grain trade formed the backbone of the Dutch economic interest in the Baltic, the business operations diversified during the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As shipbuilding material became more important with the growth of trade links across the world, the Baltic became the main provider of articles such as hemp, flax, tar, pitch and masts. From Sweden the lion's share of its dominant production of copper was sold through business houses in Amsterdam and the metal was often used as security for loans taken by the cash-starved Swedish government.<sup>9</sup> The Danes also came to rely on the financial strength of Amsterdam, especially from the 1620s when Denmark commenced an adventurous and expensive foreign policy with costly wars against the Holy Roman Empire and Sweden.<sup>10</sup>

It is, however, wrong to conclude that the German merchants with their roots in the old Hanseatic organisation were forced out from the Baltic as the Dutch merchants became more numerous. It is more correct to view the Dutch trade in the early modern period as a new layer of networks over a still-existing older pattern of trade. This becomes clear if the sources from the customs in Stockholm are studied from the first half of the seventeenth century. During this period trade in the capital increased several times in volume and it did so as the new trade with the Atlantic ports was added to the old Hanseatic-style trade. Fewer – but wealthier – merchants than those still dealing with the old ran this new trade. (See Table 10.1.)

8 M. van Tielhof, *The 'Mother of All Trades': The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 90f.

9 B. Odén, *Kopparhandel och statsmonopol. Studier i svensk handelshistoria under senare 1500-talet* (Stockholm, 1960).

10 C. van Bochove, *Close Encounters with the Dutch: Economic Consequences of the Dutch: Economic Integration around the North-Sea, 1500–1800* (Amsterdam 2008), pp. 103f.

Table 10.1 *The import (value) of Stockholm merchants in the 1640s according to the Stockholm customs (sums based on a selection of merchants)*

	Goods from the North Sea and the Atlantic	Goods from the Baltic Sea
High-volume merchants	80%	20%
Low- and medium-volume merchants	4%	96%
All merchants in the study	73%	27%

Source: Å. Sandström, *Plöjande borgare och handlande bönder: mötet mellan den europeiska urbana ekonomin och vasatidens Sverige*, Stads- och kommunhistoriska institutet (Stockholm, 1996), p. 185.

The table should be understood as an indication of the development that took place in Sweden and its capital, which normally handled around 75 per cent of the national trade. The old trade within the Baltic region still existed and was taken care of by small-scale merchants. This trade was conducted generally following the same patterns as during the late Middle Ages. The volume of this trade had increased but, relative to the rapidly growing trade with the Atlantic ports, it reflected a steadily decreasing market share.

It has been claimed that Sweden avoided most of the seventeenth-century economic crisis as a result of the close connection to the expansive market controlled by Amsterdam.<sup>11</sup> That may certainly be true as far as the statistics on the Swedish economy in general are concerned, but it does not mean that this was an easy and happy century for the Swedes in general. The resources added to the Swedish economy as a result of its close relationship to the expansive Dutch economy were soon fully consumed by an aggressive foreign policy scarcely designed to suit a population of 1.5 million farmers and fishermen on the northern periphery of Europe. Crisis or not, Sweden as well as the other countries and regions in the Baltic Sea area had risen – to use the words of Immanuel Wallerstein – from the periphery towards the new economic core that was under development in the Atlantic ports of North-western Europe. The ties to the old medieval-style regional trade were still present, but increasingly overshadowed by the global economy under Dutch supremacy.

<sup>11</sup> J. de Vries, *The Economy of Europe in an Age of Crisis* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 21.

## The English take charge

The Dutch merchants, with their fast and easy to handle *fluitschiffs*, did not only attract the admiration of their neighbours, but also their envy and hostility. The mercantilist view on trade and economic resources assumed that these were limited and that the expansion of the economy in one country had to be done at the expense of its neighbours. The English had, like the Dutch, aspirations in the Baltic market that dated back to the late Middle Ages. The heavy Hanseatic presence in the region made it hard for the English merchants to establish themselves as traders of significant importance and the competition with the German merchants escalated to more serious clashes of interest towards the end of the Middle Ages, a development which led to war in the 1470s. The English managed to establish direct connections through a northern route, around the northern shores of the Scandinavian Peninsula to the mouth of the Northern Dvina river in the White Sea in the 1550s. Although the long and difficult route to the rich Russian market meant that Swedish customs and German middlemen could be avoided, it never became a success for anyone, especially not for the English who, in the seventeenth century, had to watch the efficient Dutch as they took control of the Archangelsk trade as well as the more traditional routes to the east.<sup>12</sup>

The English had to wait for the long-term results of the (for the Dutch) devastating Anglo-Dutch wars of the second half of the seventeenth century in order to finally reach a position of economic dominance in the Baltic. In the eighteenth century exports from the Baltic region continued to grow, but at the same time the Dutch share of the trade decreased significantly.<sup>13</sup> As industrialisation in Great Britain gained momentum, the demand for raw material from the Baltic region increased. As a result British ships became much more frequent visitors in Russian, Danish, Swedish and other ports in the region, while the Dutch share of these activities declined.

## The impact of the international market on everyday consumption

For the societies and economies in the Baltic Sea area, the shift from Hanseatic to Dutch hegemony was a process that affected the people of

12 J. T. Kotilainen, *Russia's Foreign Trade and Economic Expansion in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 236–8. See also T. S. Willan, *The Early History of the Russia Company, 1553–1603* (Manchester, 1956), *passim*.

13 D. Kirby, *Östersjöländernas historia. 1492–1772* (Stockholm, 1994), p. 390.

the region more profoundly as far as internationalisation is concerned than the dominance of the English in the market. The difference between being connected to the Dutch network of trade instead of the German can be described in quantitative as well as qualitative terms. The Dutch represented a capital much larger than the combined German trading houses. From a qualitative point of view, the Amsterdam-controlled capital market made the old Hanseatic trading techniques, at least partly, obsolete: you did not have to be personally acquainted to your partner of trade, because a functioning impersonal capital market had started to develop from the beginning of the seventeenth century with the opening of the Amsterdam Bank and *Beurs* (Stock Exchange). Perhaps a more distinct proof of this internationalisation can be provided by a brief glance in the customs books from the beginning and end of the seventeenth century, i.e. from before and after the process of internationalisation under Dutch control. In the port of Stockholm, the trade in the first decade of the 1600s still followed the medieval paths. The north German ports of Lübeck and Danzig (Gdansk) in Prussia brought in more than 50 per cent of the value of imported goods to the Swedish capital, while only between 16–20 per cent was brought in on Dutch keels. In the 1640s the Dutch dominated the port of Stockholm and carried more than half of the imported goods to it.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the cargoes brought to Stockholm gave by their composition evidence of the process of internationalisation. At the beginning of the century the cargoes that entered the port consisted of roughly the same goods as had been the case in the time of the Black Death: salt, wine, beer and cloth representing the lion's share. Looking into the cargo space of a Dutch *fluitschiff* in the second half of the seventeenth century gave a totally different impression: lemons and oranges, cheap jewellery, mirrors, hats and dresses for all levels of society, wallpaper, children's toys, different sorts of candies, oysters and pastries. Another kind of good that was regarded as a curiosity two generations earlier was different brands of liquor.<sup>15</sup> The passing of the market from Dutch to English hands simply meant a continuation on the road to a modern diversified economy: the

14 Å. Sandström, *Mellan Torneå och Amsterdam. En undersökning av Stockholms roll som förmedlare av varor i regional- och utrikeshandel 1600–1650* (Stockholm, 1990), pp. 325f.

15 The examples from the latter half of the century are given from B. Boëthius and E. F. Heckscher (eds.), *Svensk handelsstatistik 1637–1737. Samtida bearbetningar, Swedish Statistics of Foreign Trade 1637–1737, Contemporary Accounts* (Stockholm 1938). Similar printed examples from the customs are to my knowledge not available for the early parts of the century. The composition of imported goods is however fairly accessible in the National Archive of Sweden, Stockholm, in the series of Local Records of the Customs, *Lokala tullräkenskaper, Längder och räkenskaper efter stora sjötullen 1533–1774*.

English continued and refined what the Dutch had started in this fashion and the economies of the Baltic region were firmly connected to a web of trade that not only included European ports such as Tallinn (Reval), Stralsund, Bremen and Köln, but also Cabo Corso and Christiansborg in West Africa, Goa and Calicut in India, Boston and Philadelphia in North America and Macao and Nagasaki in the Far East. The development was impressive and fast. Older people in the towns of the region must have been able to tell their grandchildren remarkable stories of a society with few resemblances to the contemporary one, just like so many were able to during the later era of industrialisation.

### Scandinavian attempts to establish company trade

Just as the Danish King Valdemar IV and Sweden's Gustav I had tried to cut a piece for themselves and their countries from the trade controlled by German merchants, the temptation to participate in the colonial trade that developed in the seventeenth century was too hard to resist and several such business operations were launched in the form of privileged trading companies. It would perhaps be too harsh and simplistic to say that they all failed, but it is not too much to say that no one managed to live up to the expectations laid upon them. The model for the Danish and Swedish enterprises was the mighty Dutch VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*) chartered in 1602 with an enormous capital and with far-reaching privileges. The Danish attempt to copy the Dutch (and also the slightly older but, at this early stage, not so powerful English East India Company) resulted in a charter for the company in 1616. The Scandinavian companies often hired Dutch entrepreneurs for the organisation and leadership of the enterprises, and this was also the case with the Danish *Ostindisk Kompagni*, the initiative being taken by two immigrant Dutch merchants.<sup>16</sup> A comparison of the paragraphs of the charters establishing the Danish company and the VOC shows how closely the founders looked upon the Dutch company as a prototype. A component impossible to reproduce was however the impressive capital brought into the VOC by its shareholders.<sup>17</sup>

Sweden tried in a similar fashion to take a more active part in the evolving and growing international market and to skip the middlemen.

<sup>16</sup> R. Willerslev, 'Danmarks første aktieselskab', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 10:6 (1942), p. 608.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 614, 618.

Several companies were launched after the same pattern as described in the Danish example – and with the same depressing results. The most spectacular attempt was perhaps when the Swedes in the 1630s tried to join the exclusive fellowship of colonial states by gaining a foothold in North America. Once again Dutch expertise was hired, this time a former employee of the VOC, Peter Minuit, the very same person who bought Manhattan from a local Indian tribe for 60 guilders in 1626. Minuit organised the colonial enterprise with great enthusiasm, copying the *modus operandi* from the earlier expedition that settled the Dutch in the area of today's New York. In the estuary of the Delaware River a fortress was built in 1638 named after the young Swedish Queen Kristina. The Swedish crown and the shareholders of the 'New Sweden Company' – created out of two earlier and none too successful companies – had high hopes of somehow connecting the Swedish trade in copper to a commercial centre in North America. The problems that worked against the mission were not only a severe shortage of capital, but also tropical storms (that actually killed Minuit on his way back to Sweden in 1638) and the fact that both the Dutch and the English showed little enthusiasm for a Swedish presence in the region. In 1655 New Sweden ceased to exist after an attack carried out by the Dutch in the Delaware River.<sup>18</sup>

It can perhaps be claimed that Scandinavian hopes of joining the internationalisation without any middlemen failed because it was and is often necessary to have money to earn money. The modern international economy that thrived under Dutch leadership did not make it as necessary to have personal connection to the market as in earlier days – but you had to have a capital to work with, or at least to buy the shares that formed the companies and made them able to participate in a business that sometimes could stretch over several years from the purchase of a first cargo and the sale of the last one in a series of voyages on the oceans. The shortage of capital in the Danish and Swedish trading companies of the seventeenth century made them financial failures. Their successors in the eighteenth century managed to perform better, although far from generating the kind of profit as the old model of VOC.

18 For the establishment of New Sweden, see G. Fur, *Colonialism in the Margins: Cultural Encounters in New Sweden and Lapland* (Leiden, 2006), chs. 3 and 4. On Peter Minuit, see Å. Sandström, 'Peter Minuit', in B. Boëthius, B. Hildebrand and G. Nilzén (eds.), *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, 25 (Stockholm, 1985–7).

## Internationalisation by imported burghers

To import burghers to existing or newly founded towns was a method used by the Swedish crown in the 1600s. This radical way of trying to connect to the international market can perhaps be described as a return to the medieval practice when the burghers of several Swedish towns were Germans. The main difference from those earlier days was that the German burghers then, to all intents and purposes, did not have to worry too much about Swedish taxes and custom fees since much of the terms of trade could be dictated by their organisations. The imported burgher of the seventeenth century – after some years of establishment when taxes were reduced – had to meet expenses payable to local and central government like his Swedish colleagues. The most notable example of this method is today's second-largest Swedish town, Göteborg. The town was originally founded in the first decade of the seventeenth century but burnt to the ground by the Danes in 1611, in one of the frequent wars between the two Scandinavian states. In 1621, under the reign of Gustav Adolf, a new attempt was made to create a town where the river *Göta älv* connects to the sea in the west of Sweden. On both occasions the Swedish crown recruited burghers from Dutch cities, the purpose being of course to create a trading metropolis with inhabitants wealthy enough to participate in international trade. A delegation on a recruiting mission in Amsterdam triumphantly reported back to Stockholm that they had succeeded in enlisting 200 households, of which 'some were very well-off merchants'.<sup>19</sup> Those early pioneers of what was to be the second biggest town of Sweden did not have the opportunity to establish themselves because of the war. During the second attempt Dutch families did arrive and settled in the town. The new citizens had contacts with the Swedish crown. The reason for the Dutch to move to a Swedish town not yet in existence was of course of a financial nature: the Swedish crown had to tempt the foreigners with offers favourable enough to make them undertake the probably otherwise not so enticing journey to an unfamiliar and sparsely populated country in the north. The negotiations were not only of a financial nature: the cultural aspects of the sometimes difficult process of internationalisation can also be traced. The densely populated and urban Netherlands was probably a generation or two ahead of Sweden when it came to areas connected to urban life, such as consumerism and leisure. The Swedes'

19 Sleman and Lindberg (eds.), *Privilegier, resolutioner och förordningar för Sveriges städer*, 4, p. 235; the privileges of Göteborg 1607 and commentaries, p. 449.

notion of spare-time activities and more elaborate consumer patterns of the first half of the seventeenth century can at best be described as frugal if not non-existent. Most Swedes of course lived in the countryside, but many town-dwellers had much in common with the farmers and fishermen in the rural areas, relying on traditional agrarian productions for their subsistence.<sup>20</sup> Urban facilities and way of life with theatres, coffee houses and imported luxury items that in the seventeenth century started to spread in Continental Europe and in England did not yet belong in Swedish everyday life, not even among the nobility or the more affluent burghers of the larger towns.<sup>21</sup> This made cultural clashes inevitable during the negotiations between the Swedish crown and the Dutch on the terms of the new town of Göteborg. When the burghers asked permission to have access to a forest close to the town as a recreation area, it raised the suspicion of the Swedish government. The privilege to use the forest in summertime for this purpose with their wives and children was granted but with the expressed limitations that they were not allowed to fell trees, to hunt or to do any other mischief.<sup>22</sup> This proviso gives the impression that the crown had difficulty believing that the purpose of the demand was just a wish to relax and enjoy nature. Another two or three generations had to pass in Sweden before the notion of leisure time and recreation was established and not looked upon with heads shaken in disbelief.

However, contrary to other ambitious projects of internationalisation, the foundation of Göteborg with its imported burghers must be described as a success. The town did in a short period of time – already in the seventeenth century – establish itself as the main port of western Sweden and the second most important town in the country, a position still held today. The ethnic composition of the burghers did also reflect the international shift of economic power of the Baltic region. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Göteborg burghers with Dutch ancestors were joined by more and more English and Scottish colleagues.

### A gateway to the east: St Petersburg

When the concept of internationalisation is being discussed for the Baltic region in early modern times, it is tacitly understood that the source of this

20 Sandström, 'Ploughing Burghers and Trading Peasants'.

21 For an overview of the changing consumer patterns of the period in Europe, see de Vries, *The Economy of Europe in an Age of Crisis*, ch. 6.

22 Sleman and Lindberg (eds.), *Privilegier, resolutioner och förordningar för Sveriges städer*, 6, privilege no. 91, p. 228, para. 2.



process is situated in the west, like a beacon of modern civilisation. The main objective of the forces involved in this process was however not to spread the blessings of Western cultural and technical achievements, but to gain control over the strategic resources of the region and add them to the international network of trade. This relationship between the producers and the distributors is not altogether unlike the relation between colonisers and colonised in more recent periods of time. This is perhaps especially true when it comes to the struggle for control of the production of Russian goods. The vast Russian areas of production were a main goal of traders from the West since the Middle Ages. The goods filling the cargo bays varied but the efforts of Germans, Swedes, Danes, Dutch and English were the same: to keep the Russians (and other nationalities as well) out of the ports where the goods were being shipped out and to sell the cargoes with good profit. Of course, the Russians did not regard this behaviour with great satisfaction. On the contrary, they tried hard through the centuries to break away from the dominance of foreign nations and to reach the coast of the Baltic in order to establish a connection of their own to the international market. This was not accomplished permanently until the very first years of the eighteenth century, but then it was done with a vengeance in the shape of the new Russian capital St Petersburg.

The Gulf of Finland had been a bone of contention since the thirteenth century between Danes, Swedes, Russians and Germans. After 1617 Sweden stood more or less alone controlling the shores of both sides of the Gulf. This did not necessarily mean full control of outlets of the production areas of the hinterlands, but it meant at least that no one else, Russia included, had access to the old ports of Viipuri (Viborg), Narva and Tallin (Reval). This was to change radically in the first years of the Great Northern War (1700–20/21), when Sweden was dismantled as a Great Power in a joint venture by the Danes, Poles, Prussians and Russians, where the latter pulled the heaviest load. Even though the war pressed on for two decades, the inner parts of the Gulf of Finland had already fallen into Russian hands in the very first years of the conflict. Although the Swedes had barely left the area and the final peace was almost twenty years distant, the Russian Tsar Peter I (the Great) took the decision to erect the new Russian capital in the swampy estuary of the Neva River. In this act lay centuries of Russian hopes and efforts to reach the coast of the Baltic and by doing so avoid the foreign control of trade with Russian goods.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Several studies are made of Tsar Peter and the foundation of St Petersburg. See e.g. R. K. Massie, *Peter the Great: His Life and World* (New York, 1981).

The creation of the new commercial and cultural centre in the Baltic region was a great success. Some of the features in the founding process can be recognised from the early years of Göteborg – although this comparison should not be taken too far – the Swedish seaport being much smaller. Tsar Peter had high hopes for St Petersburg as an ‘Amsterdam of the North’.<sup>24</sup> This came to mean that the city, built in the unsound surroundings of bogs and swamps, was created as an international melting pot from the very beginning. From the end of the eighteenth century, the new Russian capital appeared (at least to the neighbouring Swedish citizens of Finland) not as a representative of the barbaric East, but as a gateway to a more refined and greater world. St Petersburg was not only an important port of trade, but also a significant cultural centre. In the streets and in the many churches that served parishes of different ethnic extraction, languages from all over Europe could be heard. For the Finns, separated by force from Sweden by the Russians in 1809, St Petersburg during the course of the nineteenth century offered possibilities of careers in a vast empire that made the old mother country of Sweden look very provincial.

### Internationalisation by war

The process of internationalisation was not only carried out by more or less peaceful merchants. An important part of this process, as old as trade, is armed conflicts. It should not be overlooked that wars of different extents raged throughout the region during the greater part of the early modern period and shaped its history, its borders and the subjects of the different countries and cities. A large part of the area, at least the coastal area from Lübeck into the Gulf of Finland, was actually militarily subjugated from the Middle Ages and onwards. Denmark, as well as Sweden, had at different periods of time claimed important roles in European history, Sweden even the status of a European Great Power in the seventeenth century. The many wars fought between the two Scandinavian states – and against others – made them by necessity open up to the rest of Europe in a way they otherwise perhaps would not have done. The most important obvious sources of this kind of internationalisation were imported arms technology, credits and enrolled foreign mercenaries. Another sign of this kind

<sup>24</sup> See M. Engman, *Lejonet och dubbelörmen. Finlands imperiella decennier 1830–1890* (Stockholm, 2000), the chapter entitled ‘St Petersburg – Finlands näst största stad’.

of internationalisation, still visible today, is the many war trophies from Continental Europe in Swedish museums.

However, perhaps the most important process of internationalisation was the active intervention in Scandinavian politics of the first-rank Great Powers of Europe – to which Sweden never belonged – i.e. England, France and the Netherlands. Denmark and Sweden were allowed to act within limitations. It was not in the interest of the European Great Powers to let any of the Scandinavian states grow too mighty. The Danes as collectors of customs in the Sound were acceptable (though certainly not liked) as long as the Swedes held the other shore. The inlets to the Baltic in the sole hands of either Danes or Swedes was not acceptable. When Sweden in 1658 under King Karl X went to war against Denmark with the aim of ending once and for all its existence as an independent state, the attempt was put to an end by a joint venture of European states that did not care much for the prospect of Sweden in control of many of the important export ports and the inlets to the Baltic. The Danes themselves had learned the hard way a generation earlier the cost of interfering in international politics when in 1626 the Danish King Christian IV took the unwise decision to try to stop the German imperial offensive against the Protestants. It ended with the greater part of the country, Jylland, under occupation by the forces of the Catholic General Albrecht von Wallenstein.

It can be claimed that both Scandinavian countries belonged to a kind of economic and cultural periphery – or at least semi-periphery according to Wallerstein – but that did not mean that they were cut off from international politics in Europe during the early modern period. Decisions taken in Stockholm and København were being supervised by the Great Powers of Europe because too much of economic and political importance was at stake in this region crucial for the fast-growing world economy. It is perhaps a similar pattern one witnesses today when politics in the Middle East is monitored, analysed and reacted to in Western capitals.

### Back to the periphery: the Baltic market in the nineteenth century

The position held by the Baltic region as one of the most economically important areas in the world – if not the most – during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was gradually lost during the eighteenth century and finally gone in the following century. There were several factors behind this development, one being that the strategic goods produced in the area had to compete against those from other regions and continents, the most

important being North America. The main reason for the decline of the Baltic region as a part of the global system of trade was however the relocation of the exporting ports of western Russia and territories controlled by Russia, e.g. Poland.

As mentioned earlier, Russia fought to break away from Western interests controlling its Baltic rim from the Middle Ages and onwards. This wish and politics has been described as the striving for ‘warm water and black earth’. For one living close to the water of the Baltic it is hard to believe that the warm water actually refers to that sea, but that is the case and ‘warm’ was used in a very relative way, synonymous to ‘free of ice’ in contrast to the ports in the long stretches of Russian Arctic Ocean. The ‘warm’ water of the Baltic was reached permanently in 1703 with the foundation of St Petersburg. The black earth, by which was meant the rich soils of Ukraine, was conquered by the Russians from the weakened Ottoman Empire during the second half of the century under Catherine II (the Great). The conquests meant not only a shift of geographical centre of balance in the Russian empire, but also a shift in trade routes. In 1802 about 70 per cent of Russian foreign trade still passed through the ports of the Baltic. In 1890 this share was reduced to 35 per cent.<sup>25</sup> The Baltic region was now far removed from the Dutch description as ‘The Mother of Commerce’. The shift of gravity within the Russian Empire was the main reason for this, but another factor was the loss of the monopoly-like position of several strategic products. The straight-growing forests outside Riga were no longer indispensable for the shipbuilding industries of Western Europe, the roofs of prestigious buildings did not have to be covered with copper from Sweden and the urban population of the continent did not have to go to bed hungry when the grain flotillas from Danzig failed to arrive. The Baltic region without doubt lost much of its former international position during the nineteenth century. As a part of the international market, the region fell back to a position similar to that of the time before the era of the Vikings a millennium earlier. From a strict economic point of view this could perhaps be looked upon with regret. History shows however that it is a mixed blessing to have the attention of ambitious Great Powers, especially when they come to different conclusions on how borders should be drawn and inter-state politics should be formed.

<sup>25</sup> On the new direction of Russian exports and Russians southern expansion, see A. Attman, *Ryssland och Europa. En handelshistorisk översikt*, 2nd edn (Göteborg, 1973), pp. 46–52.

## II

# The Dutch and the English in the Baltic, the North Sea and the Arctic

OLE PETER GRELL

Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Dutch and English merchants vied with their Hanseatic colleagues for dominance over the bulk trade in the Baltic and North Sea. Scandinavian merchants played only a minor role in this commerce for both financial and geographical reasons.

Trade with the Baltic, however, proved particularly important for the Dutch and especially the population of the northern Netherlands. The 'price revolution' of the sixteenth century created a considerable gap in grain prices in particular between the Baltic and Western Europe, making it worthwhile for merchants to sustain all the expense involved in bulk trade over long distances. Cheap and ample provisions of grain from the Baltic kept prices low and stable in the northern Netherlands and explains why subsistence crises were rare in the Dutch Republic. Furthermore, the Baltic bulk trade became a major source of employment for seamen from Holland and Friesland in particular, not to mention workers concerned with the internal transport of these goods. The Baltic bulk trade proved especially profitable from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and in the seventeenth century it was even more lucrative than the Dutch East India trade. The scholarly debate over the economic significance of the so-called rich trades (capital intensive and highly processed goods) vis-à-vis the Baltic bulk trade as the basis for the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic has only served to confirm the importance of the latter. Thus most historians still consider the Baltic trade in bulk commodities among which grain was a prominent component to have been the mainspring of Dutch world trade hegemony in the seventeenth century, and contemporary observers of the United Provinces labelled it 'the mother of all trades' for exactly those reasons.<sup>1</sup>

1 M. van Tielhof, *The 'Mother of all Trades': The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century* (Leiden, 2002), pp. 1–3.

That the Dutch came out victoriously from this competition with the English and Hanseatic merchants can to a considerable extent be explained by their fortunate geographical location.<sup>2</sup> By the late fifteenth century the Baltic bulk trade had become interwoven with trade in bulk products from other areas of Europe. This placed the Dutch merchants in a particularly strong geographical position, situated, as they were, halfway between most markets. This was further facilitated by the emergence of large fleets of fully rigged vessels by the end of the fifteenth century which made it possible to fetch cheap and abundant marine salt of excellent quality from the coasts of western France, Portugal and Spain for export to the Baltic. Similarly the Dutch were able to ship large quantities of French wine to the province of Zeeland, in particular Middelburg, where it was stored for later resale in the Baltic and in Scandinavia. French wine intended for sale in the Baltic needed a convenient geographical *entrepôt*. It was ready too late in the year to be shipped directly to the ice-prone waters of the Baltic and the North Sea, but had to wait until the following spring. Furthermore, low interest rates in the Netherlands permitted Dutch merchants to buy up French wines at a discount and store them before reshipping them north the following year.

Climatically the Dutch also held an advantage over their competitors. Dutch ports became ice-free earlier in the year than the Hanseatic ports in particular. Thus Dutch ships were able to travel to South-west Europe and load up with salt before setting out for the Baltic weeks before their competitors could go to sea. On delivering the salt Dutch ships reloaded with Baltic grain and timber before undertaking the westward journey back. By the 1590s a third of Dutch ships entering the Baltic carried salt. It was a bulky commodity of low value but of course much better than sailing in ballast (without cargo) which had been customary until then. Furthermore, the salt trade provided the Dutch with a highly important processing industry which established itself in Zeeland, especially around the towns of Zerierikzee and Goes.

The English and Hanseatic merchants dealt in a variety of costly wares such as cloth apart from bulky goods like grain, timber, tar, hemp flax, and copper favoured by the Dutch.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly they were not inclined to develop ships

2 See T. P. van der Kooy, 'Holland als centrale stapelmarkt in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw', in P. W. Klein (ed.), *Van Stapelmarkt tot welvaartsstaat* (Rotterdam 1970), pp. 9–20.

3 For the English focus on the cloth trade, see J. K. Fedorowicz, *England's Baltic Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1980). See also T. S. Willan, *The Early History of the Russian Company, 1553–1603* (Manchester, 1956); H. Zins, *England and the Baltic in the Elizabethan Era* (Manchester, 1972).

exclusively dedicated to carrying bulk goods cheaply. Furthermore English ships often served dual purposes travelling to the North Sea and the Baltic as well as being used for voyages to the Mediterranean. They were therefore strongly constructed, well armed and well manned in order to deal with the variety of circumstances they might encounter.

Dutch shipbuilders and merchants, on the other hand, focused on low-cost vessels with large hulls for maximum cargos while simultaneously dropping armaments and simplifying rigging. All these measures served to reduce the size of the crews needed resulting in lower costs and maximum economy. For transport of bulky goods their design proved superior to that of their competitors. The long-distance carrier which came into being in the 1590s developed out of the older flyboat through a succession of gradual improvements and modifications. The *fluyt*, as it became known, proved a revolutionary blueprint with a hull design superior to any other vessel. Its low centre of gravity offered improved ability to ride out bad weather while its handling qualities reduced the size of the crew needed by around 30 per cent. This again led to lower operating costs resulting in lower freight rates making Dutch shipping and bulk trade in the North Sea and Baltic even more competitive. Between 1562 and 1657 over 60 per cent of the ships passing through the Sound to the Baltic sailed under the Dutch flag. They brought in 75 per cent of all herring imported, 61 per cent of salt, but only 35 per cent of all cloth imported. They carried out of the Baltic 78 per cent of all wheat exported and 77 per cent of all rye, the latter amounting to seven times more than the former.<sup>4</sup>

The Dutch took an early lead in shipbuilding being able to obtain and transport timber from Norway and the Baltic more cheaply than their English rivals. They established what can be described as the first modern shipbuilding industry, processing the imported timber far more efficiently and economically than their competitors. They used standardised techniques wherever possible and a high degree of mechanisation such as wind-powered sawmills, cranes, blocks and tackles.

The shortage of wealthy merchants in the Dutch Republic before 1590, as opposed to the commercial centres of Antwerp, Lübeck and Hamburg, who could afford to finance shipbuilding, facilitated a much broader ownership in Holland, Zeeland and Friesland. Here it became customary to divide ships up into many shares – not only three or four shares, but up to sixty-four.

4 Figures from R. Bonney, *The European Dynastic States 1494–1660* (Oxford, 1991), p. 448.

This way of financing ships while spreading ownership also served to spread the risk. Its success can be seen from the fact that already by 1560 Holland alone possessed a fleet of 1,800 sea-going ships of which 500 were based in Amsterdam. Apart from salt and wine the only other major commodity the Dutch exported to the Baltic and Scandinavia before 1590 was herring.

### The North Sea and herring

The herring fishery – known in the Netherlands as the ‘great fishery’ – specifically referred to the catching of herring on the open sea as opposed to coastal fishing. The opportunity to develop this fishery had opened up for the Dutch in the late fifteenth century when the large herring schools off the coast of Skåne had dramatically declined and with it the fishery which had been controlled by Danish and Norwegian fishermen and Hanseatic merchants. Large herring schools were now to be found in the North Sea around the Dogger Bank in particular. However, this was a totally different type of fishing from the coastal fishing which had hitherto dominated. It meant weeks spent at sea in order to reach distant fishing grounds in the North Sea and then even more time spent fishing. This raised the problem of how to preserve the catch. The development of a method to preserve the herring, by immediately gutting and salting the fish while still at sea, proved the solution. Under these circumstances a different and much larger fishing vessel was needed which could carry large stocks of salt. The result was the creation of the so-called herring buss, a large, factory-type ship which could both catch and process the fish while staying at sea for five to eight weeks, manned by a crew of eighteen to thirty men by the middle of the sixteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Like the Dutch *fluyts* these herring busses were financed on a shareholder basis often divided into sixty-four shares thereby splitting both cost and risk.

Already by the mid-fifteenth century the three Netherlandic provinces of Holland, Zeeland and Flanders were dominating the North Sea herring fishery. The Hanseatic merchants who had controlled the trade in herring and the Danes, Norwegians and Scots who had played a considerable part in it proved unable to compete lacking the means such as easy access to high-quality salt, the investment potential, not to mention the manpower. By 1560 the northern Dutch provinces which came to constitute the Dutch

<sup>5</sup> See J. de Vries and A. van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 243–51.



Republic mustered more than 500 herring busses, manned by 7,000 men, divided into three fleets, one based at Enkhuizen in Holland, another in the Maas estuary and the third in Zeeland.<sup>6</sup>

After 1650 the Dutch herring fishery declined and the herring fleet contracted, especially during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. By then the Scandinavian fishery had begun to recover, which affected fish prices making the herring trade less profitable for the Dutch. Post 1700 massive supplies of Scottish herring further undermined the Dutch share of the Baltic herring trade. Where the Dutch had supplied between 80–90 per cent of the herring passing through the Sound from 1600 to 1650, their share of the market declined to 30 per cent in the period 1710–40, falling to around 10–15 per cent twenty years later.<sup>7</sup>

### The Arctic and whaling

The English had been the first to take an interest in the Arctic trade through the London-based Muscovy Company which had been using the White Sea route to Archangel from as early as 1553 and increasingly after 1584 when Russia created the new port in Archangel as a depot for Western trade. Russia had been forced to make this move by the Swedish occupation of Narva in 1581, which had closed this major outlet for Russian trade through the Baltic. English trade eventually reached its peak in the Arctic around 1590 with the Muscovy Company despatching fourteen or fifteen large merchant ships annually to Archangel.

The Muscovy Company had a virtual monopoly on the trade in cloth, spices, copper and other valuable commodities until the early 1590s. However, by then the Dutch had begun to take an interest in the so-called 'rich trades' in Archangel and within a decade they were able to replace the English as the leading Western trading nation in the Arctic. This was facilitated by England's basic weakness at this time as a depot for the rich trades and the strength by the 1590s of the Dutch *entrepôt* linking Southern and Northern Europe. English trade with the Arctic, as all English overseas trade during this period, centred round the export of cloth, but Russia needed not only cloth but an array of expensive commodities, such as silks,

6 J. I. Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade 1585–1740* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 23f.

7 de Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, p. 252. See also B. Poulsen, *Dutch Herring: An Environmental History, c. 1600–1860* (Amsterdam, 2008).

spices, Mediterranean fruit, sugar, paper and small quantities of bulky goods, such as wine, salt and herring.

Dutch success in the Arctic was in other words not founded on their well-established dominance of the bulk trades, but rather on their newly acquired strength in the rich trades. This had been assisted by recent developments which had seen large numbers of wealthy immigrant merchants settle in the Dutch Republic in general and Amsterdam in particular bringing with them large amounts of capital not to mention the mercantile expertise needed for the rich trades. Most of the Dutch ships heading for Archangel did go straight there, but some vessels especially in the first couple of decades paid visits to the Lapland coast where they acquired salmon, hides and whale oil,<sup>8</sup> the latter quickly proving important as the basis for many soap products and as a lighting fuel.

As in so much else in the Arctic it was the English who began hunting whales. The English Muscovy Company began whaling in the 1590s in the water around Nova Zembla and the Beren Island and hunting walrus on land. Dutch competition arrived in 1609, but a couple of years later the Muscovy Company expanded their whaling into the richer grounds around Spitsbergen. The Company attempted to claim the territory for the English crown in 1611, but found its claims strongly disputed not only by the Danes, but also by the Dutch, the French and the Spanish. King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway had made extra efforts since 1605 to enforce his territorial claims to the Arctic, sending expeditions to Greenland. Later he encouraged merchants in København and Bergen to get involved in whaling and around 1620 he personally equipped several vessels for that purpose.

In 1612 Dutch, Spanish and French whaling ships arrived at Spitsbergen and a violent confrontation ensued. The next year the London Muscovy Company sent a fleet of seven ships, joined by a further four English whalers. That year no fewer than seventeen Dutch, French and Spanish vessels also arrived. The confrontation continued and the English seized several of the non-English ships before driving the rest off with a warning not to return. As a consequence of that the Dutch Republic granted a ten-year monopoly to the Dutch Northern Company and by 1614 the whaling fleet which the Company despatched to Spitsbergen was escorted by three warships financed by the Dutch government, but paid for by a levy on the Northern Company's whale products. The creation of the Dutch Northern Company was

8 Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 43–7

a political and mercantilist act by the Dutch government undertaken to oust the English and other competitors from whaling in and around Spitsbergen. It proved a success and in the clashes which followed in 1615 the Muscovy Company and other foreign competitors came out worst. The Dutch dominated whaling in the Arctic throughout the seventeenth century, well beyond the lapse of the monopoly of the Northern Company in 1642. In fact Dutch whaling experienced a vast expansion from the 1640s to 1670 when the whaling fleet grew from 35 to 148 ships.<sup>9</sup> It reached its peak in the 1680s when in some years more than 200 whaling ships sailed for Spitsbergen and Greenland. However, the Dutch dominance of whaling declined rapidly post 1682 not least because of raids by French privateers, but also because of serious competition from whalers from Hamburg, Denmark and England, and to a lesser extent France. However, the Dutch still managed to send 151 whaling ships to the Greenland Sea in 1699.<sup>10</sup>

### The Baltic

The arrival of wealthy immigrant merchants in Amsterdam in particular after 1590 saw an expansion by the Dutch into the rich trades, which had been dominated by merchants from Hamburg, Lübeck and London. Thus merchants from Hamburg who had controlled the spice trade with the Baltic for at least a decade before 1595 only remained the leading suppliers until 1596, finally to be overtaken by the Dutch in 1597. Dutch merchants increased their dominance over the spice and pepper trade to the Baltic from the turn of the century even if the Hanseatic cities continued to play a considerable role for at least another decade. Despite their success the Dutch still had a long way to go before they achieved their most comprehensive dominance of commerce in the Baltic. Many of the processed goods which were to prove so important in Baltic trade in the second half of the seventeenth century, such as fine cloth, tobacco and gin, had only started to appear.<sup>11</sup>

The Twelve Years Truce (1609–21) between Spain and the United Provinces once again gave the Dutch free access to ports in Spain and Portugal and led to a general restructuring of the Dutch trade in the Baltic, reducing freight and insurance costs considerably, while those of their

<sup>9</sup> Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 111f., 215; see also de Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*, pp. 255–63, and C. de Jong, 'De Walviisvaart', in G. Asaert et al. (eds.), *Maritieme Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 2 (Bussum, 1976), pp. 309–14.

<sup>10</sup> Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 305f.      <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51f.

competitors remained fixed. Most of the principal Dutch exports to the Baltic, such as wine, salt, spices and cloth, came from South-western Europe or beyond. Apart from the Dutch Republic itself, Portugal, Spain and Italy were the main markets in the West for Baltic grain, while Spain and Portugal formed two of the major markets for other bulk goods such as timber, masts, pitch, hemp and Swedish copper. Thus the Twelve Years Truce served to widen the gap between Dutch freightage costs and those of their competitors. Accordingly the Dutch share of the Baltic trade expanded from 60 to 70 per cent while that of the Hansa, the English and the Danes contracted in this period. The period 1609–21 also saw a growing number of Dutch vessels sailing directly from the Iberian ports to the Baltic, and vice versa, thereby lowering shipping costs further.<sup>12</sup>

Most if not all trade with the Baltic depended on access through the Danish Sound, a narrow passage and the only viable route by water in and out of the Baltic, controlled on both sides by Danish fortifications until the middle of the seventeenth century. Danish monarchs had introduced the Sound Due in the fifteenth century, first as a levy on ships, but from 1561 duties had to be paid on virtually all commodities. The Sound Due quickly became a significant source of revenue for the Danish crown. Early on the Dutch, especially the province of Holland, fully understood their dependence on unhindered access through the Sound for their Baltic trade. Thus the Dutch quickly recognised King Christian III of Denmark when he was the apparent victor in the Civil War in Denmark (1534–6) and subsequently did their utmost to prevent Charles V from intervening in the war, in order to protect their commercial interests.<sup>13</sup>

Later the Seven Years War (1563–70) between Denmark and Sweden, the first of a series of conflicts between the two countries for control of the Baltic over the next century, caused Denmark for the first time to blockade the Sound from 1565 to 1566. This resulted in immediate political intervention not only from the Dutch but also from the English. After objections from both these governments the blockade of the Sound had to be lifted, thereby signalling the growing internationalisation of the Baltic. Hand in hand with this development went the repeated claims by Danish monarchs for supremacy over the Baltic, first by Frederik II (1559–88) then by his son Christian IV

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89–94.

<sup>13</sup> J. D. Tracy, *The Founding of the Dutch Republic: War, Finance, and Politics in Holland 1572–1588* (Oxford, 2008), p. 62.

(1588–1648). By the seventeenth century, however, the Baltic had become of central importance for European trade and politics.

The Seven Years War ended in a stalemate with both Denmark and Sweden exhausted from the conflict. By then both England and the Dutch Republic considered Sweden a useful check on Danish ambitions in the Baltic. However, Danish victory in the next Danish–Swedish conflict, the War of Kalmar (1611–13), caused considerable concern in the United Provinces. Danish King Christian IV had not only blockaded Sweden and Finland during the war, arresting Dutch vessels which had sought to circumvent the blockade, but he had also introduced a considerable additional toll on all foreign ships passing through the Sound. Despite strong Dutch objections Christian IV had refused to remove the new toll even after the war had ended. The king, keen to pursue mercantilist policies favouring his own citizens, wanted to curtail the Dutch dominance of the carrying trade to and from his dominions. Furthermore, he was angered by the growing Dutch control over the whaling around Spitsbergen where he considered his claim to sovereignty contested by the Dutch. Last but not least the new toll drew off large sums of Dutch money into Christian IV's coffers.

The new toll and the blockade of Sweden and Finland had a significant effect on the economy of the provinces of Holland and Friesland in particular, resulting in a severe shipping slump from 1611 to 1613. What can only be described as a Baltic crisis for the Dutch became a major test of the statecraft of the Advocate of Holland, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. Encountering an outright Danish challenge to vital Dutch interests Oldenbarnevelt first negotiated a defensive alliance in 1613 with the Republic's fiercest competitor, Lübeck, seeking to protect their mutual trade interests and securing the freedom of the sea in the Baltic as well as the North Sea. This alliance was clearly directed against Denmark–Norway as was the alliance which Oldenbarnevelt negotiated the following year with Sweden. These alliances eventually forced Christian IV to give way and cancel the new or additional Sound toll he had introduced in 1611. This in turn resulted in a boom in Dutch commerce with the Baltic which lasted until the end of the Twelve Years Truce and the introduction of Spanish trade embargoes in April 1621.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 89–95. There were continuously tedious negotiations to settle the claims related to the numerous arrests and reprisals against ships and goods. See E. I. Kouri, *Elizabethan England and Europe: Forty Unprinted Letters from Elizabeth I to Protestant Powers*. Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Special Supplement, 12 (London, 1982), nos. 6, 12, 13, 15, 16, 24, 28, 32, 35, 36 and 39.

The exclusion from the Iberian market resulted in a massive rise in Dutch freightage. The freight rates offered by the English, the Danes and the Hanseatic cities were now highly competitive, while the direct trade between the Baltic and Iberian ports was taken over by merchants and vessels from Denmark and the Hanseatic cities in particular. From 1621 until 1647 Hamburg took over from Amsterdam as the centre for the Iberian-Baltic trade. English ships began to transport considerable quantities of grain from the Baltic to markets in Western Europe, especially those under Spanish rule. Meanwhile Dutch shipping suffered increasingly from Spanish privateers operating out of Dunkirk from 1625 onwards. Not surprisingly the Dutch share of the Baltic traffic fell during this period by more than 12 per cent compared with the previous decades. Consequently, English trade on the Baltic grew considerably.

When the Swedish King Gustav II Adolf initiated his expansionist policies in the Baltic in the late 1620s by capturing the Polish cities of Pillau and Elbing and imposing a naval blockade on Danzig, the Dutch trade with Poland collapsed and grain prices soared on the Amsterdam exchange. As a result the Dutch grain trade in Archangel via the Arctic and the White Sea was revived once more – at its peak in 1630 around one hundred Dutch ships sailed on Archangel. However, in 1631 the Dutch grain trade with the Baltic recovered and the trade in Archangel quietly faded away when Gustav Adolf withdrew from Poland and invaded the Holy Roman Empire to intervene in the Thirty Years War.

Only recent developments in the Thirty Years War prevented the Dutch Republic from taking action against Sweden in the late 1620s in order to protect their trade interests. However, Habsburg armies were by then occupying most of northern Germany and Jylland after Christian IV's disastrous intervention in the Thirty Years War in 1625–6. There was a real danger that the whole Baltic area might come under the combined control of the Habsburgs and Catholic Poland. Considering Habsburg attempts during 1628–30 to build a strong Baltic naval force at Wismar the Dutch had good reason to be concerned. In this situation the United Provinces badly needed Sweden as a political and military counterweight to the Habsburgs and this explains their willingness to endure losses to their Baltic trade.

Meanwhile, Christian IV, after having signed peace treaties with the Habsburgs, had begun a major mercantilist collaboration with Spain, signing a commercial treaty in October 1630 promising among other things to assist the Spaniards in eradicating Dutch contraband trade on the Iberian peninsula. The treaty was distinctly anti-Dutch in flavour, giving Danish-Norwegian

vessels preferential terms in the carrying trade to Spain and Portugal.<sup>15</sup> It resulted in a notable increase in Danish-Norwegian ships plying this trade while initiating a programme for building larger ships suitable for the Spanish trade.

Not surprisingly these initiatives did little to improve relations between Denmark-Norway and the United Provinces and relations were further undermined by Christian IV's claims to sovereignty over the whaling ground around Spitsbergen. In March 1638 Christian IV returned to his Sound policy from the War of Kalmar and raised the toll payable by foreign ships, while also adding a new toll at Glückstadt on the growing traffic on the river Elbe. The king wanted to promote and support Danish-Norwegian shipping at the expense of the Dutch in particular and, of course, to fill his rather empty coffers. Encouraged by the lack of Dutch response Christian IV went further the following year by changing the units of measure for Sound toll on grain, flax and herring, which in effect amounted to another hike in the toll.

The Dutch first sought a diplomatic solution, sending an embassy to København demanding that the Sound Due be lowered to its pre-1638 level and a cancellation of the new toll at Glückstadt. Heavily involved as they were in the Thirty Years War with the Habsburgs, the United Provinces struggled to mobilise naval forces against the Danes. Further Danish commercial collaboration with Spain followed with the second Spanish–Danish maritime treaty in March 1641, which was even more blatantly anti-Dutch than the first.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile another confrontation between Denmark and Sweden lurked below the surface. In 1643 Sweden stopped its war in the Holy Roman Empire in order to attack Denmark and quickly occupied Jylland. In the peace negotiations which began late the following year the Dutch, however, failed to have their case for a lowering of the Sound Due included. After vigorous campaigning within the States General, Amsterdam finally managed to convince the *Stadtholder* and the other provinces that, despite the United Provinces' focus on the war with Spain and the naval blockade of the Flemish ports, money had to be found for a Dutch fleet to be sent to the Sound. A makeshift fleet, consisting of forty-eight ships, six hired from the VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*), plus some converted merchantmen, was

15 For this treaty, see L. Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater 1523–1750*, 4 (København, 1917), pp. 87–94.

16 See Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater*, 4, pp. 280–311; compare with the 1630 treaty.

dispatched, escorting 300 merchant vessels. This fleet, commanded by Admiral Withe de With, passed through the Sound in July 1645 without paying any toll, observed from Helsingør Castle by Christian IV who was powerless to intervene. Since the king had no response and realised how exposed his capital, København, was to a Dutch attack, while the Dutch fleet was anchored in the Sound, the only solution was a humiliating climb-down. The subsequent treaty signed at Christianopol a few months later offered the Dutch a number of concessions which came to form the basis for their maritime dominance of the Baltic for the rest of the century. The Sound Due was not only lowered, but the Dutch were given preferential treatment and were exempted from being boarded by Danish custom officials when passing through the Sound. They were also excused payment of the new Elbe toll.<sup>17</sup> Danish humiliation was considerable and resentment against the Dutch would linger in København for years.

Dutch trade with the Baltic declined in the second half of the seventeenth century partly because trade with the Mediterranean and the Indies loomed ever larger in Dutch commercial life, but perhaps more importantly because grain yield ratios were falling in the Baltic, resulting in higher prices. The situation in the Baltic was not helped by the Cossack Rebellion of 1648–51 which destroyed vast stretches of Ukraine, White Russia and Poland; nor by the Baltic War (1655–60) between Sweden and Poland which resulted in much of the Dutch grain trade moving back to Archangel.

During the second half of the seventeenth century the decline in Dutch shipping of grain through the Baltic amounted to a fall of around 18 per cent, while total Dutch trade with the Baltic contracted by between 20–30 per cent, declining faster after 1672. Sweden in particular adopted a robust mercantilist stance through the 1650s which eventually broke Dutch control over the carrying trade to and from the country, even if the Dutch managed to maintain much of their influence over trade with other Baltic areas under Swedish control such as Finland and Livonia.

Despite much bitterness in København against the Dutch after 1645 Denmark depended on good relations with the United Provinces for support against an increasingly powerful Sweden. Already by 1646 Denmark sought a closer relationship with the Dutch Republic. Two treaties were agreed in The Hague in September 1649 negotiated by Corfitz Ulfeldt – a defence

<sup>17</sup> For this treaty see Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater*, 4, pp. 476–500; see also Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 148f., and J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 543f.



treaty which obliged both parties to assist the other with 4,000 troops or the equivalent in money if attacked by a third party, or if trade was impeded to such an extent that armed intervention became a necessity. Even if already existing treaties between the Dutch and the French, the Hanseatic cities and Sweden remained in force this was a major diplomatic success for Denmark. The other treaty, the so-called Redemption Treaty, allowed all Dutch ships to pass through the Sound without payment of any toll in exchange for an annual payment of 360,000 guilders, not to mention the considerable sum of more than 700,000 guilders at the signing of the treaty and its subsequent ratification. Not surprisingly these treaties were considered deeply hostile to English and Swedish interests in the Baltic.

Economic dependence and the need for protection against growing Swedish military might, however, tied Denmark to the United Provinces. Denmark-Norway consequently sided with the Dutch during the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–4) while Sweden felt deeply angered by the presence of a Dutch fleet in the Sound which prevented Swedish export westwards of naval stores and canon.<sup>18</sup>

In a conciliatory gesture the Danish government agreed with the Dutch to cancel the Redemption Treaty in 1653 which had caused such concern in both England and Sweden.

With the accession of King Karl X (1654–60) Swedish antagonism towards the Dutch increased further, not least because of Karl X's ambitious and expansionist policies in the Baltic which brought him into repeated conflict with the Dutch. In 1655 Karl X went to war with Poland putting the city of Danzig under a naval blockade stopping the Dutch grain trade. This time the Dutch acted with determination and speed dispatching a fleet of forty-two warships under the command of Jacob van Wassenaer Obdam to Danzig in July 1656. The Swedes were forced to lift their blockade while Dutch troops were landed to reinforce the Polish garrison.

Denmark declared war on Sweden in June 1657 seeing an opportunity for success at a time when Swedish forces were heavily engaged in Poland and support might be obtained from the Dutch Republic. To everyone's surprise a Swedish army was able to attack Denmark within months and in the early months of 1658 Swedish forces occupied most of Jylland while the cold weather made it possible for them to march across the ice and occupy all the major Danish islands too. Only after several diplomatic initiatives had

<sup>18</sup> Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 213–18; for the Anglo-Dutch Wars, see J. R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the 17th Century* (London, 1996).

been ignored and when København had come under siege in June 1658 did the Dutch intervene, fearing total Swedish control over the Baltic. Admiral Obdam was ordered back to the Baltic. Obdam's fleet defied the cross-fire from batteries on both sides of the Sound, by now in Swedish hands, to attack the Swedish fleet. Not only did Obdam defeat the Swedes he also landed 6,000 Dutch troops to assist in the defence of København.

Having failed to take København in February 1659 and faced with the threat of direct Dutch intervention in the conflict Karl X obtained support from England which, like him, wanted to hinder the imposition of a 'Dutch peace' on the region. An English fleet of fifty ships was dispatched to the Sound to assist Sweden in its effort to prevent the Dutch from taking control over the Sound in particular and Scandinavian waters in general. The Dutch were prepared to meet this challenge and during the summer of 1659 sent another fleet to Danish waters under the command of Michiel de Ruyter. The Dutch were now able to deploy seventy-eight warships in the narrow passage, the Great Belt, between Fyn and Sjælland anchored close to the combined English-Swedish fleet. A combination of Dutch and Danish forces ejected the Swedish forces from Fyn and the strategic town of Nyborg in November 1659, forcing Karl X to accept peace.<sup>19</sup>

Through Dutch, English and French mediation the Danish-Swedish War came to an end with the Peace of København, 27 May 1660. The true victors of this conflict proved to be the Western European naval powers, especially the Dutch Republic and England, who succeeded in securing a permanent split of Scandinavia which allowed them full and unhindered access to the Baltic, with the Sound converted from an internal Danish channel to an international waterway with open access. The prolonged Danish-Swedish confrontation for control of the Baltic had only served to weaken both states vis-à-vis the major European powers.

The Dutch were seen as having succeeded in establishing a virtual maritime empire in the Baltic in 1660, deeply resented not only by the Scandinavian powers, but also by England and increasingly by France under Louis XIV. Accordingly the 1660s saw English and French diplomats at work in København and Stockholm encouraging all sorts of political-commercial plans directed against the Dutch.

Thus, an alliance between Denmark-Norway and England was being planned in 1664, on the eve of the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–7), which

19 Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, pp. 218–21.

would guarantee Danish support for England should another Anglo-Dutch conflict break out. Charles II on his part would provide Denmark-Norway with a subsidy and twelve warships for the defence of København, while the Danish government would close the Sound to all Dutch shipping while simultaneously recalling the many Danish and Norwegian sailors who served in the Dutch navy. However, when war broke out in 1665 Denmark did not ally itself with England. Rather than staying neutral as was hoped in London Denmark entered the war on the Dutch side and closed the Sound to English shipping. This caused serious difficulties for the English navy which could only get hold of much needed naval stores via Hamburg on a reduced scale and at inflated prices.<sup>20</sup>

By the late 1660s the French sought actively to intervene in the Baltic and Scandinavian markets in order to undermine Dutch commercial dominance. Jean-Baptiste Colbert set up the *Compagnie du Nord* in 1669 to handle exclusively the carrying trade from France to the Baltic. Despite royal support and a virtual monopoly, the company proved unable to offer competitive freight rates, nor was it able to sell enough French products in Sweden and Finland in particular to balance its purchases of masts, tar and copper. Over and above that Dutch merchants dumped cut-price timber and naval stores in France in order to undercut the company. Not surprisingly the *Compagnie du Nord* proved short-lived and was wound up in 1675.<sup>21</sup>

Dutch trade in the Baltic deteriorated from 1672 to 1678 and again from 1689 to 1697, when the United Provinces found itself at war with France. Even when Dutch ships began to re-emerge in large numbers after the end of the Third Anglo-Dutch War in 1674 little changed. French privateers based at Dunkirk inflicted heavy losses not only on Dutch merchant vessels destined for the North Sea and the Baltic, but also on the Dutch whaling and herring fleets. Some years earlier, in 1667, Sweden had once again begun to pursue an anti-Dutch, mercantilist policy, imposing a hefty toll on salt and wine arriving in Swedish ports on vessels which were neither Swedish nor belonged to the country where the cargo originated, which in most cases meant France and Portugal. Five years later the Swedes joined France in an alliance against the Dutch Republic. Two years later, in 1674, Sweden declared war on France's main German enemy, Brandenburg. The defeat of a Swedish army by Brandenburg forces in June 1675 encouraged Denmark-Norway to enter the fray and declare war on Sweden, with the support of its allies Brandenburg

20 Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch Wars of the 17th Century*, p. 26.

21 P. Boissonnade and P. Charliat, *Colbert et la Compagnie du Nord (1661–1689)* (Paris, 1930).

and the Dutch Republic. This resulted in the so-called Skåne War (1675–9). The United Provinces immediately dispatched a considerable naval force to assist the Danes. This proved a successful strategy and a combined Danish-Dutch fleet defeated the Swedish navy while Danish and Dutch troops were landed in Skåne.

It was unavoidable that the two Scandinavian states should get involved when Louis XIV began his war against the Dutch Republic in 1672. The Skåne War came to signify the end of the era when Sweden had been the major power in Northern Europe and confirmed a parity between the two traditional enemies of Sweden and Denmark. More importantly the war confirmed the dependence of the two Scandinavian states on the major European powers, especially the Dutch Republic and France – and these powers were the real winners. Sweden and Denmark had fought each other to a stalemate and in the process became dependent on the major European states while helping to integrate both the Baltic and Scandinavia into the wider European political arena.

The Skåne War also resulted in a serious modification of Swedish mercantilist policies. A Dutch–Swedish treaty in 1679 cancelled the anti-Dutch shipping regulations and tolls of 1667 and concluded an era of Dutch–Swedish hostility. Two years later the Dutch–Swedish treaty of 1681 saw Sweden break away from France.<sup>22</sup> This resulted in a brief interlude in the 1680s where Dutch trade with the Baltic picked up once more only to continue its decline throughout the eighteenth century. Thus the Dutch share of the Baltic trade contracted from 50 per cent of the total in 1720 to less than 30 per cent by 1770. This, however, was a relative decline in an expanding market. Without the growing demand in Northern Europe for colonial products such as sugar, tobacco, coffee and tea during the eighteenth century combined with increased consumption of French wine and brandy, there would have been a significant decline of Dutch trade with the north in absolute terms as well.

Improved shipping design and shipping efficiency were being applied by the English and Scandinavians throughout the seventeenth century and by 1700 the English had caught up with the Dutch in producing low-cost carriers. These countries were therefore well positioned to exploit the opportunities which opened up with the weakening of the Dutch Republic's Baltic trade from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards. English Baltic trade and shipping witnessed an upsurge in the 1670s and

22 Israel, *Dutch Primacy in World Trade*, p. 302.

1680s matched by the end of the century by the expansion of Danish and Swedish shipping. The Great Northern War 1700–21, which devastated agriculture in Poland and the eastern Baltic, further accelerated the commercial change under way in the Baltic adding to the maritime strength of England and Russia in particular. Around 1720 England's shipping tonnage probably exceeded that of the United Provinces. Twenty years later English merchants had become the dominant force in the Baltic even circumventing the Dutch Republic when dealing with colonial goods, delivering them directly to Hamburg and the Baltic.<sup>23</sup> The centre of gravity for the Baltic trade had shifted from Amsterdam to London.

However, the historical interpretation presented here may well be due some serious revision in years to come. The fact that the Sound Toll Registers have not only survived fairly undamaged and with few gaps, but have later been turned into extremely useful tables, has resulted in historians focusing on the role of the Baltic to the exclusion of shipping and trade in the North Sea. That a colossal volume of shipping in the North Sea never passed through the Danish Sound tends to be forgotten when the information contained in the Sound Toll Registers is consulted. This has resulted in a Dutch-centred narrative, emphasising the role and significance of Holland and Amsterdam in particular, to the detriment of the significance of the considerable trade to the west of the Sound involving Rotterdam, the Scandinavian countries, England, Scotland, Ireland and France. Furthermore this focus has tended to exaggerate the role of Dutch shipping and downplay the role of the merchant fleets of Sweden-Finland and Denmark-Norway which, by the second half of the eighteenth century, constituted 30 per cent of Northern Europe's shipping tonnage.<sup>24</sup>

23 See D. Ormrod, *The Rise of Commercial Empires: England and the Netherlands in the Age of Mercantilism, 1650–1770* (Cambridge, 2003), esp. pp. 31–76, 278–87, 287–306; D. Ormrod, 'Shipping Movements in the North Sea/Baltic Zone 1650–1800', in R. W. Unger (ed.), *Shipping and Economic Growth 1350–1850* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 135–66.

24 Ormrod, 'Shipping Movements', p. 138; de Vries and van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy*.

## The struggle for supremacy in the Baltic between Denmark and Sweden, 1563–1721

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From the middle of the sixteenth century until the end of the Great Northern War in 1720/21 Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland were fighting each other in order to hold supremacy of the Baltic Sea and its coastlands. The concept of *dominium maris Baltici* characterises these enduring conflicts in Scandinavian early modern history with several wars and controversies between the two kingdoms.<sup>1</sup> Behind the concept lies the perception of a combined rule over the Baltic territorial waters, comprising the trade routes to and from the Baltic Sea and at the same time control over the coastal areas. Control over the coastal areas, attainable by extending the state's sphere of influence along the coast in order to encircle the Baltic Sea or to create a bridgehead for an attack on the opposite coast, constitutes an important condition for the struggle for *dominium maris Baltici*. The struggle was, however, not only about how to gain the upper hand at sea, for the possession of a naval fleet played an important role for the honour of the two crowns and for other purposes. The opposite coasts were targets for operations, for instance by blockading or by rescuing of harbour-cities, by escorting and by supporting the war on the land.<sup>2</sup>

The Sound and the Danish straits (Belts) played an important role since the Middle Ages. The Sound, the connection between the North Sea and the Baltic, constituted the most important gateway to the Baltic Sea. The Danish waterways were, since the medieval period, among the busiest waterways in Europe and became the focal point of the whole Baltic traffic. The Sound held a key position of importance for the entire Baltic Sea. The right to travel

1 J. E. Olesen, 'Dominium Maris Balthici. Kampen om Østersøen 1625–1643', *Militært Tidsskrift*, 6 (1984), pp. 212–28; U. Voges, *Der Kampf um das Dominium Maris Balthici 1629–1645. Schweden und Dänemark vom Frieden zu Lübeck zum Frieden von Brömsebro* (Zeulenroda, 1938).

2 N. Ahnlund, 'Dominium maris Baltici', in N. Ahnlund, *Tradition och Historia* (Stockholm, 1956), pp. 114–30, esp. 116f.

free und undisturbed on Baltic waters became more and more an overriding objective for the powers situated around the Baltic Sea.<sup>3</sup>

The mastery of the Baltic Sea was dependent on three decisive factors: first, the ability to control the Sound and the Danish straits (Belts); secondly, the strength of the navy; and, thirdly, the extent of control over the coastal areas of the Baltic Sea. Since the late Middle Ages Denmark controlled the gateways to the Baltic Sea and from 1429 a Sound Due was levied at Helsingør, initiated by the Union King Erik of Pomerania. With the dissolution of the Kalmar Union in 1520 and the independence of Sweden as a kingdom the situation between the countries changed. Both pre-modern powers had great interests in the Baltic Sea region. For almost 200 years to come the struggle for supremacy in the Baltic, *dominium maris Baltici*, became the dominant factor in the foreign policy of both states.<sup>4</sup>

### Heading for conflict, 1563–1629

At the beginning of the early modern period, around 1500, the Baltic Sea region was somehow still isolated from the rest of Europe. The Hanse controlled the trade between the Baltic area and Western Europe. The Teutonic Order isolated the Baltic region towards the East, and the Hanse towns effectively dominated the trade routes to Scandinavia from the south and from the west. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this situation changed, because both medieval powers were weakened and lost their dominant positions. Also the Scandinavian Kalmar Union as a medieval construction was dissolved. There followed growing economic competition in the Baltic between the Hanseatic and the Dutch traders. The Hanse towns had to accept the Danish king's control over the Sound, the key position in the Baltic. Due to Lübeck's unsuccessful intervention in the so-called Count's War (*Grevens Fejde*), 1534–6, the city lost almost all of its political and economic influence in the Baltic and its position as a Nordic power too. The breakdown of the Teutonic Order during the following decades created a vacuum in the eastern part of the Baltic, which had to be filled. This created

3 See, among others, K. J. V. Jespersen, *A History of Denmark* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 114–16.

4 K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory: Denmark, Sweden and the Struggle for the Baltic, 1500–1720', in G. Rystad, K.-R. Böhme and W. Carlgren (eds.), *In Quest of Trade and Security: The Baltic in Power Politics 1500–1990*, 1: 1500–1890 (Lund, 1994), pp. 137–76 (with literature).

much political instability and formed part of the background to the Nordic Seven Years War, 1563–70.<sup>5</sup>

The passing of the medieval powers in the Baltic Sea region must be seen in comparison with European developments. The whole European system changed in these years. The old medieval belief in a united, universal Christendom under the guidance of the pope and the emperor was dissolved. All over the continent feudal institutions started to waver and modern principalities took control. The new structure in the Baltic Sea region created new conditions for the Scandinavian powers, which moved from relative isolation to become pre-modern European national states. The competition between Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland to gain supremacy of the Baltic was long to dominate the foreign policy of both countries.

The struggle for the Livonian heritage gave both Scandinavian realms reason to try their strength against each other. As Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) had gained access to the Baltic Sea for the first time, by the conquest of Narva in 1558, and further planned to conquer Livonia, Sweden could not merely take a passive role. Sweden was further frightened by the possibility of a wider encirclement by the Danes, since the city council of Tallinn (Reval) offered allegiance and loyalty to the Danish King Christian III. The Swedish King Gustav Vasa was worried by the presence of Danish troops in Tallinn, and he feared that Denmark would profit from Russian trade too. Denmark did not accept, however, the offer from Tallinn to take over the city, and this for a while prevented a further escalation of the conflict between the two Nordic states.<sup>6</sup>

During the reigns of the successors, Frederik II of Denmark-Norway and Erik XIV of Sweden, the foreign policies of the two realms were sharpened. The young and active Frederik II of Denmark-Norway questioned the legitimacy of the Vasa dynasty and planned the revival of the Kalmar Union. King Erik XIV, for his part, planned to break the Danish encirclement of Sweden, but the Danish acquisition of the island of Saaremaa (Ösel) in 1558–9 threatened further to strengthen the Danish strategic and trade interests in the Baltic.<sup>7</sup>

In the light of this development Swedish troops conquered Tallinn in 1561 and strengthened their position in northern Estonia; Danish plans to expand further along the coast via Saaremaa on the mainland were stopped.

5 H. Gamrath and E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1559–1648', in A. E. Christensen *et al.* (eds.), *Danmarks historie*, 2:2 (København, 1980), pp. 443ff.

6 R. Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558–1721* (Harlow, 2000), pp. 23–6.

7 W. Møllerup, *Danmarks Forhold til Liffland fra Salget af Estland til Ordensstatens Opløsning (1346–1561)* (København, 1880), pp. 101ff.



The architect of the Swedish imperial age of expansion seems above all to have been Duke Johan of Finland (later King Johan III).<sup>8</sup>

The Swedish possession of Tallinn led to war with Denmark. The starting point was a Swedish blockade of the Russian city of Narva in 1562. Besides Russia, Denmark, England, the Dutch, Poland and especially Lübeck were all affected in their trade. This prompted Lübeck and Denmark to enter into negotiations. In July 1562 Denmark and Lübeck guaranteed each other's trade privileges and one year later an alliance against Sweden was concluded. During the month of May 1563 a Swedish fleet successfully attacked a Danish naval force near to Bornholm. During the summer of 1563 the Nordic Seven Years War got under way. Some months later Poland joined ranks with the Danes. Poland entered into the alliance in order to expel the Swedes from Estonia. A source of strength for Sweden lay in the southern part of Finland and the northern part of Estonia. Sweden controlled the coast on both sides of the Gulf of Finland and possessed a bridgehead position on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. Denmark's power depended especially on the supremacy over the waterways between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea.<sup>9</sup>

Over the next few years the Swedish navy proved successful as Danish efforts to force their way into the Swedish sphere of interest in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea failed; the war ended with the Swedish navy superior to the Danish. Nor was the Danes' military strategy to conquer Sweden by the use of land forces any more successful. Denmark was, however, still the strongest realm in Scandinavia, and Denmark's German mercenaries showed their superiority over the Swedes in several battles. Sweden lost the strong fortress of Älvsborg, the only access to the west, and in 1565 its forces were decisively defeated at Axtorna in Halland. Denmark, however, was not able to secure a decisive military advantage and, after a long and devastating war, by 1570 peace was negotiated and concluded in Stettin.<sup>10</sup>

The Peace Treaty of Stettin confirmed *status quo ante bellum*. Sweden had, among other stipulations, to recognise the Danish possession of Gotland, to pay 150,000 silver thalers for the fortress of Älvsborg and to raise the trading blockade of Narva. Livonia was transferred to Frederik II, who in

<sup>8</sup> See, among others, J. Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1: *Tiden före 1718*, 3rd edn (Stockholm, 1969), pp. 342–8.

<sup>9</sup> F. P. Jensen, *Danmarks konflikt med Sverige 1563–1570* (København, 1982); R. Frost, *The Northern Wars 1558–1721*, pp. 23ff., 29ff.

<sup>10</sup> A. Smirnov, *Det första stora kriget*, trans. Stefan Lindgren (Stockholm, 2009); F. P. Jensen, *Danmarks konflikt med Sverige 1563–1570*; E. Hornborg, *Kampen om Östersjön* (Stockholm, 1945), pp. 120–38.

1585 handed it over to Poland. The struggle concerning the three crowns was to be solved by arbitration. The city of Lübeck was permitted free trade in Sweden, but received, however, no war indemnities or payments. The new Swedish King Johan III (1568–92) succeeded in persuading Denmark to give up its claim on the Swedish crown; he himself relinquished his claims to Norway, Skåne (Scania) and Gotland. The old borders between the realms were re-established. The cherished hope of a Scandinavian kingship under Danish supremacy was not realised. Sweden did not manage to take control of Russian trade, which had been its main objective. The Swedish kingdom had however stepped forward as a Baltic power, although Denmark still was able to defend its supremacy in the Baltic.

The Nordic Seven Years War (1563–70) did not establish a real winner in the struggle between Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland. The Stettin peace treaty stipulated that in future regular meetings at the border were to take place between commissions, composed of councillors from the two realms. At these meetings conflicts and disagreements should be negotiated and solved; decisions and settlements were to be binding on the realms and to be respected by the two kings. If agreement was not possible, the question was to be settled by international arbitration. These decisions were to be respected by the two monarchs. Only when no solution could be found would the two kings be allowed to make their own decisions.

This article in the peace treaty on border meetings had far-reaching consequences for Denmark's policy towards Sweden. The power to decide over relations with Sweden was in reality handed over to the council of the realm. Sweden became part of Danish domestic policy. The struggle for supremacy of the Baltic (foreign policy) and the internal domestic constitutional conflict between the king and the council about the highest authority in the Danish state became interlinked. The Danish council of the realm from now on had decisive influence on the policy towards Sweden and limited the king's options within important fields of foreign policy. The influence of the council was however only possible, when conflicts could be solved peacefully. The council strived during the next decades to avoid an escalation with Sweden. For the young Danish King Christian IV, a war against Sweden became an imperative in order to break the political influence of the council.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', pp. 144ff.; V. Seresse, 'Aus der Geschichte der Union lernen: Der Friedensgedanke des dänischen Reichsrats in der skandinavischen Politik 1570–1611', in D. Kattinger, D. Putensen and H. Wernicke (eds.), '*Huru thet war talet j kalmarn*'. *Union und Zusammenarbeit in der nordischen Geschichte. 600 Jahre Kalmarer Union (1397–1997)* (Hamburg, 1997), pp. 349–82.

## Struggle for supremacy in the Baltic, 1563–1721



Map 12.1: Sweden's imperial development

During the last decades of the sixteenth century Denmark played only a minor role in the struggle about supremacy of the Baltic. Sweden fought against Russia and Poland-Lithuania over the domination in the eastern Baltic region. The Swedish realm expanded its territories and strengthened its

resources by demanding custom duties; most especially, the income from the trade on the rivers in Prussia became essential to the Swedish crown. Already during the reign of King Johann III the Baltic territories had grown in importance. As a result of the wars with Russia, Sweden had conquered Narva and Ingermanland (Ingria). The dynastic relations between Sweden and Poland during the reign of King Sigismund (1592–9) led to internal conflicts, which were solved by the removal of Sigismund from Sweden 1599. The new king was Karl IX (1604–11).<sup>12</sup>

King Christian IV of Denmark-Norway (1588–1648) had good reasons for wanting to provoke a conflict with the Swedish king. The blockade of Polish ports, especially Riga, and the activities of Swedish ships in the southern part of the Baltic Sea threatened Danish interests and the income from the Sound Due. The Swedes were also active outside the Baltic Sea.<sup>13</sup>

The policy of King Karl IX showed ordinary trade-imperial features. He founded the city of Göteborg in 1603 as a centre for the Swedish trade towards Western Europe. The king also intended to bring trade, which in the border territories was oriented towards Denmark, under Swedish control and thus to avoid the Danish Sound Due. In Northern Scandinavia, Sweden concentrated its attention on the flourishing English trade along the White Sea route to Archangel. In the east the coastal areas of Ingermanland (Ingria) in the Gulf of Finland were the most prominent targets of expansion. The Swedish activities constituted a provocation to the Danish King Christian IV, who claimed sovereignty and the right to control the trade along the coast in northern Norway.<sup>14</sup>

During the years 1601–4 negotiations at the Danish–Swedish border were carried on. However, no solution to the conflicts between the realms could be established. The councillors of the two realms warned their monarchs to act carefully and for a while it did not come to war. The Kalmar War of 1611–13 was a result of the Danish domestic power struggle over foreign policy and at the same time the Danes felt threatened by the Swedish expansion.<sup>15</sup>

12 Frost, *The Northern Wars 1558–1721*, pp. 102ff.; Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1559–1648', pp. 450ff.; L. Hedberg, *Karl IX. Företagarfursten och enväldshärskaren* (Stockholm, 2009); G. Behre, L.-O. Larsson and E. Österberg, *Sveriges historia 1521–1809. Stormaktsdröm och småstatsrealitet* (Stockholm, 2001), pp. 67ff.

13 Olesen, 'Dominium Maris Baltici', pp. 214f.

14 S. Heiberg, *Christian 4. – En europæisk statsmand* (København, 2006), pp. 147–52.

15 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1559–1648', pp. 480ff., 488ff.; Heiberg, *Christian 4.*, pp. 152ff., 159ff.

The Danish King Christian IV saw in a war against Sweden the possibility not only of solving the conflicts in Northern Scandinavia but also of restoring the Kalmar Union, and at the same time freeing himself from the guardianship of the council of the realm. He started early on to strengthen the border fortifications against Sweden and expanded the number of Danish navy vessels. By the time of the completion of these preparations and after years of internal struggles, the king won the upper hand against the council of the realm and could persuade it to make war. In April 1611 war against Sweden was declared. The Kalmar War was to become Denmark's last successful attempt to defend its mastery in Scandinavia and in the Baltic.<sup>16</sup>

The Kalmar War was opened by a great Danish offensive on two fronts against the Swedish core lands. The greater part of the Swedish troops were occupied in Russia and in Livonia, but in spite of this the Danes were unable to conquer the Swedish realm. The two fortifications Kalmar and Älvsborg were besieged and conquered, and through the devastation of Göteborg the only Swedish passage to the west was closed but a Danish attack on Stockholm in 1612 had to be abandoned. Denmark's resources simply were not large enough to conquer Sweden. In the Peace Treaty of Knärod in early 1613 the *status quo ante bellum* was confirmed. Denmark was to receive 1 million silver thalers for Älvsborg and Göteborg. The free trade between the two realms was to continue. Sweden had to promise to stop further expansion in Scandinavia. Denmark maintained its position as the most important Baltic power, and King Christian IV felt himself to be the victor. However, the existence of Sweden as an independent state was no longer on the agenda of the Danish government.<sup>17</sup>

During the following years King Christian IV expanded his power position in northern Germany partly in order to build up a barrier against Sweden. Through his financial policy, his diocese policy and his princely network the king was able to increase his influence in this area decisively. The founding of the city of Glückstadt in 1617 meant a challenge to Hamburg.<sup>18</sup> The expansion of Sweden followed at first in the eastern Baltic. After the access of Gustav II Adolf to the throne in 1611 the Swedish policy of conquering the Baltic regions and Poland was systematically developed. From the middle of

16 Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', p. 148.

17 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1559–1648', p. 490; Heiberg, *Christian 4.*, pp. 166–81.

18 H.-D. Loose, *Hamburg und Christian IV. von Dänemark während des Dreissigjährigen Krieges. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der hamburgischen Reichsunmittelbarkeit* (Hamburg, 1963), pp. 5ff.

the 1620s Sweden controlled the entire Baltic coastline from the Gulf of Bothnia to Poland. In this way Sweden challenged the Danish possession of *dominium maris Baltici*.<sup>19</sup>

Because of the Danish territorial expansion following the line of Bornholm–Gotland–Saaremaa (Ösel), Denmark claimed the greater part of the Baltic Sea as Danish territorial waters. The perception of a distinct Scandinavian divided *dominium maris Baltici* was a fact in these years, despite the strong political rivalry. Both Scandinavian powers agreed not to tolerate foreign naval fleets in the Baltic Sea. This threat came not only from Poland, but also from the House of Habsburg. During the Kalmar War and also during the Thirty Years War, King Sigismund strove to build up a Polish naval fleet in the Baltic. This was a necessary precondition for his claim to supremacy in the Baltic and for a Polish conquest of Sweden. The Polish endeavours to build up a naval fleet were supported by the greater Catholic powers, especially by Spain, which for some time in their struggle with the Dutch had kept an eye on Älvsborg and the Sound area. The fear of a sudden Spanish attack followed by a conquest of the area was very real in both the Danish and Swedish governments. In the first half of the 1620s the fear of an expansion of a Catholic navy seems to have been common in Scandinavia.<sup>20</sup>

The Swedish territorial gains generally increased the competition with Denmark, and the conflict about *dominium maris Baltici* escalated. The more the Swedes expanded, the more severe became the struggle with Denmark. A war was seriously to be expected should Sweden expand further towards the south and occupy the southern part of Livonia as far as Kurland as well as the Pomeranian coast.

King Christian IV long avoided expressing himself about the boundaries of Swedish supremacy in the Baltic. Seen from a Danish perspective it was clear that the area from Saaremaa, the Bay of Riga and along the widespread Pomeranian coast belonged to the Danish *dominium*. However, after the Swedish conquest of Riga in 1621 King Christian IV realised that Sweden had moved into the Danish sphere of interest. In 1622 he felt it necessary to ask the council of the realm about the boundaries of Danish supremacy in the Baltic. The council declared a line drawn between Bornholm and

19 See, among others, M. Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus and the Rise of Sweden* (London, 1973), pp. 40ff., 115ff.; N. Ahnlund, *Axel Oxenstierna intill Gustav Adolfs död* (Stockholm, 1940), pp. 309–38; Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1, pp. 399ff.

20 J. E. Olesen, 'Pommern, Skandinavien und der Ostseeraum in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts', in I. Asmus (ed.), *Unter der schwedischen Krone. Pommern nach dem Westfälischen Frieden* (Greifswald, 1998), pp. 13–27, at 16.

Gotland and further over to Saaremaa as constituting the extent of Danish territorial waters. It was clear that Sweden had moved within this boundary line by its expansion along the coast. However, the councillors urged the king to maintain peaceful relations with Sweden and accepted the new situation.<sup>21</sup>

The declaration by the Danish council marked an important turning point in the long struggle with Sweden over supremacy in the Baltic. Up until this moment, Denmark had claimed full mastery of the Baltic. The Danish councillors now accepted that Danish mastery had its limits. In other words, the council accepted the existence of a divided *dominium maris Baltici*. While Sweden dominated in the northern and eastern parts of the Baltic Sea, Denmark claimed sovereignty over the southern and western parts. The proclamation by the council marked the first step in Denmark's slow but unavoidable retreat in the Baltic region.

Three years after the Swedish conquest of Riga in 1621, Gustav Adolf prepared an attack on Danzig. Relations between Denmark and Sweden were strained as a consequence of King Christian's engagement in northern Germany. The Danish king decided at the last minute to avoid a war. Nevertheless, the common Scandinavian interest in fighting the aggressive Catholic powers could not conceal the fact that the conflict of interest between the Scandinavian countries was of a fundamental nature.<sup>22</sup>

From 1625 the central focus for Denmark and Sweden changed from Scandinavia and the Baltic to northern Germany. The Danish king in this year decided to involve himself in the Thirty Years War on the Protestant side, partly with a view to halting Swedish expansion. However, the Danish council did not support this royal decision. King Christian IV had been chosen as colonel of the Lower Saxonian Circle, and he entered the war in his capacity as duke of Holstein. Denmark was not formally at war with the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, but subsequent events demonstrate that, in fact, the opposite was true.<sup>23</sup>

With his intervention King Christian strove to fulfil several goals. He wanted especially to stop the hitherto successful military expansion of the emperor into northern Germany and to create a territory of interest for Denmark as an answer to the Swedish Baltic expansion in the east. Behind the king's decision to involve himself in the war was perhaps also the

21 Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', pp. 137f., 150.

22 Olesen, 'Pommern, Skandinavien und der Ostseeraum', p. 17.

23 Heiberg, *Christian 4.*, pp. 260ff.

dangerous possibility that Sweden would occupy territory near to the river Elbe and place troops south of the Danish border.<sup>24</sup>

The Danish king's engagement in the Thirty Years War ended in disaster. After his calamitous defeat by Tilly, the emperor's general, at Lutter am Barenberg near Hildesheim in August 1626 and the following occupation of Jylland by troops commanded by Wallenstein, the situation grew worse for Christian IV. The siege of Stralsund by Wallenstein and his troops in 1628 caused the king to send 1,000 men to the defence of the town. Facing a common danger, Denmark and Sweden in these circumstances came closer together. This would not, however, last for long. It was the only time when Denmark and Sweden joined in common action. The mutual mistrust and their different intentions prevented a permanent collaboration.<sup>25</sup>

At a meeting in Ulfsbäck in February 1629 at the Danish–Swedish border, Christian IV and Gustav Adolf negotiated over the situation in northern Germany, where ships belonging to the emperor could be expected to arrive at Wismar and other Baltic ports. Christian IV suggested a naval attack in order to set the vessels on fire, but Gustav Adolf was of another opinion. The only possibility of stopping the emperor was to land an army on the coast and thereby take over territory occupied by Sweden's enemies. Gustav Adolf was confident that with some effort this plan could be realised: 'The war matters for both of us.' The famous meeting between the two Nordic kings documents the fundamental differences between Danish and Swedish interests.<sup>26</sup>

The meeting in Ulfsbäck became, however, a diplomatic victory for the Danes, since it influenced the ongoing peace negotiations in Lübeck between Emperor Ferdinand II and Christian IV. The different opinions in Ulfsbäck are of special interest in understanding the political-military tactics of Gustav Adolf concerning the control of the coast, the ports and the mouth of the rivers. King Christian IV meanwhile was so convinced of the Danish

24 J. E. Olesen, 'Christian IV. og den dansk-svenske magtkamp ca. 1620–1648', in C. Kuvaja and A.-C. Östman (eds.), *Svärdet, ordet och pennan. – kring människa, makt och rum i nordisk historia. Festskrift til Nils Erik Villstrand den 24 maj 2012* (Åbo, 2012), pp. 97–120, at 100ff.

25 J. E. Olesen, 'Dänische and schwedische Zusammenarbeit gegen Wallenstein und den Kaiser 1626–1629', in W. Karge and R. Erbrant (eds.), *Terra felix Mecklenburg – Wallenstein in Norddeutschland. Fiktion und Machtkalkül des Herzogs zu Mecklenburg. Internationale Tagung 7.-9. November 2008 auf Schloß Güstrow unter der Schirmherrschaft des Botschafters der Tschechischen Republik in Deutschland Dr. Rudolf Jindrák*, Publikationen des Lehrstuhls für Nordische Geschichte, 11 (Greifswald, 2010), pp. 41–57.

26 Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', pp. 151–62.



supremacy of the Baltic, and also in the Continental question, it was impossible for him to imagine that Denmark should step back and allow Sweden to take over the leading position. Under these circumstances no Nordic co-operation against the emperor could be established. However, through his mere presence in Ulfsbäck Gustav Adolf helped to bring the peace process in Lübeck forward. The emperor and Wallenstein were afraid of a possible Danish–Swedish alliance; this explains why the Peace of Lübeck (1629) was advantageous to Denmark. King Christian IV was able to avoid renouncing territory but, for the future, had to undertake not to interfere militarily in internal German matters. The Danish king also had to give up formally his dynasty's claims on the bishoprics of Bremen and Verden.<sup>27</sup>

### Denmark's struggle to survive, 1630–60

With Gustav Adolf's involvement in the Thirty Years War as a result of his landing troops on the island of Usedom during the summer of 1630, the supremacy in Northern Europe passed to Sweden. Denmark apparently still thought of itself as master of the Baltic, but King Christian IV was not free after the Peace Treaty of Lübeck to operate as he wanted, and thus in reality the possession of supremacy of the Baltic was in doubt. Denmark became a spectator to the Swedish operations in northern Germany. Gustav Adolf changed the Danish nightmare of Swedish military presence in Pomerania into hard reality and opened the gate for Sweden's rise as a Great Power. During the next two years the Swedish king succeeded where Christian IV had failed. Soon Sweden controlled the southern coast of the Baltic and occupied key positions on the rivers Elbe and Odra. The dukes of Pomerania and Mecklenburg aligned with the Swedes and promised payments and contributions to the Swedish army.<sup>28</sup>

After the death of King Gustav Adolf in the battle of Lützen in November 1632 the Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstierna took over the government of the realm and pursued supremacy in the Baltic. Christian IV tried to prevent Swedish success by mediation and negotiations and by seeking allied partners to strengthen his position in northern Germany. With the help of the Sound Dues, Denmark made it difficult for Sweden to export goods to Western Europe from the conquered Baltic territories.<sup>29</sup>

27 Olesen, 'Christian IV. og den dansk-svenske magtkamp ca. 1620–1648', pp. 104ff.

28 S. Oredsson, *Gustav II Adolf* (Stockholm, 2007), pp. 199ff.

29 Olesen, 'Christian IV. og den dansk-svenske magtkamp ca. 1620–1648', pp. 107ff.

Again the Danish–Swedish controversies grew within the next few years. Since Christian IV had found success working as an intermediary and had slowly positioned himself closer to the emperor, Sweden took the initiative and turned its weapons against Denmark. In 1643 Axel Oxenstierna found the time ripe for an attack on Denmark from the south. In the so-called Torstensson War (1643–5), named after the Swedish general Lennart Torstensson, Denmark was attacked from two sides: from Holstein and from Skåne. Both realms tried to win Dutch military support. In spite of embittered resistance and some success, Christian IV, having been defeated in a naval battle (Fehmern Belt, 1644), was forced to conclude a humiliating peace in 1645. In the Peace Treaty of Brömsebro, Denmark ceded the islands of Gotland and Saaremaa and the Norwegian provinces Jämtland and Härjedalen to Sweden. The Danish coastal region of Halland was further to be handed over to Sweden as a pawn for thirty years in order to guarantee Swedish exemption from paying Sound Due for all its territories.<sup>30</sup>

The Torstensson War brought Sweden a further strengthening of its supremacy in the Baltic as well as free access to Western Europe. Denmark lost its mastery in the Baltic. Sweden now controlled the northern German coast and the Danish outposts of Gotland and Saaremaa. Moreover, the Swedish navy was now superior to the Danish one, due in part to hired ships and officers from the Netherlands.

Three years later at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 Sweden definitely established itself as the strongest power in the Baltic region. Sweden had now the territories of Swedish-Pomerania with Stettin and the islands of Rügen, Usedom and Wollin, the town of Wismar (including the island of Poel and its fortress) and the former bishoprics Bremen and Verden south of the Elbe. Sweden had almost succeeded in establishing an encirclement of the Baltic, and this constituted the basis for her position as a Great Power. She was satisfied by the stipulations in the peace treaties established in 1648. This was, however, not the case with Denmark and Brandenburg.<sup>31</sup>

The imposing rise of Sweden to a regional Baltic empire and the markedly reduced position of Denmark had not been possible without help from other

30 Gamrath and Ladewig Petersen, 'Tiden 1559–1648', pp. 523ff.; Hornborg, *Kampen om Östersjön*, pp. 179ff.; J. A. Fridericia, *Danmarks ydre politiske Historie i Tiden fra Freden i Lybek til Freden i Kjøbenhavn (1629–1660)*, 2: *Fra Freden i Prag til Freden i Brömsebro (1635–1645)* (København, 1881; repr., 1972), pp. 345ff.

31 Olesen, 'Pommern, Skandinavien und der Ostseeraum', p. 27; M. Roberts, *The Swedish Imperial Experience 1560–1718* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 129f.

European powers. Sweden was supported by France and the Netherlands. For France it was not the primary goal to weaken Denmark, but much more to have a strong power in Scandinavia as a counterweight against the Habsburgs. The Netherlands strove after a power balance in the Baltic in order to improve their trade conditions. It was not until 1645 as the Swedish dominance in the Baltic had become reality that the Netherlands were ready to help Denmark in a future war against Sweden.<sup>32</sup>

The Peace of Westphalia 1648 made Sweden the strongest power in Northern Europe and at the same time master of the Baltic. However, the newly established peace constituted only a short breathing space in the long struggle for *dominium maris Baltici* and control of the coast. Sweden was still surrounded by Danish territory from three sides. In the Holy Roman Empire the duke of Holstein-Gottorp allied with Sweden. Denmark stayed loyal to the emperor and made alliances with Sweden's enemies, Poland, Brandenburg-Prussia and later with Russia.<sup>33</sup>

Denmark could not be satisfied with its status as number two in Scandinavia and was prepared for revenge, especially to revise the peace treaty of 1645 and to prevent any enlargement of Sweden. The opportunity came when the new Swedish King Karl X Gustav was fighting against Poland from 1655 and a broad anti-Swedish coalition was formed between Poland, the emperor, Brandenburg-Prussia and Denmark. When Karl X Gustav and his troops were deeply engaged in Poland, Denmark declared war on Sweden, although she was badly prepared for it. The declaration of war came almost as a relief to Karl X Gustav. The war in Poland had reached stalemate and the king was now able to escape and to open a new theatre of war. He marched through northern Germany into Jylland, and in the winter of 1657–8 crossed the frozen straits (Belts) and moved towards København. In February 1658 King Frederik III and the Danish government were forced to conclude the so-called 'peace of panic' at Roskilde – the hardest peace treaty ever negotiated and concluded in the history of Denmark. Denmark had to cede to Sweden the eastern provinces (Skåne, Halland and Blekinge), the Norwegian counties Bohuslän and Trondheim and thus the access to the north-western Atlantic as well as the island of Bornholm. Denmark had further

32 Fridericia, *Danmarks ydre politiske Historie*, 2, pp. 523f.

33 See, among others, N. E. Villstrand, *Sveriges Historia 1600–1721* (Stockholm, 2011), pp. 131ff.; M. Jessen-Klingenberg, *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins. Ein Überblick von A. Scharff* (Würzburg, 1991), pp. 53f.

to recognise the sovereignty of Holstein-Gottorp. At Roskilde, Sweden achieved the greatest territorial expansion in its history.<sup>34</sup>

The stipulations in the Peace Treaty of Roskilde concerning the Swedish Sound Due payments to Denmark were however not accepted by Karl X Gustav, who soon decided to conquer Denmark as a whole. Already in the winter of 1658–9 Swedish troops were again approaching København. However, the city defended itself successfully, supported by a rescue fleet from the Netherlands, and Karl X Gustav had to change his plans. In May 1660, after the sudden death of the Swedish king, and after intervention from the Western European powers, a peace treaty was concluded in København. Sweden handed back the island of Bornholm (the inhabitants had by 1659 freed themselves successfully having shot the local Swedish commander)<sup>35</sup> and the county of Trondheim in Norway. Further Danish demands were not recognised by the Great Powers; they wanted no change in the fundamental balance of power in the Baltic. Sweden, according to these principles, was not allowed to become too strong. The two wars fought by Karl X Gustav constitute the height of Swedish power in the Baltic region. The three peace treaties with Denmark, with Poland in 1660 and with Russia in 1661 (the Peace of Kardis) ended the Swedish expansion.<sup>36</sup>

The three wars with Denmark during the period 1643–60 set a new agenda in the enduring rivalry between Denmark and Sweden over the *dominium maris Baltici*. From now on the question was whether Denmark could survive as a sovereign state or whether the country would be incorporated in the Swedish Baltic empire or not. The Danish realm had lost about one-third of its territory to Sweden, and the loss of provinces east of the Sound was especially painful. The Sound changed into an international territorial water, where each coast now belonged to the two opposing powers. This solution was in harmony with the commercial interests of the naval powers. The Netherlands stepped forward as guardian of the power balance and had in a

34 C.-G. Isacson, *Karl X Gustavs Krig. Fälttogen i Polen, Tyskland, Baltikum, Danmark och Sverige 1655–1660* (Lund, 2004), pp. 45ff., 106ff., 173ff.; *När Sundet blev gräns. Till minne av Roskildefreden 1658*, Årsbok för Riksarkivet och Landsarkiven (Stockholm, 2008); A. Florén, 'Karl X Gustav', in A. Florén, S. Dahlgren and J. Lindgren, *Kungar och Krigare. Tre essäer om Karl X Gustav, Karl XI och Karl XII* (Stockholm, 1992), pp. 13–80, at 67–71.

35 E. G. Rasmussen, *Bornholm og Skåne. Triumf og tragedie i Skæbneårene 1658–59* (Bornholm, 2008).

36 Isacson, *Karl X Gustavs Krig*, pp. 186ff.; K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks historie, 3: Tiden 1648–1730*, ed. S. Mørch, *Danmarks historie* (København, 1989), pp. 126ff.; G. Lind, 'Nederlag, krise og legitimitet. Roskildefredens følger for stat og samfund i Danmark', in H. Sanders and P. Karlsson (eds.), *Roskildefreden 1658 i perspektiv* (Roskilde, 2009), pp. 13–31; Florén, 'Karl X Gustav', pp. 71ff.

way taken over the old role of Lübeck. The two Scandinavian combatants had weakened each other through steady warfare and against this background the naval powers were given the opportunity to form alliances to secure their power and trading interests.<sup>37</sup>

### The Baltic as a subsystem of the European state system, 1660–1720/21

Peace in the Baltic region prevailed in the decades after 1660. Sweden did not want to be involved in new wars, but strove to defend the territorial gains and to maintain neutrality and the status quo. The subsequent wars between Denmark and Sweden, the Skåne War (1675–9) and the Great Northern War (1700–20/21) were in many respects a reflection of the great European conflicts during the reign of Louis XIV of France, like the Netherlandic War (1672–9) and the Spanish War of Succession (1701–14). These wars document a rising integration of the Baltic regions into the European diplomatic system, warfare strategy and economy.<sup>38</sup>

In order to maintain Swedish supremacy in the Baltic, King Karl XI (1660–97) allied with France, a connection which already during the Thirty Years War had shown itself valuable. As a result Sweden was soon dragged into new theatres of war. In 1672 Louis XIV directed a military attack against the Netherlands and the Holy Roman Empire. As an ally of France, Sweden attacked Pomerania east of the Odra in 1674, but as soon as the following year the Elector of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm, was able to defeat the Swedish forces in the battle of Fehrbellin north of Berlin.<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile Danish policy and its strategic position in the struggle for supremacy in the Baltic had changed fundamentally. Because of its many territories Denmark was able, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, to block the entrance to Kattegat against the Swedes, to encircle Sweden and to control most parts of the Baltic Sea. The peace treaties of Roskilde and København in 1658–60 changed this situation, when almost one-third of all Danish territory was ceded to Sweden. After 1660 the Danes strove first and foremost to remove the danger posed by the duchy of Holstein-Gottorp, which was allied to Sweden. However, by pursuing this foreign policy goal

37 Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', pp. 162ff.

38 Cf. Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', pp. 166f.

39 S. Dahlgren, 'Karl XI', in A. Florén, S. Dahlgren and J. Lindegren, *Kungar och Krigare*, pp. 83–148, at 100ff.

a continuation of the rivalry with Sweden was inevitable. The second intention of the Danes was to reconquer the lost territories, especially the Skåne provinces. In Denmark the government was well aware that these goals could only be achieved with the help of strong allies and a well-equipped navy.

The new Danish King Christian V allied in 1675 with Brandenburg and opened the war. He had reinforced his position by winning the counties of Oldenburg and Delmenhorst from the Holy Roman Empire. Further he was encouraged by the Swedish defeat at Fehrbellin. The Danish navy had meanwhile been improved and had acquired more vessels. Christian V first attacked Holstein-Gottorp and occupied its fortifications; secondly he forced the duke to renounce his sovereignty. Shortly after, Danish troops marched into the Swedish outposts in northern Germany. Danish forces also attacked Skåne. At sea the Danish navy was successful initially. However, Denmark had in December 1676 lost the bloody battle of Lund in Skåne and had gradually to abandon conquests, in spite of the fact that in 1677 Admiral Niels Juel defeated a superior Swedish navy in the Bay of Køge. After that, neither of the combatants made real progress.<sup>40</sup>

Sweden was supported by France and was able to maintain its territory and its position. Denmark was forced to cede her conquests (including Gotland and Wismar). The peace treaty concluded in St Germain in 1679 was a French dictat, without consulting Sweden. This illustrates the influence of foreign powers concerning conflicts in the Baltic region. This had been developing gradually and had already become visible during the earlier Danish–Swedish struggles.<sup>41</sup>

Sweden was still the strongest power in Northern Europe after the Skåne War. However, Denmark and Sweden were not the only states to be involved in the struggle for supremacy of the Baltic. Also engaged were Poland, Russia, the Holy Roman Empire and later on Brandenburg, the Netherlands, Spain and France. For almost a century Sweden succeeded in upholding *dominium maris Baltici*. King Karl XI strengthened Sweden's power by building up a strong permanent army and by enlarging the considerable naval force. However, Sweden was as a conglomerate state threatened in the Baltic region. Only so long as the neighbouring countries were weak and the

40 See, among others, Villstrand, *Sveriges Historia 1600–1721*, pp. 185ff.; H. V. Gregersen, *Slesvig og Holsten før 1830* (København, 1981), p. 352; Jessen-Klingenberg, *Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins. Ein Überblick von A. Scharff*, p. 55.

41 Frost, *The Northern Wars 1558–1721*, pp. 208ff.; Jespersen, 'Tiden 1648–1730', pp. 238ff.; Hornborg, *Kampen om Östersjön*, pp. 212ff.

naval powers were positively disposed towards Sweden was it possible to maintain supremacy. Soon, however, this basis for holding power in Northern Europe was repudiated.<sup>42</sup>

In the first decades following the Skåne War, peace was relatively stable and calm, and even a Danish–Swedish alliance was considered. After the war, as soon as 1679, an agreement on mutual help in case of a possible attack came about. In the years 1691 and 1693 treaties between Denmark and Sweden on armed neutrality were concluded. Both states strove to protect the expanding sea trade against acts of war from the competing European Great Powers. However, the collaboration did not last for long; the differences between the Danish and Swedish fundamental interests were simply too great.<sup>43</sup>

The question concerning Holstein-Gottorp especially strained Danish–Swedish relations. The Danish government was concerned about the duke's endeavours to secure his sovereignty. On the other hand, the growing conflict between France and Sweden was noticed with content in København. In the year 1682 France showed itself ready to tolerate Danish decisions concerning Holstein-Gottorp. After a Swedish threat a French navy arrived in the Sound, and Karl XI showed no interest in helping Holstein-Gottorp. However, the duchy still meant a threat to Denmark, and in 1684 Danish troops moved into Gottorp. During the following year the duke was obliged to recognise Danish supremacy and pay homage to King Christian V. Further Danish demands for sovereignty over Hamburg were prevented thanks to pressure from the emperor and Brandenburg. At an international conference in Altona the problem of Holstein-Gottorp was the subject of negotiations. As a result, the Treaty of Altona (1689) confirmed the sovereign rights of the duchy. Denmark had to accept this and could not hope for support from France.<sup>44</sup>

The question concerning Holstein-Gottorp was still not solved. Denmark watched with anxiety the strengthened relations between Sweden and the duchy and felt encircled and threatened from the south. The Swedish king died in 1697 and the Danes used the occasion and destroyed the newly erected fortifications in Holstein-Gottorp. They reckoned that no European Great Power would support Sweden. A planned marriage between the new Swedish King Karl XII and a Danish princess was not realised.<sup>45</sup>

42 Behre, Larsson and Österberg, *Sveriges historia 1521–1809*, pp. 160ff.

43 Jespersen, 'Tiden 1648–1730', pp. 253ff.

44 Gregersen, *Slesvig og Holsten før 1830*, pp. 356ff.

45 See, among others, Jespersen, 'Tiden 1648–1730', pp. 253ff.

An anti-Swedish coalition was formed in 1699 between Denmark, Russia and Saxony (with Poland in a personal union). The goal was to expel Sweden from its possessions south and east of the Baltic. Denmark intended to reconquer Skåne and further to eliminate the duke of Holstein-Gottorp as an enemy. Russia under the reign of Tsar Peter I the Great wanted to restore access to the Baltic Sea, and August von Saxony was interested in Livonia. Sweden's allied partners were, from the beginning, Holstein-Gottorp, England and the Netherlands. For the next twenty years wars and conflicts were to put their stamp on the Baltic region.<sup>46</sup>

The Great Northern War began in March 1700 with an attack by Polish and Saxon troops on Livonia. At the same time a Danish army marched into the duchy of Holstein-Gottorp. The young Swedish King Karl XII saw himself threatened from two fronts and decided at first to turn against Denmark. He landed on Sjælland and marched towards København. The new Danish King Frederik IV was ready to negotiate, and under pressure from Sweden's allies England and the Netherlands a peace treaty was concluded in Travendal. Denmark had to accept the sovereignty of Holstein-Gottorp and obliged itself for the future not to join any anti-Swedish coalition.<sup>47</sup>

In the Great Northern War Sweden was able to endure for years thanks to the military reforms undertaken by Karl XI. Besides the peace treaty with Denmark, she concluded peace with August II, king of Poland as well as elector of Saxony. Karl XII turned against Russia, but the disastrous defeat at Poltava in 1709 changed Sweden's situation. The battle was a turning point in the war and pointed to the coming end of Sweden's position as a Great Power.<sup>48</sup>

After the Peace Treaty of Travendal in 1700, Denmark had withdrawn from the anti-Swedish alliance. Yet she was waiting for an opportunity to continue the war. After the Swedish defeat at Poltava the Danish preparedness for war increased, and in October that same year war was declared on Sweden. A month later Danish troops landed in Skåne and occupied Helsingborg. However, in March 1710 the Danes suffered a military defeat.

46 Frost, *The Northern Wars 1558–1721*, pp. 226ff.

47 Jespersen, 'Tiden 1648–1730', pp. 296ff.; Gregersen, *Slesvig og Holsten før 1830*, pp. 361ff.

48 Frost, *The Northern Wars 1558–1721*, pp. 288ff. Concerning the military reforms in Sweden undertaken by Karl XI, see Dahlgren, 'Karl XI', pp. 83–148, at 127ff.; G. Petri, 'Slaget vid Poltava', in G. Jonasson (ed.), *Historia kring Karl XII* (Stockholm, 1964), pp. 65–100.



Denmark turned now against the Swedish possessions in northern Germany. This did not bring the expected success in spite of besieging Wismar, a campaign in Swedish-Pomerania, efforts by the Danish navy in the territorial waters east of Rügen as well as a military offensive in the duchies of Bremen and Verden. The Danes were forced to withdraw and were defeated in 1712 at Gadebusch in Mecklenburg. The Swedish troops marched into Holstein-Gottorp, but were besieged by Danes, Saxons and Russians and in 1713 were forced to capitulate. At almost the same time Prussia and Hannover (since 1714 united in a personal union with England) joined the anti-Swedish coalition. George I of England guaranteed the Danish King Frederik IV the possession of Holstein-Gottorp.<sup>49</sup>

At the end of 1715, as King Karl XII turned up in Stralsund after returning from Turkey, the city was besieged by the allied powers. He escaped to the Swedish core lands and was able to prevent a planned landing of Danish and Russian troops in southern Sweden. Next Karl XII threatened Norway and in 1718 undertook a second campaign against Norway in order to strengthen his tactical position at future peace negotiations. However, he was hit by a bullet and died in a trench in front of the besieged fortress of Frederikshald at the Swedish–Norwegian border.<sup>50</sup> According to an agreement with Prussia, Denmark took over Swedish-Pomerania on the southern Baltic coast north of the river Peene at the end of 1715 and administered this territory until February 1721.<sup>51</sup>

The new Swedish government under the guidance of Ulrike Leonora, sister to the unmarried deceased king, strove to establish peace negotiations. In 1720 peace was concluded with Denmark. In the Peace Treaty of Frederiksborg – arranged and guaranteed by France and England – Sweden had to agree to pay Sound Due, and to forward Denmark a great sum of money for its conquests and undertook for the future not to support the duke of Holstein-Gottorp. Denmark got the part of the duchy of Schleswig held by the duke, but had to hand over all conquered areas in return for monetary compensation. Denmark did not succeed in regaining the provinces lost to Sweden in 1660, and also Danish-Pomerania (including Rügen) had to be

49 Gregersen, *Slesvig og Holsten før 1830*, pp. 366ff.

50 J. Lindegren, 'Karl XII', in A. Florén, S. Dahlgren and J. Lindegren, *Kungar och Krigare. Tre essäer om Karl X Gustav, Karl XI och Karl XII* (Stockholm, 1992), pp. 151–225, at 197ff., 210ff.

51 M. Meier, *Vorpommern nördlich der Peene unter dänischer Verwaltung 1715 bis 1721*, Beiträge zur Militärgeschichte, 65 (München, 2008); J. E. Olesen, 'Auswirkungen der dänischen Herrschaft auf Verständnis und Praxis der Tribunalstätigkeit', in D. Alvermann and J. Regge (eds.), *Justitia in Pommern*, Geschichte, 63 (Münster, 2004), pp. 111–12.

returned to Sweden at the beginning of 1721. The naval powers dominated the Baltic and were not interested in any basic changes of power relations. International strategic interests became of primary importance. The losers in this internationalisation of the Baltic region were Sweden and Denmark.

Although Denmark was not able to gain territories, King Frederik IV (1699–1730) managed at least to solve the question of Holstein-Gottorp. The new Swedish government gave up the alliance with the duke of Holstein-Gottorp. This strengthened the southern border of Denmark and solved a basic security problem of utmost importance. Sweden was reduced to a middle-ranking power in line with Denmark. This development improved the security position of Denmark.<sup>52</sup>

Tsar Peter I the Great benefited the most from the Great Northern War. Russia secured its access to the Baltic Sea and became a Great Power like Brandenburg-Prussia. Sweden lost all its territorial possessions except for Finland, Wismar (including the island of Poel) and Swedish-Pomerania north of the river Peene. With the loss of the eastern Baltic provinces the basis for Sweden's position as a Great Power no longer existed.<sup>53</sup> The years from 1563 up to 1720/21 constitute an important epoch in the history of the Baltic and especially in the history of Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland. Seven times altogether Danish and Swedish antagonism ended in wars and open conflicts, and even during periods of peace their relations were tense.

The breakdown of the medieval powers in the Baltic at the beginning of the sixteenth century opened it up for Danish and Swedish expansion. In the struggle for supremacy in the Baltic, Denmark was able to assert itself in the Seven Years War of 1563–70 and in the Kalmar War of 1611–13 until the 1620s, but due to the defeat in 1626 at Lutter am Barenberg in the so-called Emperor's War (*Kejserkrigen*) and Sweden's expansion into the eastern Baltic, it was no longer possible for Denmark to maintain mastery of the Baltic. The second phase in the struggle for *dominium maris Baltici* lasted from 1630 until 1660 and was characterised by the question of whether or not Denmark could survive as a sovereign state. As a result of three wars Denmark had to cede several provinces to Sweden, but thanks to her strong navy and military help from the Netherlands in 1659 Sweden was not able to conquer the Danish core lands.

52 Jespersen, 'Tiden 1648–1730', pp. 306ff.; Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', p. 167.

53 Frost, *The Northern Wars*, pp. 319ff.; P. Karonen, 'The Council of the Realm and the Quest for Peace in Sweden, 1718–1721', in P. Karonen (ed.), *Hopes and Fears for the Future in Early Modern Sweden, 1500–1800*, *Studia Historica*, 79 (Helsinki, 2009), pp. 262–87.

In the third phase of rivalry (1660–1720/21), Danish plans to reconquer the lost provinces played a central role. However, both states were dependent on the Great Powers. The European naval powers saw especially in the rise of Sweden a threat to their interests and followed a policy of maintaining the balance of power in the Baltic. From the middle of the seventeenth century the Baltic Sea region became more and more an integrated part of the international political and economic system. With the end of the Great Northern War in 1720/21 both Sweden and Denmark were reduced to middle-ranking states. Russia now became a Great Power. Due to the expanding internationalisation of the Baltic region the two Scandinavian powers must be characterised more as participants than as winners in this process.

## Militarisation of Scandinavia, 1520–1870

GUNNER LIND

Militarisation was a dominant feature of European history in this epoch. A fundamental aspect was military expansion. Armies and navies became much larger, even compared with the growing population. Militarisation also meant structural change. During the first phase, culminating between 1550 and 1650, armies and navies became permanent state establishments instead of temporary formations combining the more warlike parts of the populace with the small forces of international mercenaries. During the second phase, roughly between the French Revolution and the First World War, mass conscription enabled a further rise in the size of armed forces, supported by the wealth of industrial economies.

Military expansion and structural change had an immense impact on society. A military sector in the modern sense separated from the rest, now unarmed and civilian. In this way militarisation also meant civilianisation, drawing a clear social demarcation line dividing military from civilians. The social elite changed with the addition of a well-populated class of military officers and administrators, transforming the social role of traditional nobility. Tax burdens multiplied and conscription interfered with the plans of families and the lives of individuals. Military service and death in war consumed productive manpower. Politics were changed by the resource demands of the new military and the political potential of new military elites and new armed forces.

Militarisation – economic, social, cultural or political – was generally modest in European societies, compared with the standards of the industrial age. Military developments were, however, one of the most dynamic aspects of the early modern era, not least in Scandinavia, as the two Nordic kingdoms were among the most militarised in Europe both from a quantitative and structural point of view during large parts of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The impact was so strong that the history of these societies can to a large extent be written as the history of militarisation; and

Swedish military history has been the point of departure for wide-ranging interpretations of European history.<sup>1</sup>

### Challenges and reform, 1520–1614

Navies came first. Nordic kings had built and operated warships for centuries. This developed into stable naval institutions during the first decades of the sixteenth century. København and Stockholm became main bases and shipyards. Small corps of naval officers, seamen and artillerymen formed the nucleus of a naval establishment. In 1560, each navy totalled about 7,000 tons displacement, distributed on sixteen and nineteen ships respectively, plus a number of Swedish galleys. Tonnage had increased to 15,000 and 24,000 in 1610.<sup>2</sup>

Navies came first for several reasons. Sea transport was eminently important between the Danish islands and along the coasts of the vast, thinly populated landscapes of Norway, Sweden and Finland. During the sixteenth century, the Nordic kings greatly desired to match the naval strength of the Hanseatic cities. Finally, dedicated royal warships could be built to a size and design which were not practical or economical for the dual-use ships of cities or aristocrats.

Navies are costly, high-technology forces employing relatively few people. The main impact of naval development during this epoch was fiscal, even if wartime conscription of sailors could be felt in towns and coastal areas. The Swedish crown, however, embarked on a much more ambitious project around the middle of the century: creating a large state army of permanent regiments with professional officers commanding soldiers recruited from the Swedish and Finnish countryside, first as volunteers, later by conscription, and only training and serving little in peacetime to keep costs down. Organisational and military setbacks were numerous during the first decades and wartime armies were always stiffened with as many international professionals as could be paid, but the project was successful in the long run. Sweden became the first European state to create an

1 J. Glete, *War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden as Fiscal-Military States, 1500–1660* (London, 2002); M. Roberts, 'The Military Revolution, 1560–1660', in C. J. Rogers (ed.), *The Military Revolution Debate* (Boulder, 1995). See also G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovations and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1996).

2 J. Glete, *Navies and Nations: Warships, Navies and State Building in Europe and America, 1500–1860*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmensis, Stockholm Studies in History, 48 (Stockholm, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 133–9.

established state army mainly from conscripts and one of the first to establish a sizeable permanent army at all.<sup>3</sup>

The influence of this army was huge. It enabled the Swedish kings to resist Denmark in two wars and to expand Swedish territory across the Baltic. Conscription enabled the crown to take men instead of money from a cash-poor rural population, raising Sweden among the powers of Europe and enabling the Vasa kings to wage war in the east almost continually from the mid-sixteenth century to 1629. Death in service must have acted as a brake on the economic and demographic expansion of the age, but how much is not known. It is known, however, that individuals did much to avoid conscription, and that conscription created an important new arena for friction as well as for political give-and-take between crown and peasants, contributing to the political status of the peasants' estate. The military officers, *krigsbefälet*, appeared as a new element at the top of society. About half were Swedish noblemen or foreigners who were accepted as such. The existence of a large group of non-noble officers drove the recognition of *krigsbefälet* as an estate with written privileges and separate representation when the estates were called together. Another testimony to the importance of the military was the short civil war where Duke Karl ousted Sigismund in 1597. Winning over the royal navy and the established regiments had become an important element in the game for the throne.<sup>4</sup>

### Militarisation, 1615–60

For decades the new military format had little impact on Danish land forces. A small number of aristocrats from Denmark and Holstein participated in the international professional military system, especially in the Netherlands War, and a number acted as military entrepreneurs financing equipment and soldiers during the Kalmar War (1611–13). The first permanent regiments were established in 1615. They arose as a result of the conversion of the duties owed by some crown farms into the provision of soldiers; but from 1621

3 G. Artéus and T. Roth, *A Brief History of the Swedish Armed Forces* (Stockholm, 2003), pp. 10–12.

4 G. Artéus, *Till militärstatens förhistoria. Krig, professionalisering och social förändring under Vasasönnernas regering*, *Militärhistoriska Studier*, 8 (Stockholm, 1986); S. A. Nilsson, *Den stora krigens tid. Om Sverige som militärstat och bondesamhälle*, *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis*, *Studia Historica Upsaliensia*, 161 (Stockholm, 1990); S. A. Nilsson, *På väg mot militärstaten. Krigsbefällets etablering i den äldre Vasatidens Sverige*, *Opuscula Historica Upsaliensia*, 3 (Uppsala, 1989).

a system of conscription was used instead. Conscript regiments first appeared in Norway a few years later.<sup>5</sup>

From then until the 1680s, both Nordic states had essentially the same military system: armies combining professional regiments recruited both nationally and abroad with national regiments where rural conscripts were led by professional officers and NCOs (non-commissioned officers); and navies with a strong professional core, mainly based in the capital cities, supplemented with a certain amount of conscription and additional recruitment in wartime. Armies and navies grew rapidly without changing the basic model. The trend towards growth was partly obscured by strong oscillations between periods of war and peace. Swedish military activities reached an all-time high during the 1630s and 1640s, while Danish-Norwegian armies were largest during the German War of the 1620s and the Swedish wars in 1657–60. The Swedish-Finnish army was larger than the Danish-Norwegian through most of these decades. Sweden waged war for much longer periods than the Danish state and periodically controlled vast resources commandeered from conquered territory or contributed by allies. Navy sizes were more equal, but even here Sweden periodically had a substantial lead.<sup>6</sup>

Militarisation of the elites proceeded during these decades, but on different levels. Large numbers of new men, rising through the ranks or hired in Germany, were integrated as Swedish noblemen. All available talent, nobles and commoners, was recruited from the Swedish domains on both sides of the Baltic to serve the state as military or civilian officers. Profiting from war enabled this much-enlarged elite, with or without old pedigrees, to earn a living serving the crown of Sweden. The scale was more modest in the Danish state, but the mechanisms were the same. These military officers, organised in a strict hierarchy, and military bureaucrats, governing tens of thousands of soldiers and sailors, were carriers of distinct cultural values. They valued courage, of course, but also expediency, efficiency, obedience, skill, experience and personal merit; but they were often at odds with the estate system, stiff legalism and deference to tradition typical of society and politics.<sup>7</sup>

5 G. Lind, *Hæren og magten i Danmark, 1614–1662* (Odense, 1994).

6 L. E. Wolke, 'De svenska arméerna i Tyskland under Trettioåriga kriget. Sammansättning och styrka', in K. Abukhanfusa (ed.), *Krig och fred i källorna* (Stockholm, 1998); Glete, *Navies and Nations*; Lind, *Hæren og magten*; J. Mankell, *Uppgifter rörande svenska krigsmaktens styrke, sammansättning och fördelning sedan slutet af femtonhundratalet* (Stockholm, 1865).

7 C. Collstedt, *Duellanten och rättvisan. Duellbrott och synen på manlighet i stormaktsväldets slutskede* (Lund, 2007); G. Göransson, *Virtus Militaris. Officersideal i Sverige 1560–1718*, *Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis*, 68 (Lund, 1990); Lind, *Hæren og magten*; G. Lind,

Politics were militarised in both states beyond the obvious question of war and peace. At one level, tax, tolls and conscription for military purposes became major political issues, creating tensions between the crown and the population, high and low, and between the estates of the realm. At another level, officers and military bureaucrats appeared as a distinct, numerous and powerful element in politics. This was apparent in Sweden throughout the period, shaping the discussion of the reduction (taking back royal estates) versus contribution. The consequences were most dramatic in Denmark, however. The two levels of political impact combined during the absolutist revolution in Denmark in 1660–1, motivating the lower estates to unite with the king against the nobility and enabling the king to use the threat from the army to break noble resistance at the culmination of the crisis and intimidate adversaries afterwards.<sup>8</sup>

Militarisation below the level of the elite may paradoxically have been strongest in the Danish state during these decades. Most of the many conscripts from the Swedish lands perished beyond the sea during the foreign wars, mainly from disease. Rural society was militarised in a negative way, shaped by efforts to avoid conscription and by the lack of men in the households, the fields and the forest.<sup>9</sup> The efforts of the state generally prevailed, however, in large part carried by the clergy as transmitters of state propaganda and administrators of the comprehensive registration of the population. In Denmark and Norway, where losses were much more modest and military strategy mainly defensive, serving and former soldiers became an increasingly numerous class. Actual military experience may have contributed to the change in the image of war in the printed public sphere during these decades, where a dominant religious interpretation of war as

'Kong Frederik og muremester Sørensen. Den ældste danske militærfaglige litteratur og dens publikum', *Fund og Forskning* 34, 1995; S. C. Pedersen, *På liv og død. Duellens historie i Danmark* (København, 2003).

8 L. Jespersen, 'The Constitutional and Administrative Situation', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000); Lind, *Hæren og magten*; S. A. Nilsson, 'Reduktion eller kontribution. Alternativ inom 1600-talets svenska finanspolitik', *Scandia*, 24 (1958).

9 M. Huhtamies, *Knektar och bönder. Knektersättare vid utskrivningarna i Nedre Satakunda under trettioåriga kriget* (Helsingfors, 2004); J. Lindegren, *Utskrivning och utsugning. Produktion och reproduktion i Bygdeå, 1620–1640*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 117 (Uppsala, 1980); N. E. Villstrand, *Anpassning eller protest. Lokalsamhället inför utskrivningarna av fotfolk till den svenska krigsmakten 1620–1679* (Åbo, 1992).



the scourge of God was marginalised by newsprint telling of war as a manly contest and a patriotic enterprise.<sup>10</sup>

### Military absolutism, 1660–1720

Peacetime armies and navies continued to grow after 1660, but the trend gradually levelled out. Denmark-Norway finally reached parity with Sweden-Finland in military participation rate during the last decades of the seventeenth century. Both Nordic states reached their highest level of demographic and economic militarisation during the Great Nordic War. The military participation rate was then between 4 and 5 per cent in both states, an extreme rate according to the standards of any age and far beyond most contemporary powers. The impact on the living conditions of the population was considerable, especially in Sweden and Finland. The Danish state protected the native population to a higher degree from the impact of military loss by hiring more of its soldiers in Germany.<sup>11</sup>

Military structure, on the other hand, became very different. The Danish crown continued to use the mixed system and employed approximately equal numbers of conscripts and professional soldiers. Large professional forces were concentrated together with most naval activities in and around København. Smaller concentrations could be found in Holstein and in the Norwegian fortresses. Conscript forces with modest action in peacetime were distributed over the countryside. Conscription to both army and navy was strongest in Norway, but found everywhere. In Sweden, the new allotment system (*yngre indelningsverket*) replaced conscription with a new kind of professional soldiers embedded in the countryside, volunteers employed by the peasants in lieu of conscription. Traditional professionals in fortress or urban garrison were relatively few. The navy reduced its presence in Stockholm in favour of the new base at Karlskrona.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> G. Lind, 'Syndens straf og mandens ære: Danske tolkninger af krigen 1611-1660', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 128:3 (2008).

<sup>11</sup> G. Lind, 'Military and Absolutism: The Army Officers of Denmark-Norway as a Social Group and Political Factor, 1660–1848', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 12 (1987), p. 222; J. Lindegren, 'Maktstatens resurser', manuscript, Historiska Institutionen (Uppsala, 1992), pp. 116–87.

<sup>12</sup> L. E. Wolke, *Svenska knektar. Indelta soldater, ryttare och båtsmän i krig och fred* (Lund, 1995); G. Lind, 'Danmark og Øresund i 1600-tallet', in J. Engström and O. L. Frantzen (eds.), *Øresunds strategiske rolle i et historisk perspektiv* (Lund, 1998); G. Lind, 'Den dansk-norske hær i det 18. århundrede. Optimering, modernisering og professionalisering', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 15 (1986); *Svenska flottans historia. Örlogsflottan i ord*

*Indelningsverket* rearranged and intensified the use of a set of tools used by both states during many decades. Together with the great tax assessments of arable land in both states it stands as a monument to the fiscal rationalisation necessitated by persistent extreme military effort. Rationalised support of the armed effort engendered an appreciation of frugality and equality as elements of political culture – rather unusual given the typical tendencies of the day.<sup>13</sup>

The absolutist revolution placed the ‘little army, which is the most real security for the royal hereditary house’<sup>14</sup> at the core of Danish politics. During the rule of Christian V, military aristocrats also played a considerable role at court. The council of the absolute kings, however, was never strongly military in character. The Danish monarchy moved towards the system of control which came to be typical of absolutism. Military and civil power merged solely in the royal person. The king conferred directly with his military ministers outside the council and only rarely admitted military men to the council itself. Correspondingly, royal policy aimed successfully at splitting and segregating the elite groups of society. The radical application of the system of rank for those in the service of the crown made it possible to have an elite of state servants, most of it military, as something clearly separate from the hereditary nobility. Military interests were well served, indeed paramount, but they were very rarely openly expressed.<sup>15</sup>

Military and civilian branches of government were more tightly integrated in Sweden, not least during the rule of Karl XII, where the state was partly ruled from the king’s headquarters. Here the integration of military service elite and old nobility continued as before. Despite the political battles, social and cultural integration gradually weakened the distinctions between old and new elements of the elite. The interests of the service nobility, mainly military men, gradually became the dominant force in Swedish politics. This was crucial during the decades of royal absolutism. Leaders of the army

*och bild från dess grundläggning under Gustav Vasa fram til våre dagar*, 1–4 (Malmö, 1942–9), see vol. 2.

13 Wolke, *Svenska knektar*; Å. Karlsson, *Den jämlike undersåten. Karl XII:s förmögenhetsbeskattning 1713* (Uppsala, 1994); M. Roberts, ‘Charles XI’, *History*, 50:169 (1965).

14 J. A. Fridericia (ed.), *Generallieutenant Jørgen Bjelkes Selvbiografi* (København, 1890), pp. 175f.

15 N. G. Bartholdy, ‘Adelsbegrebet under den ældre enevælde. Sammenhængen med privilegier og rang i tiden 1660–1730’, *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 12:5 (1971); G. Lind, ‘Elites of the Danish Composite State, 1460–1864: Zones of Fracture, Mixing, and the Struggle for Hegemony’, in A. Bues (ed.), *Zones of Fracture in Modern Europe: The Baltic Countries, the Balkans, and Northern Italy* (Wiesbaden, 2005).

appeared as de facto leaders of the state in 1718, filling the vacuum of power at the death of King Karl.<sup>16</sup>

The great political changes in both Nordic states were thus intimately connected to the military. Except for Denmark in the autumn and winter of 1660–1, there was no visible military threat; but military interests had become a force in society, working hand in hand with the interests of the warring monarchs and permeating the traditional nobility.

### Stable military states, 1720–1805

The eighteenth century was a period of relative stability. Military growth stopped. Wars were short, and in the Danish case almost absent. The demographic and economic impact thus declined, especially in comparison with the growing population. Most military structures were also unchanged for decades. From 1763 to 1803, however, Denmark-Norway saw a gradual reinvention of conscription through several experimental stages. The old separate national and professional regiments disappeared. The end result was a very modern model where conscripts were trained in garrisons and stayed on the rolls for a number of years after that. This reform is mainly regarded as a part of the agricultural reforms, as indeed it was; but it also gave the military more manpower than it was fiscally possible to arm and militarised the life experience of many more young men from the countryside in a much stronger way than before. These changes made the army a stronger element in rural life in Denmark, as it was in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Military activity, however, was concentrated more than ever in garrison cities by the reforms.<sup>17</sup>

Armies and navies became seats of an increasingly distinct and sophisticated military culture during the eighteenth century. This was the age of the well-drilled soldier; of the universal use of military uniforms; of the first theoretical officer schools, scientific societies and specialised journals. Theoretical professionalisation had a strong impact in Scandinavia, especially in Denmark, where schools started early (1701 for the navy, 1713 for the army) and examinations for new officers were obligatory before the century ended. The impact of this more culturally distinct military continued

16 G. Artéus, *Krigsmakt och samhälle i frihetstidens Sverige*, Militärhistoriska Studier, 8 (Stockholm, 1982).

17 K. C. Rockstroh, *Udviklingen af den nationale Hær i Danmark i det 17. og 18. Aarhundrede*, 1-3 (København, 1909–26).

to have two main forms. One was the rural regiment embedded in the countryside, injecting an element of military life into the yearly routine of a considerable number of the men and contributing a strong contingent of military officers to the county elites. Another was the garrison city, where København was in a class by itself. Among the elite and the common people, military men were ever present and ever visible, in both the town and the countryside.<sup>18</sup>

The political influence of the military was now mostly felt through social and cultural mechanisms. In the Danish monarchy, the army and navy were kept secluded in their own decision-making processes, more strictly than ever. But the armed foundation of the monarchy was sometimes visible. It was obvious day and night in the military security surrounding the fortress capital; and securing the military control of København and environs through trusted commanders and regiments was an element in both of the coups during the madness of Christian VII, in 1772 and 1784.<sup>19</sup> In both states, military social prestige was high, but particularly in Sweden. The dominance of military men in the noble estate made their viewpoint the self-evident point of departure both at the royal court and in the *riksdag* and *riksråd* of the Age of Liberty. This shaped Swedish policy, both during the Age of Liberty and later. Military priorities were respected at home and foreign policy was guided by a bellicist outlook and surprisingly high military confidence. Several coups and coup attempts were carried out by military officers down to the deposition of Gustav IV Adolf in 1809.<sup>20</sup>

These developments had support outside the military. During the eighteenth century, a bellicist patriotism became a visible part of the political culture in both states and a strong element in the increasingly important

18 G. Artéus (ed.), *Nordens garnisonsstäder. Slutrapport från et forskningsprojekt*, Försvars-högskolans Acta, 4 (Stockholm, 1997); Lind, 'Den dansk-norske hær i det 18. århundrede'; G. Lind, 'Krigsmænd og borgere i København 1600–1855', in K.-E. Frandsen (ed.), *Kongens og folkets København gennem 800 år* (København, 1996); K. Skjold Petersen, 'Garnisonsbyen under enevælden', in S. Bitsch Christensen (ed.), *Den klassiske købstad* (Aarhus, 2005); M. Rosenlöv, *Uddannelsen af Hærens linieofficerer 1713–1963* (København, 1963); J. Seerup, *Søkadetakademiet i oplysningstiden*, Marinehistoriske skrifter, 29 (København, 2001); W. Sjöstrand, 'Grunddragen av den militära undervisningens uppkomst och utvecklingshistoria i Sverige till år 1792', in *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift*, 1941:6 (Uppsala, 1941); F. Thisner, *Militärstatens arvegods. Officerstjänstens socialreproduktiva funktion i Sverige och Danmark, ca 1720–1800* (Uppsala, 2007).

19 A. D. Jørgensen (ed.), *Regeringsskiftet 1784. Fremstillinger og Aktstykker* (København, 1888); L. Koch, 'Hvorledes Sammensværgelsen mod Struensee kom i stand', *Museum*, 1891:2 (1891); Lind, 'Krigsmænd og borgere i København'.

20 Artéus, *Krigsmakt och samhälle*; M. Hemström, *Marschen mot makten. Västra arméns revolt och väg till Stockholm 1809* (Uppsala, 2005).

printed public sphere. It was evident in the Danish state from the middle of the century, and even earlier in Sweden, where patriotism with a military focus had been a theme of royal propaganda for centuries. Defining the focus of patriotism as either the monarchy, the state or the nation was not uncomplicated, especially in the Danish state. But one side of the complex transformation of identities was clearly the adoption of military values and the desire to emulate the military on the part of the middle classes. In Denmark, this contributed to the aversion to the inherited German culture of the army. German as a service language and the many common soldiers still hired from Germany had to go, creating an army which could serve as a focus of Danish nationalism on an equal footing with the navy.<sup>21</sup>

### European normalcy, 1805–70

Bellucist patriotism was prominent during the Napoleonic Wars, in Scandinavia as elsewhere. The war years saw long periods of full mobilisation. Both states expanded their armies with new types of conscript forces: in Denmark and Norway through the implementation of the unified conscription system, extended with various reserves; in Sweden by the addition in 1812 of supplementary conscripts, *beväringen*, to the old troops. In most of Europe, this was an age where military efforts surpassed anything that had gone before. In Scandinavia, absolute military participation was higher than ever, but relative participation did not reach the level of the decades around 1700.<sup>22</sup>

This was the end of Scandinavia as a peculiarly militarised region in Europe. During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars the typical European level of military activity was raised to a point where it matched that of the Nordic states. Economic and demographic militarisation declined in Scandinavia during the coming decades as armies did not keep up with the rapidly growing population and economy. Only Denmark kept a fleet which could be compared with the eighteenth century.<sup>23</sup> The cost in money and lives from war was inconsequential, even in Denmark which had to sustain two wars in the middle of the century. The special social and political status

21 T. Damsholt, *Fædrelandskærlighed og borgerdyd. Patriotisk diskurs og militære reformer i Danmark i sidste del af 1700-tallet* (København, 2000); J. Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk. Nationell och politisk självbild i Sverige från sen stormaktstid till slutet av frihetstiden* (Stockholm, 2000).

22 Lind, 'Military and Absolutism', p. 222.

23 Glete, *Navies and Nations*, 2, pp. 433–5; Lind, 'Military and Absolutism', p. 222.

of the military – evident as late as the 1809 coup in Sweden – declined with the trend towards democratisation.

Normalisation towards European standards was in many ways characteristic of Scandinavian military affairs during the nineteenth century. Political militarisation became embedded in the interconnected national and democratic popular mobilisation. Forms of conscription were extended from the rural population to all men. Attitudes towards the armed forces became flavoured by, on one hand, the association of the military with the old regime and, on the other, by popular love of the soldiers and sailors as protagonists of the nation. The Nordic states were now evidently small powers, and this did necessarily give the national armed forces a restricted defensive role. The stage was set for the continuing cultural and political demilitarisation of the region, which became so characteristic of much of the twentieth century.

## Colonial empires

ERIK GØBEL

Scandinavians have sailed over the seas since the Viking Age in order to conquer new land, often far from home. It started seriously during the ninth century when Vikings colonised the Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, the Hebrides and Isle of Man, as well as parts of Ireland, the Føroyar Islands and Iceland, and from 985 also Greenland. Vikings had also established colonies in the Danelaw in England, in Normandy and along the large Russian rivers. At the end of the Middle Ages, however, only the Føroyar Islands, Iceland and Greenland were still under the Norwegian, later the Danish, crown.

Another kind of colonisation started in the seventeenth century when the Danes founded a trading post in the town of Tranquebar on India's east coast and later a factory in the town of Serampore in Bengal. Moreover, Sweden had for twenty years, from 1683, a colony called New Sweden in Delaware. By the middle of the seventeenth century, both Swedes and Danes acquired forts on the African Gold Coast. In 1672 and 1784, respectively, Denmark and Sweden established small colonies in the Caribbean, and, during a very short intermezzo in 1813–14, the island of Guadeloupe was under Swedish sovereignty.

### The Føroyar Islands

The Føroyar Islands consist of a score of rocky islands, sparsely populated, taking up 1,400 square kilometres. Together with Norway the Føroyar Islands came under the Danish Crown in 1380, but far into the seventeenth century Bergen was the main link to the surrounding world, just like it had been since the Middle Ages. In addition, the Hanseatics played an important role with regard to supplies, and therefore had its trading privileges renewed in 1523.<sup>1</sup>

1 H. J. Debes, *Føroya Söga*, 1–3 (Torshavn, 1990–2000); J. F. West, *Faroe: The Emergence of a Nation* (London, 1972).

The Reformation was carried out in the Føroyar Islands at the king's orders in 1540, and the church land, i.e. almost half of the arable land, became crown land, which was then hired out to the king's yeomen. These made up the upper class together with pastors and government officers of the static, patriarchal and almost self-supporting society. People made a living mainly from sheep-breeding, birding and inshore fishing from small boats. The most important export commodities were woollen goods in the shape of stockings and jerseys, which were exchanged for grain and timber. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, chartered companies enjoyed trading rights to the colony, while in the period 1655–1709 the king's creditors were enfeoffed with the islands.<sup>2</sup>

A more or less constant curse was attacks by pirates, especially those from North Africa, who plundered isolated villages and often kidnapped the villagers. To keep them away, redoubts were constructed around the main town of Tórshavn.

The Føroyar Islands were governed in the Middle Ages by the high sheriff in Bergen, but from 1620 the central administration in København took over the general government of the colony, still according to Norwegian laws. The local government was taken care of by a royal administrative officer (*landfoged*). His subordinates were six sheriffs who collected taxes and secured law and order in their district.

From 1709 until 1856, the Danish crown had the monopoly in trade, at times by means of a chartered Icelandic Company, in accordance with the mercantilist ideas at that time. The monopoly trade's only shop was in Tórshavn, and not until the 1830s were three more shops opened in three other islands. Nonetheless, there were almost constant problems with having the colony sufficiently provisioned. From 1768 to 1788, Niels Ryberg, who was one of København's greatest merchants and shipowners, was allowed to establish a trading centre in Tórshavn. This helped to a certain degree, even though his main business was smuggling tea to the British Isles. In spite of the deplorable situation and the high grain prices around 1800, the Føroyar wanted neither free trade nor liberalisation on a general scale.

When Denmark-Norway became involved in war against Great Britain in 1807, the Føroyar Islands escaped British occupation, but soon they suffered from serious scarcity of all kinds of provisions as shipping from

2 N. Andersen, *Færøerne 1600–1709* (København, 1895; repr., 1964).



Denmark and Norway was cut off. Many people starved, just like in Norway, during the war.

By the peace of 1814, Denmark ceded Norway to Sweden, while the Føroyar Islands – and Iceland and Greenland – stayed under the Danish crown.<sup>3</sup> The islanders were few and society stagnant, but became in 1821 a Danish county (*amt*), governed by a Danish prefect (*amtmand*) and Danish officials in general. By the first free constitution in 1849, the Føroyar became a part of the Kingdom of Denmark, and an advisory assembly was re-established three years later.<sup>4</sup> Division of the colony into municipalities was carried out in 1872.

The repeal of the monopoly trade system in 1856 had profound consequences for the Føroyar Islands. The monopoly and its tariff policy had favoured the production of stockings and neglected the fisheries, which was the most obvious industry for the society. Fish products made up only less than 20 per cent of the exports in 1850. The monopoly system had hampered all initiatives as no private activity was allowed to be profitable. The society, which comprised 8,922 persons in 1860, was so poor that the Føroyar islanders were exempt from state taxes.

After the liberalisation a number of trading posts emerged in villages with considerable fisheries and other kinds of work, e.g. tending cattle and potato growing. It turned out, however, that deep-sea fishing soon would be by far the most important industry in the islands. After some futile attempts deep-sea fishing from larger vessels (as opposed to the traditional small open boats) gained ground from 1872, partly inspired by the Shetlanders. Drying and salting of the catch was a job dominated by women. Deep-sea fisheries took the Føroyar Islands into the modern-world market, and for the next hundred years the fishing industry became the centre of Føroyar economy.

The official language in church and school had been Danish since the Reformation. During the 1870s, though, a national consciousness emerged which encouraged among the Føroyar islanders an understanding of their own cultural and linguistic character. The movement developed around 1900 into a political movement with demands especially regarding the Føroyar language and for self-government.

3 F. Gad, 'La Grönlande, les isles de Ferröe et l'islande non comprises: A New Look at the Origins of the Addition to Article IV of the Treaty of Kiel of 1814', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 4 (1979).

4 J. Thorsteinsson, *Et Færø som Færø. Studier i Færøernes forfatningsmæssige stilling i forhold til Danmark 1834–1852* (Århus, 1990).

## Iceland

Iceland was populated around 870 by Norsemen from Norway. In 1262 the island became a province under the Norwegian crown, and in 1380 the country came, together with Norway, under the Danish king. Nevertheless, Iceland kept its traditional uncentralised administration. During the fifteenth century, the Black Death almost depopulated the island.<sup>5</sup>

From the mid-sixteenth century, the Danish state increased its influence after having carried through the Reformation in 1551 whereby the king confiscated church property and came to be the owner of 19 per cent of the farmland. Almost all peasants were copyholders. Legislative power lay with the *Althing* (*Alþingi*) and the king, whose representative in the country was the captain at Bessastadir (until 1683). Since 1574 Iceland was a bailiwick (*len*), held for an annual fee payable to the king, and divided into twenty-one districts (*sysse*l).

The English and Germans, in particular from Hamburg, had for a long while been trading on the Icelandic coast, but as from 1565 the Danish crown had been exercising its authority by selling licences to shipping and trade in specific ports and trading districts in Iceland. In 1589 and 1631, a fishing limit of 32 miles around the island was established in an attempt to keep away English, Dutch and Basque fishermen and whalers.

In 1602 a Danish monopoly in trade was introduced and was in force until 1787.<sup>6</sup> As prices in fish products were falling and grain-growing and pig-breeding decreased, Iceland became more and more dependent upon sheep-breeding and exports of woollen goods such as stockings and jerseys. Since the fourteenth century, Iceland also exported considerable amounts of sulphur, but this came to an end when the mines were emptied in 1605. The fishing industry was extensive during the seventeenth century, when dried cod and ling in particular were exported. On the other hand, the Icelanders were heavily dependent on imports of many necessary commodities, first and foremost grain, iron and timber.

By the late seventeenth century, the number of inhabitants was c. 55,000. When the first census was taken in 1703, it had decreased to 50,358 living in 7,622 households, of which 5,895 were in farms and 1,175 in houses

5 G. Karlsson, *Iceland's 1100 Years: The History of a Marginal Society* (London, 2000); S. Lindal *et al.* (eds.), *Saga Islands*, 1–10 (Reykjavik, 1974–2009); B. Thorsteinnsson, *Island* (København, 1985).

6 G. Gunnarsson, *Monopoly Trade and Economic Stagnation: Studies in the Foreign Trade of Iceland 1602–1787* (Lund, 1983).

without land. Sixteen per cent of the inhabitants were classified as destitute and vagrant. A comprehensive smallpox epidemic from 1707 to 1709 killed thousands and the population was reduced to a little more than 34,000 people. After the further visitations of smallpox and decline later in that century, the population did not reach 56,035 until 1835, while it had increased to 69,763 in 1870.

Absolutism was introduced in Iceland in 1662, as the interests of the crown and leading Icelanders were closely connected. A chief administrative officer (*landsfoged*) was sent to Iceland in order to collect the king's taxes and dues, in 1683, at the same time as the island became a Danish county (*amt*).<sup>7</sup> Because of its remote position and particular conditions, Iceland enjoyed certain favours such as its own laws and local administration. Sheriffs possessed administrative power and functioned as judges. The *Alþingi*, thereafter, did not have any significant power.

The monopoly in trade lay in the hands of Danish merchants of København, either operating as individuals or united in chartered companies. On a couple of occasions, however, the crown itself had to take over shipping and trade.

In the early eighteenth century, meat – in particular mutton – fish and knitwear made up a third of the value of exports from the country. At that time fisheries were reduced due to a shortage of fish in the sea. In addition, a large proportion of Icelanders lived on the breadline – or below – because commodities imported from Denmark were scarce, expensive and of inferior quality.

In the 1750s the first urban area on the island was established at Reykjavik. Here the crown assisted a handful of small factories economically and practically in order to enable them to work wool into cloth and manufacture fish products.<sup>8</sup> These new establishments never became economically successful, but the town of Reykjavik grew, and gradually became the centre of Iceland's administration and trade. By the mid-seventeenth century, experiments with promising new crops like potatoes, cabbage and beets were started. With regard to health, a country medical office was founded in 1760, where both midwives and nurses were trained.

7 H. Gustafsson, *Mellan kung och allmoge. Ämbetsmän, beslutsprocess och inflytande på 1700-talets Island*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studies in history, 33 (Stockholm, 1985).

8 H. Robertsdóttir, *Wool and Society: Manufacturing Policy, Economic Thought and Local Production in 18th-century Iceland* (Gothenburg, 2008).

The findings of a commission in Denmark in 1770 brought about the division of Iceland into two counties and, not least, the abolition of the medieval principles and organisation of trade which had been intensely criticised for a long time.<sup>9</sup> From now on, prices were fixed with regard to the value of commodities on the foreign markets, Danish merchants were allowed to settle in the country and Icelanders were allowed to be apprenticed to shopkeepers – but the actual monopoly of trade was maintained. Icelanders experienced a rise in most export prices, especially fish products, first and foremost cod which was both dried and salted.

Iceland was hit by a terrible disaster in the summer of 1783 when a volcanic eruption covered 580 square kilometres with lava and poisonous ash fell on almost the entire island. This catastrophe was followed by extraordinarily cold weather and a failure of crops, and the next year by strong earthquakes. Between 1783 and 1785 a third of Iceland's cows, three-quarters of the sheep and around 10,000 people, i.e. 20 per cent of the population, died from starvation. In addition to this came a smallpox epidemic in 1786 which carried off another 1,500 persons. Help from Denmark to the colony was very limited and arrived much too late.

The monopoly in trade was abolished as from 1788, and the majority of merchants were by then Norwegians and Holsteiners. The organisation and manner of trade itself at the many trading stations along the coasts, however, were not much changed.

## Greenland

Greenland has been populated for 4,000 years, initially by Eskimos (*Inuit*). In 985 the first Scandinavians arrived from Iceland and settled in south-west Greenland. The Norsemen remained there until they died out in the fifteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

Greenland, i.e. western Greenland, was rediscovered by Martin Frobisher and John Davis in the 1570s and 1580s as a consequence of British interest in whaling, which was to procure animal train-oil. The Danish-Norwegian king also had interests in the northern seas and claimed, from around 1600, sovereignty over Greenland, while also Dutch, French and Basque whalers were active in the Davis Strait. Danish attempts to establish whaling

<sup>9</sup> E. Hreinsson, *Nätverk och nepotism. Den regionala förvaltningen på Island 1770–1870* (Göteborg, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> F. Gad, *Grønland* (København, 1984).

companies in 1619 and 1635 were unsuccessful, and even though train-oil prices were rising, whaling under the Danish flag did not really come into operation. However, expeditions were sent out from København and Bergen throughout the seventeenth century in order to claim the territorial right which was challenged first and foremost by the Dutch.

The Dutch were, especially after the peace in 1713, exceedingly active on the west coast of Greenland where they, in addition to whaling, carried out a comprehensive trade with the Eskimos during the summer months. They bartered narwhal and walrus teeth, seal and fox skin, blubber and whalebone against a variety of European commodities such as clothing, foodstuffs and metal goods. For the rest of the year the Eskimos were cut off from the outside world, living their traditional life as sealers and hunters.<sup>11</sup>

After the termination of the Great Northern War, in 1720, a trading company was established in Bergen on the initiative of Pastor Hans Egede, who wished to conduct missionary work among the Norsemen in Greenland. Accompanied by his family and other colonists he arrived in 1721 at southern Greenland and seven years later Egede founded Godthaab (Nuuk) a little further to the north. He did not find any Norsemen, so instead he pursued his mission and teaching among the Eskimos. He left Greenland in 1736, and later published the first comprehensive description of the Eskimos and Greenland.<sup>12</sup>

Soon thereafter, the crown took over business, and as time went on established new so-called colonies on the west coast from Julianehaab (Qaqortoq) in the south to Upernavik in the north. In this way Denmark-Norway could lock up Greenland and more or less keep other Europeans out. Trade and shipping became a Danish-Norwegian monopoly, which was administered from 1734 to 1749 by the København merchant Jacob Severin and from 1750 to 1774 by the General Trading Company.<sup>13</sup> Until the 1770s, nonetheless, the Dutch were constantly an active competitor to Danes and Norwegians.

European impact on Greenlandic society was intense. Diseases such as smallpox carried off large numbers of Eskimos, and economic and social

11 F. Gad, *Grønlands historie 1700–1808*, 1–3 (København, 1967–76) (English translation, *The History of Greenland, 1700–1808*, 1–3 (London, 1970–82)).

12 H. Egede, *Det gamle Grønlands nye Perustration, eller Naturel-historie og Beskrivelse over det gamle Grønlands Situation . . .* (København, 1741); new edn by Louis Bobé, *Meddelelser om Grønland*, 54 (København, 1925) (English translation, *A Description of Greenland . . .* (New York, 1973)).

13 P. P. Sveistrup, *Det Almindelige Handelskompagni 1747–1774 med særligt Henblik paa dets Virksomhed i Grønland, Meddelelser om Grønland*, 131:9 (København, 1943).

circumstances were gradually transformed according to European norms. Contributing to this was the fact that many missionaries married Greenlanders and had a family there.

By establishing the Royal Greenland Trading Company in 1776 and by injecting public capital, Denmark-Norway concentrated on exercising sovereignty over Greenland, while the Company traded and administered the colony. Moreover, a more efficient local administration was generated in 1782 when two inspectorates (*inspektorater*) were instituted, one for south Greenland and one for north Greenland – the east coast of the enormous island was still not colonised. One of the important tasks was to protect the Eskimo population, for instance by means of rules of behaviour for the Europeans, by supporting the sealers, by helping during food shortages, by prohibiting aquavit etc. When it came to trade, fixed prices for both purchase and sale were introduced, being exactly the same all along the coast.

Around 1790 the colonisation of western Greenland had been accomplished. But after a time of prosperity, especially during the 1790s, Denmark-Norway's involvement in war against Great Britain became a catastrophe and the servicing of Greenland came to an almost complete standstill from 1808 to 1814. Greenland was not ceded by the peace treaty, but Denmark had gone bankrupt and the following decades were hard times. From the 1830s, however, conditions improved,<sup>14</sup> as the number of trading stations – small places as a rule with church, school and shop – increased considerably, the Company's buying and selling became more effective and the commodities in the shops became better and even cheaper.

In this way Greenlandic sealing and other kinds of production was stimulated, which was a necessity if the colony was to make a profit. Society became more and more influenced by European commodities such as tobacco, coffee, coal and wood. The population amounted in 1805 to around 6,000, but increased gradually to 9,648 in 1855; thereafter it stagnated and totalled only 9,720 in 1880.

Inspired by the improved economy, it was considered whether trade might be liberalised, but commissions in 1835, 1851 and 1863 found it better for the Greenlanders if the Royal Greenland Trading Company maintained its monopoly of shipping and trade to the closed country. The Company, on the other hand, should not aim at the largest possible profit, but instead be in

<sup>14</sup> P. P. Sveistrup and S. Dalgaard, *Det danske Styre af Grønland 1825–1815, Meddelelser om Grønland*, 145:1 (København, 1945).

economic equilibrium, while a surplus, if any, was to be used for the raising of the level of education and standard of living in general among the Greenlanders. (The monopoly lasted until 1950.)

With regard to administration, a number of boards (*forstanderskaber*) were established and elected by locals in order to take care of local issues, first and foremost public assistance, but the boards also functioned as a Greenlandic legal institution. Each board comprised the colony manager, the doctor, the pastor and the majority of members were Greenlanders. Mission and school activities were continued in Greenland, among others by the effective German *Herrnhuters* (Moravian Brethren). This meant that illiteracy had been almost eradicated by the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1860 12 per cent of the population was employed in European occupations such as administration, trade, mission and education, while 88 per cent were sealers.

The increase in population was probably caused by better sanitation, Danish doctors, educated midwives and the first hospital in 1856. From the mid-nineteenth century the seal population was decreasing, and so was demand for animal oil. The most important export commodities, according to value, were train-oil (12 per cent), seal skin (7 per cent), fox skin (2 per cent) and eiderdown (1 per cent). In addition, cryolite had been found in 1807 at Ivigtut, where mining was intensified, in particular after 1859, as demand for aluminium increased drastically, and consequently also for this very scarce catalyst. Later on, cod-fishing and sheep-breeding became most important.

Because of the heavy sea ice along the east coast of Greenland it was very dangerous and almost impossible to land there. In 1822, however, the English whaler William Scoresby succeeded in getting ashore, and a few years later a Danish naval officer did the same. But not until fifty years later did Danish and foreign expeditions start a serious exploration and mapping of the coast of east Greenland and the northernmost part of the coast of West Greenland up to Thule. All of Greenland became a Danish county by the constitution of 1953 after a difficult process of modernisation which was accelerated after that.

## Asia

In Asia, Sweden had no colonies even though a number of trading expeditions were sent to India and China. Denmark, on the other hand, established factories in India and small trading posts around the Indian Ocean.

In 1618 five ships departed from København bound for Ceylon (Sri Lanka).<sup>15</sup> The fleet was equipped by the first Danish East India Company which was established by royal charter in 1616. The Danish company was heavily inspired by the Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, VOC) and the Danish charter was to a high degree simply copied from the Dutch of 1602. The capital was predominantly domestic: the king provided a considerable amount, while Hamburgers and the Dutch invested 2.5 and 5 per cent respectively. Activities were based upon Dutch expertise with regard to both navigation and trade.

The first expedition, commanded by the young nobleman Ove Gjedde, sailed through the Channel, via the Cape Verde Islands and the Cape of Good Hope, along Africa's east coast to Ceylon, where the fleet dropped anchor after 535 days which were characterised by many problems and many dead sailors. On top of all this, it turned out not to be possible to obtain permission to establish a trading station in Ceylon.

Nevertheless Gjedde's expedition became a success, because the Danes sailed on to the Coromandel Coast where they managed to negotiate a treaty with the Nayak of Tanjore. He bestowed the small town of Tranquebar upon the Danish king and promised that the Danes might establish a fort and a factory there, if only they would carry on trade. Tranquebar is situated a couple of hundred kilometres south of Madras (Chennai). Very soon Ove Gjedde erected Fort Dansborg and a wall surrounding the town. When his fleet departed for Denmark with a modest cargo of pepper and textiles, they left a small garrison, a few tradesmen and a pastor.

In order to procure more return cargoes for Europe it was necessary to trade around Asia, especially for a small European nation, and the Danes engaged themselves heavily in intra-Asian shipping and trade, the so-called country trade. They established small trading offices in Pipli and Balasore in Bengal, in Masulipatam on the northern part of the Coromandel Coast, in Bantam on Java and in Macassar on Celebes. Gradually the Coromandel became more and more important.

Crucial for the colony, however, was service from København, but this was rather irregular and unpredictable. Denmark experienced hard times from 1618 to 1638, and only twenty-three expeditions were sent out. After

15 G. Olsen, *Dansk Ostindien 1616–1732. De ostindiske kompagniers handel på Indien, Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 5 (København, 1966); O. Feldbæk and O. Justesen, *Kolonierne i Asien og Afrika* (København, 1980); S. Diller, *Die Dänen in Indien, Südostasien und China 1620–1845* (Wiesbaden, 1999).



two ships had been equipped the year after, the navigation came to a complete standstill, and the Company was dissolved in 1650. In spite of many problems, however, Tranquebar turned out to be still in Danish hands when a relief expedition finally arrived at the colony in 1669. The expedition sailed on to Bantam and returned to København with a valuable pepper cargo.

Now the Danish East India Company was revitalised, in 1670, by a new charter and new capital. Two ships per year were sent to Asia, where the Danes expanded their activities to include also Arabia and China, as they profited from being neutral during the wars between the great maritime powers from 1688 to 1713, both in buying in Asia and selling in Europe. In 1674 the Danish Company re-established a factory in Bengal and in c. 1700 at Oddeway Torre on the Malabar Coast from where pepper was exported.

Trade was of course the key incentive to engage with India, but missionary activities also played a role, and – contrary to trade – this was a success. Already in 1705, the king sent out missionaries, i.e. Moravian Brethren from Herrnhut in Germany, to Tranquebar. In spite of the scepticism and direct opposition from the Company, they started missionary work and teaching. The missionaries soon learned the local Tamil languages, translated the Bible, founded a printing press and built a church. This was the very first Protestant mission in India, and it became of great importance to all later Protestant missions. From the mid-eighteenth century, however, pietism ebbed away and the Tranquebar mission lost ground.

In the town were around 3,000 inhabitants, of whom by far the majority were Tamil Hindi, besides Muslim and Catholic minorities. The smallest group was 100–200 Danes, who were practically all employed by the Company as soldiers, tradesmen and administrators.

The European trading companies of the seventeenth century were not in a position to develop territorial jurisdiction over large areas in India. Thus, just a small territory of around 50 square kilometres belonged to Tranquebar, including the villages of Poeriar, Tillali and Ericutancheri, with a population totalling c. 20,000 persons. The Danish East India Company controlled the land of the territory, where first and foremost rice and textiles were produced, and collected taxes and excise from their Indian tenants.

During the Great Northern War which began in 1700, the Company's trade came to a standstill, and when peace came in 1720, its economy was in ruins. The Danish East India Company went bankrupt in 1729. Both the crown and the merchants wished, nonetheless, to maintain trade and shipping to the East Indies from København, and to make use of a joint stock company for the general benefit and economic growth. Therefore,

the Asiatic Company was established in 1732 with new capital and headquarters with administration buildings, shipyard, and storehouses, etc. in København.<sup>16</sup>

At this time, the situation in Tranquebar was difficult because of fierce competition from the larger European companies and the political development in South India. The cargoes from Denmark were mainly made up by Spanish silver in coins, small quantities of iron and lead (i.e. necessary ballast in the large sailing ships) and European consumer goods for use in Tranquebar or re-export from there. The return cargoes consisted of Indian cotton textiles, supplemented by heavy ballast goods such as pepper, redwood and saltpetre.

The Asiatic Company sent out one ship per year to India. Then again, this was too little, so from 1732 ships were sent directly from København all the way to Canton.<sup>17</sup> Operating costs in China were fairly small, as the Danes – like all Europeans – were not allowed to own any real property, and profits on tea in Europe were very high, at least until 1784. This meant that for the rest of the Company's lifetime, it was the China trade which secured the largest returns and dividends.

The Asiatic Company, nevertheless, started around the middle of the eighteenth century to expand its activities in India in three ways. Danish trading posts were founded in Calicut on the Malabar Coast in 1752 and three years later another one in Colachel in order to profit by the increasing European demand for pepper. Both factories also participated in the flourishing arms trade. During the Colonial War 1756–63, these trading posts experienced their palmy days, but already from around 1780 they definitely lost their importance.

Saltpetre, cotton textiles and silks from Bengal were absolutely necessary in all trade in India. The Danes had had to abandon their former factories there, but established in 1755 a trading station in Serampore (which they called Frederiksnagore) on the River Hooghly just above Calcutta (Kolkata), but below the French factory at Chandernagore and the Dutch at Chinsura.

Finally Denmark tried to colonise the Nicobar Islands, a insignificant group of small islands, situated on the sailing route between the Coast of

16 K. Struwe, *Dansk Ostindien 1732–1777. Tranquebar under kompagnistyre, Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 6 (København, 1966).

17 E. Gøbel, 'Danish Companies' Shipping to Asia, 1616–1807', in J. R. Bruijn and F. S. Gaastra (eds.), *Ships, Sailors and Spices: East India Companies and their Shipping in the 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries* (Amsterdam, 1993).

Coromandel and the Malacca Strait. Nevertheless, malaria made these plans completely impossible to carry out, even though three attempts were made. Still, Denmark claimed the right of sovereignty over the islands.

The first charter of the Asiatic Company expired in 1772, and it lost its monopoly of Indian trade under the Danish flag. Private shipowners and merchants had from now on the possibility of participating if they paid recognition to the Company.<sup>18</sup> The state took over, in 1777, the administration of the colonies in Asia which at that time were Tranquebar and Serampore as well as the factories in Calicut, Colachel, Balasore, Patna and Porto Novo (on the coast 50 kilometres north of Tranquebar), and the Nicobar Islands. After the takeover most of the Company employees simply continued their work in the colonies as before. Of decisive importance for the Danish India trade had been, since 1757, the British East India Company's control of Bengal and, from 1763, of the Coromandel Coast.

A census in 1790 demonstrated that Tranquebar had 3,544 Indian and Indo-Portuguese inhabitants, whereas only 157 Danes and 20 other Europeans were living in the town. When the crown had taken over, the garrison was made up of four officers, thirteen non-commissioned officers and seventy-four privates, in addition to a few artillerymen and musicians, two sepoy regiments of ninety and a corps of fifty-eight Indian talliers for guard duty in Tranquebar's territory.

Tranquebar's revenues in the late eighteenth century originated from land tax, custom and excise, in addition to monopolies in spirits, tobacco and betel. Expenses were large, dominated by the fort and garrison. Seen separately, there was a deficit in the colonial budget, but the Danish state enjoyed much larger revenues in København from customs, employment, production and business brought about by the India trade and shipping.

The Indian population in Serampore with its small territory amounted to around 10,000 persons, while the number of Danes was a little less than forty. It was an open town with no defences, and it yielded a profit because of the increasing trade in salt, saltpetre and opium. The waterfront was made up, as time went on, of elegant white neoclassical buildings, such as a church and college, erected by the Danes and other Europeans.

Neither in Tranquebar nor Serampore were Danes and Indians in much contact with each other, even though they were living side by side. It was a

<sup>18</sup> A. Rasch, *Dansk Ostindien 1777–1845. Storhedstid og hensygnen, Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 7 (København, 1966); A. Rasch and P. P. Sveistrup, *Asiatisk Kompagni i den florissante Periode 1772–1792* (København, 1948).

deliberate Danish principle to interfere as little as possible in the affairs of the local people, as it would have been economically destructive and militarily impossible to try to impose a rule which conflicted with the social and religious norms of the Indians.<sup>19</sup>

The most profitable period was experienced in the Danish colonies in India from the outbreak of war in 1775 until Denmark-Norway became involved in war against Great Britain in 1807. The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars between France, England, the Netherlands and Spain brought about an immense demand for tonnage under the neutral Danish flag. Dutch coffee and sugar from Java had to be transported to Europe, while Isle de France had to be provided with necessaries and its own products bought, but most important was the fact that enormous British fortunes should be remitted discreetly and safely from India to Europe.<sup>20</sup>

Increasing British competition and dominance on the Coromandel Coast together with the general mercantile displacement towards Bengal meant that the Asiatic Company almost stopped its trade in Tranquebar as Serampore was able to take over both trade and administration. At this time, Indian cotton textiles made up 80 per cent of the value of the return cargoes, but around 1800 the demand in Europe for these commodities was drastically declining, and the Asiatic Company soon had to face hard times.

The private Danish India trade after 1772 was almost entirely financed by British loans in India and British cargoes bound for Europe. During the American War of Independence the Danes did a roaring trade, but the peace crisis after 1783 was severe. When war was resumed in 1793 the Danes experienced palmy days once again.

From 1772 until 1807, sixty-four Company ships from India came to København carrying cargoes worth 35 million Danish rix-dollars, and 124 private India-men carried cargoes worth 38 million rix-dollars. To this can be added sixty China-men and 120 expeditions from Batavia (on Java) and Isle de France.<sup>21</sup> It must be kept in mind, that at the beginning of this epoch, the Danish-Norwegian state had a budget of 6 million rix-dollars a year.

The importance of Tranquebar for the Danish India trade in these boom years was limited, as the private merchants did not make any use

19 N. Brimnes, *Constructing the Colonial Encounter: Right and Left Hand Castes in Early Colonial South India* (London, 1999).

20 O. Feldbæk, *India Trade under the Danish Flag 1772–1808: European Enterprise and Anglo-Indian Remittance and Trade* (Copenhagen, 1969).

21 O. Feldbæk, 'The Danish Asia Trade, 1620–1807: Value and Volume', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 39 (1991).

of the place. As a consequence of this the Asiatic Company closed down its factory in the town in 1796. Serampore was of greater importance, since both Company and private traders traded here, especially in times of war when it might be difficult and even dangerous to visit other nations' factories. On the other hand, it was crucial for the British remittances in the form of loans, cargoes and freights that Danish colonies in India did exist. Possession of colonies was also necessary for Danish participation in the native market and for the Danish international shipping and trade in general.

Tranquebar and Serampore were occupied by the British in 1801 and again in 1808–15 because of the political situation in Europe. This meant that Danish shipping and trade to Asia was totally interrupted until peace was restored in 1814. The occupations, however, were easy, and the Danish officials in Tranquebar simply went on administering town and territory as usual. This was not the case in Serampore which had for a long time for all practical purposes been a suburb of Calcutta, and in 1815 it was almost totally integrated into the British society and economy.

The two colonies had lost their significance as support for Danish shipping and trade in India, and a new great war was not expected in the near future. Intra-Asian trade under the Danish flag had come to a standstill, and the Asiatic Company never recovered as it suffered considerable losses on the few cargoes from Serampore, among other things because of competition from the emerging cotton textile industry in England. The private India-men chose to trade in other places than the small Danish colonies.

It was decided to keep the colonies with as small expenses as possible, while waiting for the market to improve. The governor resided in Tranquebar, but trade abandoned this dead enclave, which increasingly assumed a British stamp. Serampore was also deserted by trade, but the British Baptist missionaries were very active with regard to building of several schools, founding of a printing press and the first proper university in India – Serampore College.

In 1845 it was all over and the colonies on the continent, i.e. Tranquebar and Serampore, were sold to the British East India Company. The sales treaty secured rights for the mission in Tranquebar and the College in Serampore.

Denmark still claimed sovereignty over the Nicobar Islands, but was really not interested in them at all. Gradually they became a base for pirates, and in 1868 Great Britain took over the sovereignty without further ado. This was the end of the Danish presence in Asia.

## The Gold Coast

Following in the wake of the big European maritime powers, Sweden-Finland started around 1645 to equip a few maritime voyages to the Gold Coast, which is more or less where Ghana is today. On the Coast the Dutch were the dominant European power, but they came reluctantly to an arrangement with the small newcomers.

The Swedish African Company was granted its charter in 1649 by the Swedish crown.<sup>22</sup> It operated from the city of Stade on the river Elbe, while many of its employees were Germans or Dutch with useful experience from the Dutch East India Company. On the Gold Coast the Swedes established a fort at Cabo Corso (Cape Coast) and later smaller factories at Anomabo, Osu, Butri and Takoradi. Commander on the Coast was Henrich Carloff. The commodities much sought after were gold and ivory, as well as slaves and sugar from the island of St Thomas.

In 1655, the Swedish African Company was granted a new charter, Göteborg was now chosen as staple town and many Swedes were recruited. The Company was managed by the Swedish government and became an instrument for mercantilistic policies, i.e. a crown company.

The Danes, however, also wished to trade and get a foothold on the Gold Coast.<sup>23</sup> A few expeditions had been equipped from Glückstadt on the River Elbe. Because of the war against Sweden, the Danes made an agreement with Henrich Carloff that he should conquer the main Swedish fort, Carolusborg, and hand it over to the Danes. This happened shortly after in 1658, but the peace treaty of 1660 implied that the Swedes had their forts and factories back. The interest of the Swedish in the Gold Coast was, however, only slight and in 1663 they were finally displaced by the Dutch from Fort Carolusborg and with it from the Gold Coast. In all this the local Africans (i.e. Fetu) had played a rather important role either as friend or as foe.

In the meantime Danish activities on the Coast had increased, after the king in 1659 had granted a favourable charter to his subjects in the Glückstadt Company which traded along the Coast. The Danes were driven away from their small Fort Frederiksborg at Fetu but, nevertheless, they moved their

22 G. Nováky, *Handelskompanier och kompanihandel. Svenska Afrikakompaniet 1649–1663, En studie i feodal handel* (Uppsala, 1990).

23 Feldbæk and Justesen, *Kolonierne i Asien og Afrika*; G. Nørregaard, *Guldkysten. De danske etableringer i Guinea, Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 8 (København, 1966) (English translation, *Danish Settlements in West Africa* (Boston, 1966)); A. M. Jørgensen (ed.), *Danskernes huse på Guldkysten 1659–1850* (København, 2014).

main activities to the Coast further east, after having formed an agreement with the king of Accra, which guaranteed them the right to settle there. Finally, in 1666 the Dutch States General recognised the Danish rights to Fort Frederiksborg, Fort Christiansborg (at Accra) and the factory at Cape Coast.

The Danish company sent out two or three ships per year with cargoes which were first and foremost bought in Amsterdam or Hamburg – just like the Swedish cargoes. A few return voyages went along the triangular route via the Caribbean with a cargo of enslaved Africans. The overhead expenses in Africa were, however, too heavy for the volume of trade; this meant that in the late 1660s the economic problems became overwhelming and the Glückstadt Company had to cease trading.

In 1671 the West India and Guinea Company was established in København.<sup>24</sup> Its purpose was to take over trade and shipping to the Gold Coast and to colonise the Caribbean island of St Thomas which was acquired the year after. The colonies in the West Indies and on the Gold Coast were integral parts of an Atlantic system, primarily by virtue of the transatlantic slave trade which was necessary in order to produce the costly cane sugar in the plantations in the Caribbean.

The Company had problems in equipping voyages from Denmark to the Gold Coast, which meant that the Danish forts there often had to trade with foreign ships instead. Just a few private expeditions were sent out from København, as they had to pay recognition to the Company. In 1685, therefore, Fort Frederiksborg had to be disposed of, and the Company simply vegetated for some time. From 1690 to 1696 the national monopoly on African trade was contracted to Nicolaj Jansen Arff, a wealthy København merchant and shipowner. The weak position of the Danes on the Coast can be illustrated by the fact that the Africans, in 1693, captured the Danish main fort, Christiansborg, and kept it for almost a year.

Trade on the Coast was carried out as barter. The Danes, like the other European merchants, offered textiles, spirits, metal goods, powder and firearms for sale. By far the most important commodity was East Indian textiles. These were exchanged for gold, ivory and slaves. Enslaved Africans became the principal export commodity as time went by and almost all ships under the Danish flag returned via the West Indies.<sup>25</sup> Please note that all

24 E. Gøbel, 'Danish Trade to the West Indies and Guinea, 1671–1754', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 31 (1983).

25 E. Gøbel, 'Danish Shipping along the Triangular Route, 1671–1802: Voyages and Conditions on Board', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 36 (2011); P. O. Hernæs,

Table 14.1 *Danish slave expeditions, 1660s–1806*

	No. of voyages	Voyages per year	No. of slaves	Slaves per year
1660s–1689	15	0.5	3,000	100
1690–1697	11	1.4	2,900	363
1698–1734	20	0.5	6,800	184
1735–1765	60	1.9	15,500	500
1766–1776	23	2.1	5,300	482
1777–1792	65	4.1	22,150	1,384
1793–1802	125	12.5	24,900	2,490
1803–1806	25	6.3	5,100	1,275
Total	344		85,650	

Source: E. Gøbel, 'Danish Shipping along the Triangular Route, 1671–1802: Voyages and Conditions on Board', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 36 (2011).

numbers given in Table 14.1 are minima; they only refer to voyages which we have precise information about. It is estimated that a total of well over 100,000 slaves were transported by the Danes to the Caribbean.

The West India and Guinea Company made use of its trade monopoly from 1697 to 1734, but thereafter slave trade was open to all Danish-Norwegian citizens, whereas the Company concentrated its efforts on colonising and cultivating the island of St Croix which had been bought from France in 1733. On the Gold Coast, Fort Fredensborg was built at Ningbo in 1736, among other things in order to support trade on the long coast from Accra to the River Volta, where small Danish factories could be found at Ponny, Ada, Quitta, Aflahue and Popo. Besides trading at the Danish posts, ships also started to trade along the foreign Upper Coast to the west of Accra in order to acquire the necessary return cargoes. The Danish factories, on the other hand, often sold both slaves and other commodities to foreign ships.

Variable trade conditions made African trade difficult, but in 1747 new capital was invested in the West India and Guinea Company, which began again itself to trade in slaves. From then on gold and ivory were of only insignificant importance compared to slaves in the Danish trade; the Danish trading posts in times of severe price competition acted as providers for the international transatlantic slave trade.

*Slaves, Danes, and African Coast Society: The Danish Slave Trade from West Africa and Afro-Danish Relations on the Eighteenth-century Gold Coast* (Trondheim, 1995).



Private merchants and shipowners eventually were ready to take over Danish activities, and the Company with its monopoly was dissolved in 1754. Thereafter the forts were taken over by the Danish state, while trade was carried out almost as before, even though the private merchants had difficulty in shipping enough slaves to the West Indies.

After peace was restored in 1763, the Danish state once again decided to establish a company, The Guinea Company, under the direction of Henning Frederik Bargum, which was not, however, granted a national monopoly. The intention was to let the Danish forts function as suppliers for the international slave trade, in particular the French. But the trading posts turned out not to have sufficient capacity to provide both the Danish West Indies with slaves and at the same time operate as contractor to the re-establishment of the French slave trade. The unstable political situation on the Coast with changing African rulers and resistance from the Dutch and English contributed to the Danish problems, and the large overall expenditures to forts, soldiers, clerks, tradesmen etc. made the Guinea Company an unprofitable business. It went bankrupt in 1775.

In order to exploit the favourable trade conditions during the war, the Baltic and Guinea Company was established in København in 1781. The firm was granted a national monopoly and promised in return to deliver frequent sailings to the Gold Coast and to expand activities in general there, while the Dutch were impaired by their war against the British. The Danes succeeded in expanding towards the east beyond the Volta, and by far the majority of the slave cargoes were now sent to the Danish West Indian islands, while just a smaller number were exported to foreign nations in the Caribbean. After the peace, though, the high Danish export figures were again reduced to a normal level.

It was considered if there could be found alternatives to the transatlantic slave trade, among other thing influenced by the British abolitionists. The Danes attempted in 1788 to establish a proper colony on the Coast, where Africans slaves were to produce colonial commodities.<sup>26</sup> The efforts were headed by the doctor Paul Erdmann Isert and supported wholeheartedly by the influential finance minister Ernst Schimmelmann, but soon the Danish plans suffered the same sad fate as those of other nations.

Schimmelmann, himself a convinced abolitionist, appointed a committee which looked into the slave trade. Its exhaustive research resulted in a royal decree in 1792 according to which Denmark-Norway, as the first of slave-

26 H. Jeppesen, 'Danish Plantations on the Gold Coast, 1788–1850', *Geografisk Tidsskrift*, 65 (1966).

trading nations, would abolish its trade, but only from 1803.<sup>27</sup> In the meantime conditions for slaves in the Danish West Indies should be improved in order to reduce the mortality and increase the fertility and thus to enable the slave population to reproduce itself. This would mean that slave imports from Africa would be unnecessary. During the transition period it was also necessary to adjust the composition of the population with regard to sex and age, so the state subsidised the import of slaves, especially women, until the ban came into force. The result was that after abolition had been decided upon, more slaves than ever before were transported across the Atlantic to the Danish West Indies 1793–1802, i.e. 2,500 annually. Thereafter a not insignificant illegal Danish slave trade was carried on, including deliveries to the international still legal trade.

Hard times in Denmark after the Napoleonic Wars meant that it was considered whether to abandon all forts except for the main Fort Christiansborg.<sup>28</sup> The Danes on the Coast were on the defensive, and an increasing part of the trade was carried out by private merchants, while the government more and more turned into an administrative and political superstructure. The slave trade was still an important economic activity for the merchants at the Danish factories; in particular Danish mulattoes played a prominent role as middlemen between sellers in the interior and buyers on the ships.

In the 1820s an effort was made once more to establish plantations intended to produce foodstuffs for the West Indies and tropical products for Europe, but without success. Instead the Danes aimed at becoming middlemen in the trade in palm oil, which was becoming the most valuable export commodity on the Coast.

Danish attempts around 1830 to alter their scattered so-called establishments into a real colony, i.e. a well-defined territory under Danish sovereignty and control, were met with heavy resistance from both the English and Africans and therefore had to be abandoned. The Danish trade had problems in managing the intensified international competition and the downward export prices.

Consequently it was decided in 1838 to co-operate almost unconditionally with the British, and in 1843 they were offered the Danish establishments.

27 E. Gøbel, *Det danske slavehandelsforbud 1792. Studier og kilder til forhistorien, forordningen og følgerne* (Odense, 2008).

28 D. Hopkins, *Peter Thonning and Denmark's Guinea Commission: A Study in Nineteenth-century African Colonial Geography* (Leiden and Boston, 2012); O. Justesen, 'Danish Settlements on the Gold Coast in the 19th Century', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 4 (1979).

Transfer took place in 1845 when the British paid £10,000 for the five forts and territorial rights.

## Delaware

The idea of a Swedish colony in North America had been launched as early as 1624, but not until 1637 was a Swedish South Sea Company organised, later called the New Sweden Company. The capital was half Swedish and half Dutch – so were the first ships' crews.<sup>29</sup>

Two ships from Göteborg navigated by Dutchmen, arrived in 1638 to the Delaware river, where the colonists signed a treaty with the Native Americans (i.e. Lenapes) which allowed them to settle on the west bank up to the Schuylkill river (where Philadelphia is today). Relations to the local inhabitants were good and the Swedes traded corn and provisions from the Lenapes and fur from the Susquehannocks who lived in the distant woods. Many of the Swedish settlers were pardoned criminals or landless Finnish peasants. A small wooden Fort Christina was erected (in today's Wilmington). The colony was named New Sweden.

Since 1641 the Company was a purely Swedish enterprise. In its lifetime, until 1655, a total of twelve expeditions were sent from Sweden with provisions, goods and settlers. The ships departed from Göteborg, sailed through the Channel and, via the Canary Islands and the Caribbean, reached New Sweden, whereas the return voyage took a more direct route across the Atlantic. During the 1640s, the territory was expanded and covered an area of a couple of hundred square kilometres of the west bank and somewhat less of the east bank (i.e. today parts of Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania). The colony consisted of a score of scattered settlements along the Delaware river, most of them with Swedish or Finnish names such as Sveaborg (today Swedesboro) and New Vaasa (Kingsessing in West Philadelphia). The colony was protected by five small forts, or rather redoubts. The colonists made a living from agriculture, hunting and trade, and were able to ship cargoes of tobacco and furs to Sweden.

Relations with the English to the south-west in Virginia and, in particular, the Dutch to the north in New Netherland were tense from the beginning,

29 A. Åberg, *The People of New Sweden: Our Colony on the Delaware River, 1638–1655* (Stockholm, 1988); S. Dahlgren and H. Norman, *The Rise and Fall of New Sweden: Governor Johan Risingh's Journal 1654–1655 in its Historical Context* (Stockholm, 1988); G. Fur, *Colonialism in the Margins: Cultural Encounters in New Sweden and Lapland* (Leiden and Boston, 2006).

not least when Pieter Stuyvesant became governor there in 1647. He built Fort Casimir immediately south of Fort Christina. The pressure from outside intensified the internal quarrel among the Swedes, who were also concerned about lack of provisions and other necessities.

Moreover, when a Swedish expedition arrived at the Delaware river in May 1654, it captured Fort Casimir from the Dutch and entered new friendship treaties with the local Native Americans. In the same year, in the month of August, Stuyvesant struck back with a superior fleet from New Netherland, a display of force which made the Swedes capitulate at once without fighting, even though they were supported by Lenape and other locals. This was the end of New Sweden as such.

The population of the colony at the end amounted to 400 Swedes and Finns, of whom by far the majority decided to stay. In spite of Sweden's diplomatic efforts to get the colony back, it was incorporated into New Netherland, which was ceded to the British by the Peace of Breda in 1667, and finally Delaware became one of the thirteen colonies which declared themselves independent in 1776. The Swedes, however, secured for themselves until 1682 a certain degree of self-government, while Swedish culture and to a limited degree also language was retained, and for instance pastors were sent out from Sweden until 1783. The Swedes set up the very first Lutheran communities in North America, and the Holy Trinity Church at Christina is today the oldest stone church building in the United States.

## The Caribbean

In the Caribbean the Danish flag flew over a small colony from 1672 for the next two and a half centuries, while Sweden held sovereignty over the island of St Bartholomew from 1784 to 1878, and over Guadeloupe for a year from 1813.

## The Danish West Indies

A few Danish ships sailed to the West Indies for the Glückstadt Company in the 1640s, followed in the 1650s by a few from København.<sup>30</sup> Domestic

30 J. O. Bro-Jørgensen, *Dansk Vestindien indtil 1755. Kolonisation og kompagnistyre, Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 1 (København, 1966); O. Hornby, *Kolonierne i Vestindien* (København, 1980); W. Westergaard, *The Danish West Indies under Company Rule, 1671–1754, with a Supplementary Chapter, 1755–1917* (New York, 1917); I. Dookhan, *A History of the Virgin Islands of the United States* (St Thomas, 1974).

products such as provisions, beverages and tools could be sold in the Caribbean, whereas return cargoes consisted of valuable commodities like tobacco, ginger, sugar and indigo. In 1666 an expedition was sent out from København in order to colonise St Thomas, i.e. one of the Virgin Islands, unoccupied by other Europeans even though it had a splendid natural harbour. This first attempt failed, however, because of lack of resources.

In 1671 a West India Company was chartered in København in order to establish and secure shipping, trade and administration of a colony in the Caribbean. The king provided a significant portion of the capital, whereas ships and sailors were lent from the Royal Danish Navy. Governor Jørgen Iversen arrived the year after with a small flotilla to St Thomas, where the Danes immediately started building Fort Christian at the harbour. Mortality en route and in the colony was dreadfully high, but the few settlers (together with their indentured labourers and slaves) succeeded in getting a foothold and being accepted by the English and French in the area. Right from the beginning the Danes welcomed foreign immigrants who wished to settle as planters or tradesmen in the Danish colony.

The most important crops in the first period were tobacco and indigo, which were easy to raise. The aim was, nonetheless, to grow sugarcane, but this demanded larger plantations and was much more labour-intensive. The Company therefore engaged itself in the slave trade along the triangular route, and from 1674 its official name was the West India and Guinea Company. The rest of the century was a hard time for the Company, but not necessarily for the colony and its people.

The Company had constant economic problems. Only private initiatives on St Thomas and the support from the government ensured that the colony came through the difficult settling phase. In the 1690s the Company's monopoly was rented out to private entrepreneurs who tried to take over the Guinea trade (Nicolaj Jansen Arff from København) and the West India trade (Jørgen Thormøhlen from Bergen) respectively. Furthermore the Brandenburgers had been allowed, in 1685, to establish a factory on St Thomas, where they planned to trade in slaves, of course in return for payment of recognition to the West India and Guinea Company. At the same time Denmark began to claim sovereignty over Crab Island (Vieques), which is situated between St Thomas and Puerto Rico, but without ever colonising it.

The population of St Thomas consisted in 1686 of 300 whites and 333 slaves, but already five years later these numbers were doubled. The society was very multi-ethnic and multi-racial. The majority of the whites were Dutch

and the Dutch language prevailed. Little by little the town of Charlotte Amalie developed as a neighbour to the fort. In addition to agriculture, trade began gradually to become important to the colony, among other things transatlantic and intra-Caribbean trade in slaves. In times of war St Thomas profited from its neutral status and began trading with the British colonies in North America, where sugar and cotton were exchanged for provisions.

At the end of the War of Spanish Succession, St Thomas was brought fully under cultivation, so in 1718 the Danes took possession of the nearby little island of St John. The English put up with this, and within a decade St John had also been brought under cultivation, especially with sugarcane. Living on the hundred plantations were ten times as many slaves as free people. In 1733 an insurrection took place, whereby the slaves succeeded in gaining control of the whole of St John and kept it for more than six months before they were defeated by French troops. The situation on the island became normal again remarkably soon after.

In order to benefit from large-scale farming in essential sugar production, the island of St Croix was bought from France, and the West India and Guinea Company was re-organised. Thus, the Danish West Indies had reached its full extent, i.e. 330 square kilometres. Already in 1751 the new island had been cleared, surveyed and brought under cultivation, first and foremost with sugar. Many foreigners were welcomed, above all the English. On St Croix two towns were established, Christiansted and Frederiksted, with a fort in both places.

Still the Company was not very active when it came to trade; instead private Danish shipowners and merchants participated more and more in shipping and trade to the colony. The inhabitants of the three islands were against the Company and its administration and instead they longed for a public takeover. Therefore the Danish state took over all the Company's assets and liabilities in København, on the Gold Coast, and in the Caribbean from 1755. At the time when it became a crown colony, its population consisted of 228 whites and 3,481 slaves in St Thomas, 212 and 2,031 respectively in St John, and in St Croix 1,323 and 8,897. The unfree made up 90 per cent of the inhabitants. The palmy days of the Danish West Indies came in the second half of the eighteenth century, when both trade on St Thomas and the plantation economy on St Croix flourished.<sup>31</sup>

31 J. Vibæk, *Dansk Vestindien 1755–1848. Vestindiens storhedstid, Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 2 (København, 1966).

Around one half of the sugar exports went to Denmark-Norway, where the brown raw sugar was refined and made into white sugar in refineries, which were a vital industry in Denmark. The other half of the raw sugar was exported to North America and moreover the world market. Prices were favourable in general and St Croix exported up to £26 million a year, besides quite a lot of rum and other less important products. The plantation economy, notwithstanding, was often far from good, as substantial investment had to be put into slaves, tools, land and buildings, and not a few planters sank deeper and deeper into debt to capitalists in the Netherlands. Later the Danish state took over the debt, and on a general basis the island prospered.

So did St Thomas, which since 1764 was a free port that enjoyed intensified shipping and trade especially in time of war. This Danish port became a regional *entrepôt*, to which cargoes were sent from all over the West Indies and from where they were safely shipped in Danish-Norwegian ships to Europe. After the Netherlands had joined the war in 1780, St Thomas welcomed a large influx of Dutch investors from St Eustatius, and generally speaking the society in Charlotte Amalie was highly cosmopolitan and religiously tolerant.

Shipping under the Danish flag during the lifetime of the Company consisted of an average of four ships annually, of which one came by the triangular route via the Gold Coast, but in the period 1755–1807 there arrived on average fifty-seven ships every year from Denmark, of which two came by the triangular route. The peak year was 1782 during the American War of Independence, when 227 Danish ships arrived, of which ten were on slave voyages. The state benefited constantly from considerable profits from the colony.

The slave population in the Danish West Indies increased only slightly in the second half of the eighteenth century because of high mortality and a low birth rate. The number of slaves reached its maximum of 35,235 in 1802. It is estimated that a total of well over 100,000 enslaved Africans were transported across the Atlantic on board Danish ships before the Danish abolition came into effect in 1803. The total population of the colony did not peak until 1835, when the three islands had 43,178 inhabitants. By far the majority of the slaves worked in the plantations, while a minority were house slaves or artisans. The so-called 'free coloureds' made up a small, but increasing class.

The three Danish West India islands were occupied by the British in 1801–2 and again in 1807–15. Both times the treatment was mild, and only a

few Danish government officials and military persons were dismissed, but the colony's trade was redirected from Denmark and instead was included in the British economic system.

After the recovery of the colony and the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, the Danish West Indies profited principally from trade with the new republics in South America. In the 1830s, Charlotte Amalie became Denmark's second largest town, but it was British, French and German merchant houses which dominated the busy port. The harbour with its excellent service facilities was, as a rule, called at by a couple of thousand vessels every year between 1816 and 1850.<sup>32</sup> Most of the seemingly Danish trade, however, was commission trade on behalf of foreigners. During the same period the sugar exports from St Croix were declining, among other things caused by years of bad crops and fierce competition on the world market.

Emancipation took place in 1833 on the British islands in the Caribbean, and people on the Danish islands closely observed the result. In Europe there was a broad aversion to slavery, but at the same time there was fear of both the economic consequences for the production of the colony and the government finances if slave owners were to be compensated for the loss of their slaves. Therefore abolition in the Danish West Indies was postponed for the time being.

Moderate reforms were carried out, nonetheless, such as education of slave children, increased off-duty hours for slaves and in 1847 it was decreed that thereafter all new-born babies were to be free persons. An incipient slave riot in St Croix, however, forced Governor-general Peter von Scholten to immediately emancipate all slaves on 3 July 1848.

After the emancipation it was decreed that the now free black agricultural workers had to sign one-year labour contracts, according to which they had to live in the plantation. Working days were nine hours with Saturdays and Sundays off, and payment consisted of a small plot meant for private cultivation plus wages which depended on working capacity. In the towns, on the other hand, no such regulations existed.<sup>33</sup>

In 1849 Denmark got a free constitution, and the administration of the Danish West Indies was re-organised four years later by the Colonial Law.

32 E. Gøbel 'Shipping through the Port of St Thomas, Danish West Indies, 1816–1917', *International Journal of Maritime History*, 6 (1994).

33 F. Skrubbeltrang, *Dansk Vestindien 1848–1880. Vore gamle tropekolonier*, 3 (København, 1966).



Thereafter the central administration in København had full control of the colony, which had a local administration headed by a governor and a colonial council. A controversial political issue after emancipation was the compensation to former slave owners. After a heated debate, the Danish state paid, in 1853, 50 dollars per slave, which was somewhat less than half the former value of a slave.

After the emancipation, the growing of sugar on St Thomas and St John was brought to an end, and the sugar fields on St Croix were reduced. Although steam mills were introduced and fertilizer imported, production was falling because of the migration of field workers to the towns. Black workers from the towns, then again, served as rather well-paid porters on the plantations in the neighbourhood. Attempts to import coolies from India in the 1860s were not successful. Sugar production here was seriously caught between the world's big cane sugar-producing nations and the expanding European beet-sugar industry. By the middle of the nineteenth century, by far the bulk of sugar exports was sent to Denmark. After new tariff legislations in 1863 duties were increased and St Croix fell slowly into decay.

After 1848 St Thomas kept its position as the main port for shipping and trade in the West Indies, especially after the British Royal Mail had established its regional Caribbean headquarters there a few years earlier, and in 1873 the German Hamburg-America Line (*Hamburg-Amerika Paket Aktiengesellschaft*, HAPAG) did the same. The harbour was well equipped with modern technical facilities, including a large dry-dock, and it served as a central place for bunker coal and the exchange of all kinds of information. Until around 1870 St Thomas did well, but as new transport technology and means of communication gradually made it superfluous, conditions deteriorated, and St Thomas – with little St John – made a permanent deficit.

The Danish government had started to explore the possibility of selling the colony. According to the Monroe doctrine the United States showed an interest, and a sales convention concerning only St Thomas and St John was signed in 1867. A referendum in the colony showed that the voters wished to come under the American flag, but because of domestic policy problems in Washington the sale had to be abandoned.

The Danish interest in the colony had cooled, and conditions for the inhabitants of the three islands worsened with regard to health, education, housing, income etc. In 1878 on St Croix this resulted in a serious insurrection which had to be defeated by military force. Conditions were

not improved, and little by little the mercantile ties to Denmark were loosened, and the United States became the most important trade partner instead.

A new attempt to sell the colony in 1900–2 was well received in America, but was rejected by the Danish parliament. Reluctant reforming efforts thereafter did not help, and after the outbreak of the First World War, the United States made it clear that they now insisted on buying the colony, among other things because of the possibility of setting up a naval base in Charlotte Amalie, and because St Thomas was centrally situated with regard to shipping to and from the new Panama Canal. Transfer took place in 1917, since when the three islands have been called the United States' Virgin Islands.

### St Bartholomew

A couple of hundred kilometres east of St Croix is situated the tiny barren island of St Bartholomew (St Barth, St Barthélemy). From the middle of the seventeenth century it was a French possession, but France surrendered it to Sweden in 1784 in exchange for staple rights in Göteborg.<sup>34</sup>

Sweden wished both to initiate shipping and trade between the mother country and the colony and to gain a foothold that would facilitate involvement in local trade in the Caribbean, thus following the examples of the Dutch on St Eustatius and the Danes on St Thomas. St Bartholomew was not suited for agriculture; on the other hand it had a fine natural harbour, which the French had called *Le Carénage*; the Swedes renamed it *Gustavia* after their king. It was protected by the small battery at *Gustavsvärn*.

A Swedish West India Company was established in 1787 as a joint-stock company with a royal charter, but without a monopoly. The king was the largest shareholder as he provided 10 per cent of the capital. The Company and the crown administered the colony in common and were also to share the profits from the island. The Company was permitted to participate in the transatlantic slave trade, but apparently it did not avail itself of this

34 I. Hildebrand, *Den svenska kolonin St Barthélemy och Västindiska kompaniet fram till 1796* (Lund, 1951); L. Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce: The Swedish Consular Service and Long-distance Shipping, 1720–1815* (Uppsala, 2004); H. Weiss, 'A Divided Space: Subjects and Others in the Swedish West Indies during the Late Eighteenth Century', in G. Rydén (ed.), *Sweden in the Eighteenth-century World: Provincial Cosmopolitans* (Farnham, 2013).

opportunity. The firm never became an economic success and was dissolved in 1805.

Private Swedish trade and shipping, on the other hand, experienced palmy days, in particular during the American War of Independence and again after the outbreak of war in 1793, as St Bartholomew right from the beginning was a free port which profited very much from transit trade within the Caribbean and between the West Indies and the United States – just like St Thomas. An important part of St Bartholomew's transit trade concerned the prohibited exchange between the British West Indian islands and the American republic, as American commodities were exchanged for colonial products and redistributed to the British islands, among other things nearby St Kitts.

Much of this shipping and trade was impeded, though, by men-of-war and privateers of many nations. Sweden was in fact closely connected politically to France, and for this reason Great Britain occupied St Bartholomew from 1801 to 1802. The transit trade reached its peak during the final war years, 1812–14, when profits also peaked. Prosperity on the Swedish island continued on a more modest level, but only until 1831 when England opened its colonial ports to American trade, and St Bartholomew lost considerable earnings as a middleman.

An extensive transit trade in slaves went through Gustavia, promoted by the Swedish authorities, until it was banned in 1813. Most of the slaves were transported from Africa on foreign ships while smaller Swedish-flagged vessels were engaged in the intra-Caribbean slave trade. In addition, many United States-owned and -manned vessels acquired Swedish sea-passes and sailed under the neutral Swedish colours until 1809. The exact volume of slave trade in St Bartholomew is not known, but it seems as if Gustavia around 1805 had become an important port in this respect – maybe almost as busy as Tortola, as it had replaced the Danish and maybe even the Dutch slave trade.<sup>35</sup>

The cosmopolitan population on the island consisted, at the time when the Swedes took it over, of only 749 inhabitants and it attempted to attract immigrants, preferably foreign merchants. By 1821 the population had increased to 5,003, of whom 38 per cent were slaves and 24 per cent free coloured. Unlike most other Caribbean colonies, the majority of the

<sup>35</sup> Kindly communicated by Prof. Holger Weiss. Cf. R. Sjöström, 'En nödvändig omständighet. Om svensk slavhandel i Karibien', in R. Granqvist (ed.), *Svenska överord. En bok om gränslöshet och begränsningar* (Eslöv, 1999).

slaves on St Bartholomew did not work in plantations, but in town as domestic servants or tied to activities linked to the export economy. Emancipation was declared in 1847.

As early as the 1830s, the colony was run at a loss, and in 1852 Gustavia was destroyed by fire. After a series of vain attempts to sell St Bartholomew to the United States or Italy, the Swedes finally managed to sell it to France in 1878.

## Guadeloupe

Guadeloupe is situated 200 kilometres south of St Bartholomew. It was captured in 1810 from the French by the British. The fertile sugar island was offered to the Swedish crown in return for joining the alliance against Napoleon. Thus, Guadeloupe formally became a Swedish possession in 1813, but the English continued their administration of the island. Even before an expedition was ready for departure from Sweden, Guadeloupe was given back to France by the Peace of Paris in 1814, i.e. after only fifteen months of Swedish formal sovereignty.

## Epilogue

All of the Scandinavian colonies were rather small. Even though Iceland is a large island and Greenland the world's largest, only limited coastal areas were accessible to the Europeans. This is also true for the tropical colonies where the Scandinavians only ruled over small areas and individual factories.

Relatively few Scandinavians left their home country and settled in the colonies. Yet the colonies were of importance, not least economically, in particular to Denmark. Quite a lot of people were directly involved in shipping and trade to the colonies as sailors and traders or went out there as missionaries, soldiers or administrators or as accompanying wives. To this must be added the indirect or derivative effects such as building and maintenance of ships, providing the voyages and colonial trade; insurance business; sugar-refining; and the storage, sale and distributing – at home and abroad – of colonial commodities. Especially to cities like København, Bergen and Göteborg all these activities played a far from unimportant role.

To the tropical colonies the presence of the Scandinavians was for the most part just an *intermezzo* which did not leave any significant social trace – except for the comprehensive transport of enslaved Africans across the

Atlantic to the Caribbean. But many of the European buildings – for instance, forts, churches, dwelling-houses, windmills, greenhouses and other plantation buildings – are still standing. It may be added, that the archival records from the old Danish tropical trading companies, kept in the Danish National Archives, are an international heritage of such significance that they have been included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register of the documentary cultural world heritage.

## The military imperative

LEON JESPERSEN

By about 1630 it was clear that there had been a marked alteration in the relative strengths of the two Scandinavian powers, Denmark and Sweden. As far as Denmark-Norway was concerned, a new and perilous political situation arose in terms of both external relations and domestic security after Christian IV's participation, from 1625 to 1629, in the Thirty Years War; the Peace of Lübeck in 1629, when the Danish monarch had to refrain from interfering in German affairs; and after Sweden's subsequent engagement on the Continent. In Sweden's case, the development was marked to a greater degree by continuity.<sup>1</sup>

After the dissolution of the Kalmar Union in 1521 a state of rivalry existed between Denmark as the leading power in Scandinavia and the kingdom of Sweden, where for the next hundred years the Vasa dynasty feared Danish aggression designed to restore the Union. From a geographical standpoint the Swedish kingdom was tightly encircled by the 'arch-enemy', 'the Jute', as the Danes were called. To the west and north Sweden bordered Norway, and to the south-west the Danish territories of Skåne, Halland and Blekinge in the Scandinavian peninsula. Only between Bohuslän and Halland did Sweden have a breathing-space and access westward to the sea at Göteborg, with its fortress of Älvsborg. To the east, likewise, Danish possessions

1 The Peace Treaty of Lübeck in 1629 is published in L. Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater 1523–1750 med dertil hørende Aktstykker*, 4 (København, 1917), pp. 42–83. The prefaces to treaties published in *Danmark-Norges Traktater 1–11*, contain detailed information on Denmark's foreign policy. The literature on Danish and Swedish foreign policy is extensive. For general works, cf. E. Albrechtsen, K.-E. Frandsen and G. Lind, *Konger og krige 700–1648. Dansk udenrigspolitisk historie*, 1 (København, 2006); K. J. V. Jespersen and O. Feldbæk, *Revanche og neutralitet 1648–1814, Dansk udenrigspolitisk historie*, 2 (København, 2006). For Swedish foreign policy, see W. Tham, *Den svenska utrikespolitikens historia*, 1:2: 1560–1648 (Stockholm, 1960); G. Landberg, *Den svenska utrikespolitikens historia*, 1:3: 1648–1697 (Stockholm, 1952). Recently, Swedish foreign policy has been dealt with in N. E. Villstrand, *Sveriges historia 1600–1721* (Stockholm, 2011).

greeted the eye. Directly opposite Sweden's east coast the Danes were in possession of the island of Gotland, and in 1559, after the disintegration of the Teutonic Order's domains, Denmark acquired the island of Saaremaa (Ösel).<sup>2</sup> South of Denmark in the Baltic was the Danish island of Bornholm.

Apart from this, the Danish realm included the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, which were provinces of Denmark and the Holy Roman Empire respectively. Moreover, the Danish-Norwegian state stretched to the north Atlantic islands of the Føroyar and Iceland, which were old Norwegian crown lands. The Orkney and Shetland islands had been pledged since the fifteenth century, and although every Danish king promised to redeem the islands they remained in British hands. With an area of around half a million square kilometres, the king of Denmark-Norway ruled over a considerable state, equivalent to present-day France.

While from a geographical standpoint the Swedish kingdom was tightly encircled by the Danish-Norwegian monarchy, there was no question of a corresponding military encroachment. It was not possible to carry out large-scale military actions from all the Danish-Norwegian possessions; the main attack would have to be launched through the east Danish territories of Skåne, Halland and Blekinge.<sup>3</sup> And the wars between the realms had shown that from here it was difficult to lead sizeable armies together with their supplies through the trackless and wooded terrain into Sweden.

However, on the Swedish side they may have felt pressurised by the Danes and may have used this to reinforce the will of the people in terms of defence and sacrifice.<sup>4</sup> On a symbolic level the Danish king's use of three crowns in his coat-of-arms was seen as a manifestation of plans for a union. There were several weaknesses in Sweden's military situation. It may have been of little significance that Sweden was extremely narrow at the point opposite mid Norway, with the regions of Jämtland and Härjedalen. But it was a disadvantage that the Danes controlled sailing traffic into the Baltic and that ice conditions at the naval base in Stockholm prevented Sweden from getting its warships into open sea as early as the Danes.

2 K. Rasmussen, *Die livländische Krise 1564–1571* (København, 1973).

3 F. P. Jensen, 'Den danske "indkredsning" af Vasa-tidens Sverige, Svensk historietolkning i Karl XII-renässansens tegn', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 76 (1976), pp. 1–24.

4 See S. Arnoldsson, *Krigspropagandan i Sverige före trettioåriga kriget*, Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift, 47:7 (Göteborg, 1941); A. M. Forsberg, *Att hålla folket på gott humör. Informationsspridning, krigspropaganda och mobilisering i Sverige 1655–1680*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Studies in History, 80 (Stockholm, 2005).

The dissolution of the Kalmar Union had moreover led to several problems regarding the distribution of lands, which had to be cleared up. In the north the border between Sweden, Norway and Russia was in dispute, and the taxation of the nomadic Sami was a bone of contention between these countries. Nor was the eastern border between the Finnish part of the Swedish realm and Russia clear-cut. And jurisdiction over the seas was debated: in the terminology of the time, *dominium maris Baltici*.

Danish kings, particularly from the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, had held sway over the Baltic, and since the fifteenth century they had demanded tolls in the Sound (Öresund). When, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Swedish kingdom expanded into Estonia, Livonia and Prussia, it came to rule over the greater part of the coastline of the Baltic, and the foundations of the Danes' control of the Baltic crumbled.<sup>5</sup> In addition, Sweden attempted to levy tolls and regulate trade in Baltic harbours. So there was a series of problems and flashpoints which were capable of starting a war.

On the Swedish side there was fear of an attack not only from Denmark-Norway but also from Russia. And after the Swedes in 1599 deposed the Catholic King Sigismund, who since 1587 also had occupied the Polish throne, Sweden and Poland became involved in a lengthy dispute with both dynastic and religious aspects. So, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Sweden was surrounded on all sides by potential enemies. But it was precisely the conflation of national security, religious and dynastic aspects that made it possible for the Swedish government to justify a defensive war carried out by offensive means.

Despite the young Vasa state's difficult position as regards possible outlets, it gave a good account of itself in confrontations with its neighbours. From the 1560s Sweden established itself in Estonia, and on concluding peace with Russia in 1595 at Teusina and in 1617 at Stolbova the Swedish kingdom expanded eastwards at the expense of Russia. In 1595 the eastern border of the Finnish part of the kingdom, which dated from the Peace of Nöteborg in

5 U. Voges, *Der Kampf um das Dominium Maris Baltici 1629 bis 1645. Schweden und Dänemark vom Frieden zu Lübeck bis zum Frieden von Brömsebro* (Zeulenroda, 1938). A short survey in English with references to the extensive literature can be found in K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory: Denmark, Sweden and the Struggle for the Baltic, 1500–1720', in G. Rystad et al. (eds.), *In Quest of Trade and Security: The Baltic in Power Politics 1500–1990*, 1: 1500–1890 (Stockholm, 1994), pp. 137–76; G. Rystad, 'Dominium maris Baltici – dröm och verklighet. Sveriges freder 1645–1661', in K. Abukhanfusa (ed.), *Mare Nostrum. Om Westfaliska freden och Östersjön som ett svenskt maktcentrum*, Skrifter utgivna av Riksarkivet, 13 (Västervik, 1999), pp. 95–105.



1323, was shifted further east, and in 1617 Russia acknowledged the Swedish kingdom's possession of Käkisalmi (Kexholm) county and Ingermanland (Ingria). After the wars against Denmark-Norway, the Seven Years War of 1563–70 and the Kalmar War of 1611–13, Sweden admittedly had to redeem the fortress of Älvsborg by paying compensation. But it surrendered no territory, and it was clear that a Danish conquest of Sweden and a restoration of the Union was impossible.

The rivalry and the power struggle between the two Scandinavian kingdoms continued in other ways. After concluding peace with Russia in 1617 Sweden carried on waging war against Poland.<sup>6</sup> During the 1620s Swedish armies conquered Livonia, and in 1626 they invaded Prussia. Sweden's war against a Catholic power had inspired anti-Catholic propaganda in Sweden even before the outbreak of the Thirty Years War, and after the outbreak it was easy for the Swedish government to present the war against Poland as part of the European struggle between Catholics and Protestants. In the words of Gustav II Adolf, all the wars of Europe were intertwined. The anti-Catholic propaganda in the Swedish kingdom became anti-imperial from 1626.<sup>7</sup>

In 1618 the Thirty Years War broke out, when Bohemia rebelled against the rule of the Catholic Habsburgs and elected the Protestant Elector Frederick of the Palatinate as its king.<sup>8</sup> His reign was to be short, as he was driven out after the victory of the imperial forces at the battle of the White Mountain in 1620. Several European powers hoped to engage the Scandinavian countries in what was presented as a war of religion. Their appeals were intensified after the Western powers – the Netherlands, Britain and France – formed defensive alliances with a view to Frederick's restoration. By way of answer to these appeals, Gustav II Adolf imposed more far-reaching conditions in terms of subsidies and the size of his army than Christian IV did. But the motives behind the rival bids of the two Scandinavian kings to lead a Protestant army were strongly influenced by *realpolitik*.

6 For Sweden's military actions in the 1620s, see M. Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus: A History of Sweden 1611–1632*, 1–2 (London, 1958, 1968).

7 S. Arnoldsson, *Krigspropagandan i Sverige före Trettioåriga kriget*; cf. also S. Oredsson, *Gustav Adolf, Sverige och Trettioåriga kriget. Historiskrivning och kult*, Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis, 70 (Lund, 1992), ch. 2.

8 The literature on the Thirty Years War is extensive. See among others the book by L. E. Wolke, G. Larsson and N. E. Villstrand, *Trettioåriga kriget. Europa i brand 1618–1648* (Värnamo, 2006).

The Danish-Norwegian King Christian IV was driven by several considerations. One was that he was in the process of securing for his second son Duke Frederik, the future King Frederik III, secularised north German bishoprics. Another was that control of north Germany – south of the Elbe and the Weser – would give the Danish king economic and political advantages and prop up his rule. Last, but not least, it was crucial that Sweden should not set foot on the north German coast nor south of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Furthermore, it has been argued that Christian IV acted as a German prince.<sup>9</sup>

It was presumably these weighty reasons that lay behind Christian IV's 'cheaper' offer to the Western powers. However, the Danish king found it more difficult than his Swedish colleague to justify intervening. The Danish council of the realm had on several occasions refused on the grounds that the Thirty Years War was not a war of religion and the council wished at almost any price to keep the country out of a war which could hurt trade and agriculture.<sup>10</sup> Presumably the council also feared the strengthening of royal power during a war. Therefore, it was not possible to create propaganda on a large scale, as in Sweden, in favour of military intervention. Confronted by this massive resistance, Christian IV accordingly declared war in his capacity as duke of Holstein and not as king of Denmark.<sup>11</sup>

The king has been harshly judged for leading his country into a war without having received sufficient assurance of support from the Western powers, which led to the defeat at Lutter am Barenberg in 1626 and the occupation and plundering of the Jylland peninsula by imperial troops. In defence of the king's actions it should be pointed out that Sweden's growing power and expansion in the Baltic could have been opposed by Danish

9 T. Dahlerup, 'Christian IVs udenrigspolitik, set i lyset af de første oldenborgeres dynastipolitik', in S. Ellehøj (ed.), *Christian IVs Verden* (København, 1988), pp. 41–63; L. Tandrup, 'Når to trættes, så ler den tredje, Christian IVs og rigsrådets forhold til Det tyske Rige og især til Sverige', in S. Ellehøj (ed.), *Christian IVs Verden* (København, 1988), pp. 64–97; J. E. Olesen, 'Christian IV. og den dansk-svenske magtkamp ca. 1620–1648', in C. Kuvaja and A.-C. Östman (eds.), *Svärdet, ordet och pennan – kring människa, makt och rum i nordisk historia. Festskrift til Nils Erik Villstrand den 24 maj 2012* (Åbo, 2012), pp. 97–120; P. D. Lockhart, *Denmark in the Thirty Years' War, 1618–1648: King Christian IV and the Decline of the Oldenburg State* (Selinsgrove and London, 1996).

10 L. Jespersen, 'The Constitutional and Administrative Situation', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000), pp. 142–5.

11 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'The Danish Intermezzo', in G. Parker (ed.), *The Thirty Years War* (London, 1984), pp. 71–81.

dominance in north Germany and on the Baltic coast. The council of the realm's vacillating foreign and security policy was not a real alternative.<sup>12</sup> And when the subsidies from England to a large extent ceased, this was put down to England's domestic and foreign political problems. In any case, there were signs in 1625 that the emperor's conduct of the war was about to get bogged down from lack of money. And the king has finally been rehabilitated as a war leader, with emphasis on the fact that his dispositions at Lutter am Barenberg were sensible enough.<sup>13</sup>

The German emperor was not interested in the subtle difference between Christian IV's role as duke of Holstein and king of Denmark-Norway respectively. In the Peace of Lübeck in 1629, however, Denmark avoided surrendering territory. In accordance with the emperor's edict of restitution from the same year, whereby bishoprics – secularised after 1552 – were to be re-catholicised, Christian IV had to refrain from interfering in German concerns, including the prince-bishoprics, which were to provide for his son. The lenient peace settlement was due to the emperor's fear of a common Scandinavian military effort or intervention from Sweden. The emperor's military commander, the Bohemian noble Albrecht von Wallenstein, likewise wished for a speedy peace with Christian IV. Wallenstein had received Mecklenburg as a duchy in 1628, and with the title 'general of the Baltic Sea' he planned to build up an imperial Baltic fleet.<sup>14</sup>

Both Scandinavian kingdoms knew of these plans to form a fleet, and in 1628 they managed to unite in order to rescue Stralsund, which was besieged by imperial troops.<sup>15</sup> But when the Scandinavian kings met in

12 L. Tandrup, *Mod triumf eller tragedie. En politisk-diplomatisk studie over løbet af den dansk-svenske magtkamp fra Kalmarkrigen til Kejserkrigen med særligt henblik på formuleringen af den svenske og især den danske politik i tiden fra 1617 og især fra 1621 til 1625*, 1–2 (Århus, 1979).

13 J. C. Kirchmeier-Andersen, 'Christian IV som taktiker', *Vaabenhistoriske aarbøger*, 33 (1987), pp. 63–157; 34 (1988), pp. 5–107.

14 S. Heiberg, *Christian 4. Monarken, mennesket, myten* (København, 1988), pp. 273–90. Regarding Wallenstein's role in the peace negotiations see L. Jespersen, 'Wallenstein – Feind oder "Freund" Dänemarks?', in J. E. Olesen (ed.), *Terra felix Mecklenburg – Wallenstein in Nordeuropa. Fiktion und Machtkalkül des Herzogs zu Mecklenburg. Internationale Tagung 7.-9. November 2008 auf Schloss Güstrow unter der Schirmherrschaft des Botschafters der Tschechischen Republik in Deutschland Dr. Rudolf Jindrák* (Greifswald, 2010), pp. 99–111.

15 L. Jespersen, 'Dänisch-schwedische Rivalität und das Scheitern der nordischen Zusammenarbeit', in H. Wernicke and H.-J. Hacker (eds.), *Der Westfälische Frieden von 1648 – Wende in der Geschichte des Ostseeraums Für Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Herbert Ewe zum 80. Geburtstag* (Hamburg, 2001), pp. 47–63.

1629 at Ulfsbäck – shortly before the Peace of Lübeck – the Danish side was no longer interested in Gustav II Adolf's plans for Scandinavian military co-operation, which would prolong the war. The Danish negotiators only wished to give the outward impression of Scandinavian co-operation in order to obtain a suitable peace settlement with the emperor. Gustav II Adolf, on the contrary, was determined to intervene in the Thirty Years War. While Gustav II Adolf achieved nothing from the meeting at Ulfsbäck, in other areas he reaped the harvest of the previous year's work. In 1629, with the armistice at Altmark, Sweden was able to hold on to Livonia.<sup>16</sup>

The Swedish government strove to make the war 'feed itself'. The expensive army was to be used on foreign territory and at intervals to be removed to new areas in order not to exhaust resources. Moreover, the coming of peace and demobilisation would confront the government with sizeable demands for payment. Warfare pushed payments and debts before itself like a snowball. In this way war had its own dynamic.<sup>17</sup>

Sweden's conquest of Livonia started in 1621, and in 1626 Gustav II Adolf entered Prussia. The invasion of Prussia reflected this military imperative.<sup>18</sup> In Prussia Sweden controlled the mouths of the rivers Vistula and Memel, just as the action moved nearer to Poland and the arenas of the Thirty Years War. At the armistice of Altmark in 1629 Sweden won the right to demand tolls (*licenter*) in the Prussian harbours for six years. And shortly before this the results of the long-standing propaganda campaign manifested itself when the Swedish council of the realm (*riksråd*), in December 1628, gave its assent to intervene in the Thirty Years War, just as the king was given a free hand to decide the timing of the war.

Swedish troops had already been engaged in battles with imperial forces which had been supporting the Poles. In 1630 the Swedish army landed in Pomerania, and in the following years the Swedish army advanced far into the Holy Roman Empire and along the coast of the Baltic. Gustav II Adolf had only experienced the first phase of the war when he was killed in the battle of Lützen in November 1632.

16 See Jespersen, 'Rivalry without Victory', pp. 137–8; K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Kongemødet i Ulfsbäck præstegård februar 1629', *Historie*, Ny Række, 14:3 (1982), pp. 420–39.

17 H. Landberg *et al.*, *Det kontinentala krigets ekonomi. Studier i krigsfinansiering under svensk stormaktstid*, *Studia Historica Upsaliensia*, 36 (Uppsala, 1971).

18 K.-R. Böhme, 'Building a Baltic Empire: Aspects of Swedish Expansion, 1560–1660', in G. Rystad *et al.* (eds.), *In Quest of Trade and Security: The Baltic in Power Politics 1500–1990*, 1: 1500–1890 (Stockholm, 1994), p. 183, where other motives are also mentioned.

It is difficult to clarify the king's ultimate goal in entering the war.<sup>19</sup> After his intervention he sought to create a federation of Protestant states in Germany, a *corpus evangelicorum*. After his death, when the chancellor Axel Oxenstierna became de facto leader of the government (1632–44) on behalf of the king's under-age successor Kristina, Oxenstierna founded, in 1633, the Heilbronn federation, which bound the Protestant princes together.<sup>20</sup> He wanted Sweden to receive *satisfactio*, compensation, for its expenditures in the war. Sweden's involvement in the war was terminated eighteen years after the intervention in Pomerania, and at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 Sweden and France were victors.

The Swedish government had been at pains to emphasise that the war against the emperor was simply a logical continuation of Sweden's war of many years' duration against its enemies, whom the emperor had supported. To that extent it was not as much of a turning point as when Christian IV, between 1625 and 1629, interfered in the European turmoil. Nevertheless events around 1630 augured something new, namely that Sweden engaged itself both militarily and politically in the politics of Continental Europe, and became a European Great Power.

It can hardly be doubted that considerations of Sweden's security weighed heavily in the decision to intervene. Considerations of security and religion were permanently personified in the Polish king, who as late as 1660 maintained his claim to the Swedish throne. Habsburg plans to create a Baltic fleet after the Peace of Lübeck in 1629 were seen as a real threat by both Sweden and Denmark.

The Swedish government, which watched Christian IV's collection of tolls in the Sound with envy and irritation, may have spotted the possibility of a corresponding command of East–West trade by controlling the ports of disembarkation in the Baltic. Sweden had given a foretaste of its intentions when, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it had wanted to push up into the Arctic, and when it collected tolls (*licenter*) at the Prussian harbours from 1627 to 1635. It is difficult to tell what role the control of East–West trade played in the decision to intervene on the Continent; but after a few years' war these plans occupied a prominent place.<sup>21</sup> In all probability the

19 Most recent analysis in Villstrand, *Sveriges historia*, pp. 143–6; cf. Jespersen, 'The Constitutional and Administrative Situation', pp. 139–42; S. Oredsson, *Gustav II Adolf* (Malmö, 2007).

20 M. Roberts, 'Oxenstierna in Germany, 1633–1636', in M. Roberts, *From Oxenstierna to Charles XII: Four Studies* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 6–54.

21 A. Attman, *The Struggle for Baltic Markets: Powers in Conflict 1558–1618* (Lund, 1979).

Swedish contribution to the war – like that of the Danes in the years 1625–9 – was dictated as much by security as by economic considerations.

In addition, there could have been a domestic incentive for waging war.<sup>22</sup> While the Danish property-owning aristocracy had almost no advantage from Christian IV's intervention in the 1620s, the Swedish nobility was employed by the state in civil and military duties. By apportioning crown property – donation – the Swedish crown honoured Swedish noblemen for their public service, and after the expansion eastwards they were allotted the captured properties.

From a Danish viewpoint, the years after the Peace of Lübeck in 1629 formed a dividing line. After Denmark's defeat and Sweden's assumption of responsibility for waging war on the Continent, Sweden was indisputably the leading power in Scandinavia. What happened in 1630 had obviously been on its way for a number of years. Although the Kalmar War of 1611–13 had ended to Denmark's advantage, it revealed a military balance in Scandinavia. But with Sweden's expansion in the Baltic and its acquisition of considerable coastal areas, the balance was disturbed, and it is symptomatic that Christian IV in 1622 asked his council of the realm to define the boundaries of the Danish *dominium maris Baltici*.<sup>23</sup>

As for security policy, what happened was exactly what Christian IV had wished to avoid with his participation in the war. Sweden now led the Protestant contribution to the war, and Swedish troops were operating both along the Baltic coast and south of Denmark, which had been sidelined politically into the role of spectator. Denmark's altered security situation unleashed a flurry of defensive measures, including, from 1637, the innovation of a standing army of mercenaries. The war from 1625 to 1629 also used up Christian IV's personal capital, and the increased defence expenditure of the 1630s strained the state finances.

The king's drastic raising of the Sound tolls, which were formally the monarch's personal income, was intended to improve his liquidity and political freedom of manoeuvre, but at the same time it strained his relationship to the maritime powers. Besides, the king found it difficult to reconcile himself to passively watching what was going on south of

22 A. Strindberg, *Bondenöd och stormaktsdröm* (Värnamo, 1988); J. Lindegren, 'The Swedish "Military State", 1560–1720', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10:4 (1985), pp. 305–36.

23 K. Erslev (ed.), *Aktstykker og Oplysninger til Rigsraadets og Stændermødernes historie*, 1 (København, 1883–5), pp. 336f.

Denmark. Despite the articles in the Peace of Lübeck which stipulated that he was not to meddle in German affairs, he succeeded in 1634 in having his son Duke Frederik elected prince-bishop of Bremen and Verden; but just as important, in the 1630s he worked against the interests of Sweden by diplomatic means, under the pretext of offering his services as a mediator.<sup>24</sup>

The increased tension between the Scandinavian countries triggered off the Torstensson feud of 1643–5. A Swedish army led by General Lennart Torstensson moved from the Holy Roman Empire up into Jylland without a declaration of war. And at the Peace of Brömsebro in 1645 Denmark-Norway had to hand over the Norwegian counties of Jämtland and Härjedalen together with the islands of Gotland and Saaremaa to Sweden. Moreover, Sweden was to have Halland in pledge for thirty years, and to enjoy exemption from tolls in the Öresund.<sup>25</sup> All of this strengthened Sweden-Finland's leading position in Scandinavia and further weakened the foundations of Denmark-Norway's control of the Baltic.

Besides these acquisitions of land from Denmark-Norway, the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 resulted in Sweden's receiving Vorpommern, the islands of Rügen, Usedom and Wollin and the town of Stettin, along with the bishoprics of Bremen and Verden and the area around Wildeshausen. Sweden thereby controlled the mouths of the rivers Elbe, Weser and Oder. Sweden enjoyed thereafter several years of peace; but this also confronted the country with new problems. A proportion of its troops were withdrawn, but Sweden had to continue to maintain a sizeable army in order to defend its newly acquired lands from enemies simply waiting for revenge. When in 1654 Queen Kristina abdicated in favour of her cousin, Karl X Gustav, Sweden soon found itself at war again. In 1654 Sweden had at its disposal a large, expensive army, and it illustrates the inertia of the military that the Swedish *riksråd* debated whether the army should be used against Denmark-Norway, or against Poland and Russia.<sup>26</sup>

In 1655 the attack was launched against Poland with the aim of hindering the expansion of Russia, which the previous year had declared war on Poland. What presumably had been intended as a limited military action

24 See generally J. A. Fridericia, *Danmarks ydre politiske Historie*, 1–2 (København, 1876–8; repr., København, 1972).

25 Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater*, 4, pp. 418–63.

26 B. Kentschynskij, 'Karl X Gustav inför krisen i öster 1654–55', *Karolinska Förbundets Årsbok* (1956), pp. 7–140.

developed into a five-year-long war, in which Swedish troops fought against Russia, Poland, Brandenburg, Austria and Denmark.<sup>27</sup>

The Danish king, Frederik III, exploited Sweden's involvement in Poland for a war of revenge. Frederik had introduced recruitment of mercenaries in 1656, which stood him in good stead when, in the summer of 1657, together with the estates and the council, he issued a declaration of war.

Sweden managed to detach troops from Poland which were able to move from north Germany through Schleswig-Holstein and Jylland. After the Swedish army's legendary march in February 1658 over the ice which bound the Danish islands together, Denmark-Norway was forced at the end of that same month to agree peace terms at Roskilde which meant a dismemberment of Denmark-Norway.<sup>28</sup> With the handover of the east Danish provinces of Skåne, Halland and Blekinge, Denmark lost one-third of its territory and population. Sweden now controlled one side of the Sound and the whole south coast of the Scandinavian peninsula. Together with the loss of the island of Bornholm, the basis for Denmark's mastery of the Baltic disappeared. And as far as Norway was concerned, the handover of Trondheim county cut this realm into two parts. When in August 1658 Karl X Gustav went to war again in order to completely wipe out Denmark-Norway as an independent state, it became clear that the rivalry between the two Scandinavian kingdoms had developed into a struggle for survival for Denmark-Norway.

The plan almost succeeded. The population of Bornholm freed themselves from the Swedish rule, but in Denmark it was only the beleaguered København that could resist.<sup>29</sup> The inhabitants of the capital put up a stubborn resistance, and after receiving help from, first, a Dutch fleet which brought supplies and troops, and later from Austria and Brandenburg, which moved into Jylland with an army, the Swedish army was beaten. The peace settlement at København in 1660 had already been dictated by the maritime powers at the so-called Concerts of The Hague, and reflected the fact that the Baltic area and the conflicts between the Scandinavian powers had become

27 R. Frost, *After the Deluge: Poland-Lithuania and the Second Northern War 1655–1660* (Cambridge, 1993).

28 L. E. Wolke, 1658. *Tåget över Bält* (Lund, 2008). The Peace Treaty of Roskilde is published in Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater*, 5, pp. 218–40. The peace treaty is analysed in H. Sanders and P. Karlsson (eds.), *Roskildefreden 1658 – i perspektiv* (Roskilde, 2009).

29 Various aspects of the besieged København (August 1658–May 1660) are treated in P. Wessel Hansen and L. Jespersen (eds.), *Stormen på København. Den svenske belejring 1658–1660, København, Kultur og Historie*, 1 (København, 2009).



increasingly significant to Europe. In a different way from what Gustav II Adolf had envisaged, the wars in Europe had become intertwined.

The European maritime powers did not want to see one Scandinavian kingdom gaining control over both sides of the Sound. Accordingly they resisted both Sweden's war of annihilation against Denmark-Norway, and the latter's recovery of the east Danish provinces. The decisions of the peace of 1658, therefore, came to form the basis of the peace settlement of 1660; but in contrast to the 1658 arrangement, Denmark-Norway did not have to hand over Trondheim county and Bornholm.<sup>30</sup>

Although Sweden had not achieved its undeniably wide-ranging aims in waging the war, it now stood at the summit of its power. Simultaneously with the Peace of København, it made peace with Poland at Oliva. Here, Sweden's possession of Livonia was confirmed, just as the Polish king forfeited all claims to the Swedish throne; and the following year at Kardis, Sweden concluded a peace with Russia which repeated the terms of the Peace of Stolbova.

From now on, Sweden adopted a new policy of peace and defence. This necessitated maintaining strong forces in the newly acquired territories, while at the same time Sweden sought by means of alliances, first with England and the Netherlands (1668), then with France (1672), to secure its position. But both the alliances, and the supply problems connected with the maintenance of military preparedness, contained within them the seeds of new wars.<sup>31</sup>

For Denmark-Norway, the attitude of the European powers to the peace settlement of 1660 gave warning that circumstances could scarcely be altered by a war of revenge. Leading circles in Denmark seem to have recognised this; an anonymous text from 1660, *Somnium Gersdorffianum* (Gersdorff's Dream), apparently written by leading Danish civil servants, Joakim Gersdorff and Hannibal Sehested, gave expression to this fatalistic position.<sup>32</sup>

A Danish-Norwegian reconquest was certainly attempted during the Skåne War of 1675–9, when Sweden, as a consequence of its alliance with France, and with a view to the provisioning of the army, again became

30 For the peace treaty of 1660, see Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater*, 5, pp. 345–80.

31 K.-R. Böhme, 'Die sicherheitspolitische Lage Schwedens nach dem Westfälischen Frieden', in H. Wernicke and H.-J. Hacker (eds.), *Der Westfälische Frieden von 1648. Wende in der Geschichte des Ostseeraums. Für Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Herbert Ewe zum 80. Geburtstag* (Hamburg, 2001), pp. 31–46. As regards the former Danish provinces, see H. Sanders, *Efter Roskildefreden 1658. Skånelandskapen och Sverige i krig och fred* (Lund, 2008).

32 C. O. Bøggild-Andersen, *Hannibal Sehested. En dansk statsmand*, 1 (København, 1946), pp. 231–3.

involved militarily against Brandenburg, Lüneburg, Austria and the Netherlands.<sup>33</sup> At sea, Denmark-Norway gained the upper hand; on land, a Danish army was confined to Skåne; but after suffering a stinging defeat at Lund in 1676, it became clear that Denmark-Norway could not change circumstances on the battlefield. And at the negotiating table it found no support for its territorial demands. At the same time France's influence helped to ensure that in 1679 Sweden only had to hand over insignificant territories to Brandenburg and Lüneburg.<sup>34</sup>

During the Great Northern War from 1700 to 1721 Denmark made a few more attempts. In 1698–9 Denmark, Poland, Saxony and Russia formed offensive alliances directed against Sweden. But when a Swedish force landed on Sjælland, north of København, in 1700, Denmark-Norway was forced to desert the Union. In the same year Sweden defeated a Russian army at Narva, and in 1706 Sweden was able to conclude a peace with August II of Saxony at Altranstädt which implied the abdication of the Polish king. Sweden now concentrated on its struggle with Russia. The Swedish army marched first towards Moscow, but then changed direction towards the Ukraine, where it was annihilated at the battle of Poltava in 1709.<sup>35</sup> The Swedish king, Karl XII, fled to Turkey, from where he would not return home until 1715.

In the same year as its defeat at Poltava, another alliance was forged against Sweden, consisting of Russia, Brandenburg, Poland, Saxony, Britain, Hannover and Denmark-Norway. A Danish army invaded Skåne again but was beaten at Hälsingborg in 1710, and after Karl XII in the same year had rejected the neutrality act passed at The Hague, which was designed to guarantee the neutrality of the Swedish provinces as long as they were not used as bases for attack, Russia, Saxony and Denmark-Norway launched an attack against Pomerania. A Danish army was defeated at Gadebusch in Mecklenburg in 1712; but the following year a Swedish army of 10,000 men was forced to surrender at Tønning, south-west of Husum. At the same time Russian armies were winning great victories in the east. In 1718 Karl XII led an attack on Norway; but in the same year the king was killed by a bullet at Frederikshald on the Norwegian border.

33 F. Askgaard and A. Stade (eds.), *Kampen om Skåne* (København, 1983).

34 For the peace treaty of 1679 see Laursen (ed.), *Danmark-Norges Traktater*, 7, pp. 297–336.

35 P. Englund, *The Battle of Poltava: The Birth of the Russian Empire* (London, 1992).

In the peace treaties of 1719–21 the Swedish kingdom lost all the territorial gains it had made in the Baltic since 1560 and a number of its territories in northern Germany. With this, the period as a Great Power was over. The country had not had sufficient resources to hold on to its far-flung possessions. At the Peace of Uusikaupunki (Nystad) in 1721, Russia profited most from the fall of Sweden as a Great Power, gaining Ingermanland (Ingria), Käkisalme county, Estonia, Livonia and Saaremaa. Despite these favourable circumstances, when the partners in the alliance divided up the Swedish possessions at the Peace of Frederiksborg in 1720, Denmark-Norway made no territorial gains, despite having conquered parts of Pomerania and other Swedish possessions in northern Germany during the war.

Sweden's earlier gains from Denmark-Norway remained in Swedish hands. However, according to the peace settlement of 1720 Sweden had to pay Sound tolls on the same footing as the Western powers, and a commission was set up to determine the disputed borders in Lapland and Finnmark. After Sweden's rise and fall as a Great Power, several of the problems which had followed in the wake of the Vasa state's secession from the Kalmar Union remained unsolved.

On the Danish-Norwegian side, there were no new attempts to reconquer the lost territories. In 1809 Sweden had to hand over Finland to Russia; but just as the modern Finnish-Russian border to a large extent corresponds to that of 1721,<sup>36</sup> so the borders within Scandinavia today are identical to those of the peace treaty of 1660; not necessarily because they can be regarded as 'natural', but as a consequence of the interests of the Great Powers.<sup>37</sup> With the peace treaty of 1660 the Swedish kingdom confirmed its position as the leading power in Scandinavia, and it kept this position even after 1721. While at the beginning of the seventeenth century each of the Scandinavian kingdoms had a population of a little over 1 million, by the end of the century the Swedish kingdom (including the east Danish provinces), with its nearly 2 million inhabitants, had almost twice as many inhabitants as Denmark-Norway.

36 R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), pp. 317f.

37 Sweden had on several occasions, inter alia at the negotiations with Denmark in 1658, claimed that the border in the Sound was given by nature and by God; cf. L. Jespersen, 'Hvorfor den blev betalt siden, da vi ikke mere herskede i Sundet, må Vorherre vide', in O. Degn (ed.), *Tolden i Sundet. Toldopkrævning, politik og skibsfart i Øresund 1429–1857* (København, 2010), pp. 295–328.

While the Baltic provinces preserved their languages, administration, legal systems and institutions, the Swedish kingdom started to incorporate the conquered Danish-Norwegian territories. According to the peace treaty of 1660 the population of the east Danish provinces would keep their privileges together with Danish law and justice, in so far as these did not conflict with general Swedish law.<sup>38</sup>

This guarantee had a rather elastic character, and immediately after the conquest, Sweden started a 'Swedification' of the territories.<sup>39</sup> In view of the Danish-Norwegian attempt to reconquer the territories during the Skåne War of 1675–9, and a certain local tendency to steal upon the Danish army, the Swedification process was intensified, and the last remains of Danish rule were removed under the pretext that they conflicted with general Swedish law. The town of Karlskrona was founded on the south coast of Blekinge in 1680 as a naval base. From here the Swedish fleet could be sent out into the Baltic earlier in the year than from the more northerly Stockholm. With the conquest of the Norwegian district of Bohuslän the Swedish kingdom gained increased access to the Kattegat in the west.

The Danish fortress of Kronborg in Helsingør (Elsinore), which provides the setting for Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, was designed to enforce the Danish-Norwegian king's control of the the Sound and ensure that passing ships stopped at the toll station at Helsingør and paid the Sound toll. Until the peace settlement of 1658 the coastline opposite the barely 5-kilometre-broad strait was in Danish hands; but even after the Danish-Norwegian king had been forced to surrender the areas east of the Sound, he continued to demand tolls in the Sound, and the requirement to pay tolls continued until 1857, when it was abolished after pressure from the United States.<sup>40</sup>

38 J. Rosén, 'Statsledning och provinspolitik under Sveriges stormaktstid, En författningshistorisk skiss', *Scandia* (1946), pp. 224–70; I. Dübeck, *Fra gammel dansk til ny svensk ret. Den retlige forsvenskning i de tabte territorier 1645–1683* (København, 1987).

39 As to the different views on the treatment of the former Danish provinces and the concept of Swedification, see E. Jutikkala, 'The Integration Policies of Sweden and Denmark', *Scandinavian Studies*, 45 (1973), pp. 191–212; H. Gustafsson, 'Att göra svenskar av danskar? Den svenska integrationspolitikens föreställningsvärld 1658–1693', in K.-E. Frandsen and J. C. Johansen (eds.), *Da Østdanmark blev Sydsverige. Otte studier i dansk-svenske relationer i 1600-tallet*, Skånsk medeltid och Renäsans, Skriftserie utgiven av Vetenskaps-Societeten i Lund, 19 (Ebeltoft, 2003), pp. 31–60; Sanders, *Efter Roskildefreden 1658*, pp. 60–5; cf. E. I. Kouri, 'Die Stellung des Finnischen als Verwaltungssprache bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in T. Nicklas and M. Schnettger (eds.), *Politik und Sprache im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Mainz, 2007), pp. 137–52.

40 Jespersen, 'Hvorfor den blev betalt siden', p. 310.

## The military imperative

The Sound tolls, which had ensured a surplus in the state budget in the first half of the seventeenth century, now became less and less important for the state finances as a result of international agreements and the growth of taxation. The developments within the military sector at the end of the seventeenth century were not the least significant factor of change within the state finances.

## Fiscal and military developments

LEON JESPERSEN

Posterity has marvelled at the fact that the Swedish kingdom, with its limited population and resource base, could in the course of the first half of the seventeenth century elevate itself to the status of a European Great Power. After the Peace of Westphalia 1648 and the peace agreements of København and Oliva in 1660 with Denmark and Poland respectively, Sweden stood at the height of its power.

Its success was due, among other things, to the fact that Sweden developed an effective administrative and military apparatus, and that the country was led by two talented politicians. The Swedish King Gustav II Adolf demonstrated his talents as a politician, but also as a military commander who employed new military technology and tactics.<sup>1</sup> However, Sweden's expansionary policies would not have been possible without the king's close co-operation with the chancellor Axel Oxenstierna who succeeded in persuading the nobility to make sacrifices and made it possible to mobilise the relative prosperity of the Swedish peasant economy.<sup>2</sup>

During the War of Liberation (1568–1648) against Spain, the Dutch developed the arts of fortification and warfare, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries many people, including Swedes, made their way to the Netherlands to acquire a modern military education, just as the Dutch were summoned to Sweden. They worked as engineers on fortifications, and Dutch books on military theory were known in Sweden. The victories of the Swedish army over European powers resounded throughout Europe. These were formerly attributed partly to tactical innovations together with the employment of light, mobile leather cannons. And while the Swedish armies

1 Recent books on Gustav II Adolf, see S. Oredsson, *Gustav Adolf, Sverige och Trettioåriga Kriget* (Lund, 1992); S. Oredsson, *Gustav II Adolf* (Malmö, 2007); see also M. Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus: A History of Sweden 1611–1632, 1–2* (London, 1958, 1968).

2 The most recent biography on Axel Oxenstierna is G. Wetterberg, *Axel Oxenstierna. Makten och klokskapen* (Malmö, 2010).

which operated on the Continent contained many foreigners, it has been asserted – as something unique – that Sweden had created a national army as early as the 1540s.

Gustav II Adolf's military qualifications are well known, and although the warfare waged by the Swedish army was characterised by innovations, posterity's judgements are built partly on misapprehensions. The oft-cited Swedish leather cannons were only used for a short period, and played no decisive role.<sup>3</sup> The image of the Swedish army's national character also requires some modification. Moreover, the Swedish kingdom's rapid toppling from European Great Power status shows that this status rested on shaky foundations. With insufficient economic and human resources, Sweden, after the Great Northern War (1700–20/21), lost the greater part of its overseas possessions.<sup>4</sup>

It has been shown that the Swedish kingdom did not – as has been asserted – build up Europe's first national army from 1544 onwards. After an uprising in the 1540s, *Dackefejden* (the Dacke rebellion), in addition to foreign enlisted men, many Swedes from the rebellious areas were recruited, and the foundation was laid for a national army.<sup>5</sup> In the Swedish kingdom, as in other European countries, there were different ways in which the people might be armed. In keeping with medieval tradition, the common man might be called up and armed in times of war or crisis situations. This was particularly common for operations of a defensive and mainly local nature. At the other end of the scale, there might be full-scale conscription for offensive purposes. In practice, there was a range of variations between these two theoretical types of service, and the Swedish king deliberately blurred the distinction between them in order to use the call-up for more offensive purposes.<sup>6</sup> In 1619 a national army was created by conscripting every tenth man.<sup>7</sup> The army was organised in regiments and from the 1640s onwards conscription was carried out on the basis of farms instead of individuals.

3 M. Roberts, 'Gustaf II Adolf och krigskonsten', in G. Rystad *et al.* (eds.), *Historia kring trettioåriga kriget* (Falun, 1994, first printed in 1963), p. 75.

4 N. E. Villstrand, *Sveriges historia 1600–1721* (Stockholm, 2011), pp. 518–23, compares the quick rise and fall of the Swedish empire to a soufflé and he discusses how to label this period in Swedish history.

5 L.-O. Larsson, 'Gustav Vasa och "den nationella hären"', *Scandia*, 33 (1967), pp. 250–69.

6 S. A. Nilsson, *På väg mot militärstaten. Krigsbefällets etablering i den äldre Vasatidens Sverige*, *Opuscula Historica Upsaliensia*, 3 (Uppsala, 1989), pp. 3–9; S. A. Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid. Om Sverige som militärstat och bondesamhälle*, *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia*, 161 (Uppsala, 1990), pp. 109–11.

7 L. E. Wolke, *Svenska knektar. Indelta soldater, ryttare och båtsman i krig och fred* (Lund, 1995), p. 15; cf. N. E. Villstrand, 'Adaptation or Protest: Local Communities Facing

After Sigismund was deposed as king of Sweden in 1599, the Swedish armies, which were fighting against Poland, consisted largely of Swedes and Finns, and when the German War began in 1630 over half of the army's complement of 72,000 men were from Sweden. But as the armies grew, the proportion of Swedes decreased. After the victory at Breitenfeld in 1631 and before the defeat at Nördlingen 1634 Swedes made up only a small proportion of the army. Apart from this short period Sweden had to produce many soldiers. In the years 1630–48 about 70,000 of them died.<sup>8</sup> Of the Swedish soldiers who were sent to Germany, 60 per cent were killed, wounded or taken prisoner. The army's huge losses were caused more by epidemics than by warfare. Research carried out on one locality – Bygdeå – has shown how serious the demographic impact of this could be. In the period 1620–40 Bygdeå supplied 255 soldiers, 215 of these died.<sup>9</sup>

There was a constant need for recruits from Sweden, both before the Swedish intervention in the Thirty Years War and during the warfare on the Continent. There were different forms of recruitment in the Swedish kingdom. Boatswains were required for the fleet; the government employed different methods in order to get well-qualified men. This reflected the fact that it was harder for the Swedish government than for the Danish to get enough men with experience of the sea.<sup>10</sup> The number of Swedish warships increased from the mid-seventeenth century and matched the Danish fleet. Local communities to a large extent opposed the enlistment of their menfolk. As regards the Finnish part of the kingdom, it has been possible to identify areas where it was practically impossible to recruit men. The population 'voted with their feet' and disappeared.<sup>11</sup>

Conscription for the Swedish Armed Forces 1620–1679', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *Revolution from Above?* (Odense, 2000); M. Huhtamies, *Knektar och bönder. Knektersättare vid utskrivningarna i Nedra Stakunta under trettioåriga kriget* (Helsingfors, 2004).

8 J. Glete, 'The Swedish Fiscal-military State in Transition and Decline, 1650–1815', Paper to the XIV International Economic History Congress, Helsinki, 21–25 August 2006, Session 69 'Mobilizing Money and Resources for War during the Early Modern Period', [www.helsinki.fi/iehc2006/papers2/Glete.pdf](http://www.helsinki.fi/iehc2006/papers2/Glete.pdf).

9 J. Lindegren, *Utskrivning och utsugning, Produktion och reproduktion i Bygdeå 1620–1640*, *Studia Historica Upsaliensia*, 117 (Uppsala, 1980); J. Lindegren, 'Knektänkornas land', in R. Ambjörnsson and D. Gaunt (eds.), *Den dolda historien. 27 uppsatser om vårt okända förflutne* (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 363–75.

10 N. E. Villstrand, "'Bondpojkar doppade i vatten', Svensk sjömilitär rekrytering ur en jämförande perspektiv (1500–1800)', in C. H. Ericsson and K. Montin (eds.), *Människan i flottans tjänst, Sjöhistoriskt jubileumssymposium i Åbo 24 november 2000* (Åbo, 2001), pp. 43–58.

11 Villstrand, 'Adaptation or Protest', pp. 249–314.



The cavalry consisted of domestic recruits, with the addition of nobles performing mounted service (*rusttjänst*). This requirement of cavalry service by the nobles was a bone of contention between the monarch and the nobility; besides, the mounted nobility had lost some of their military importance.<sup>12</sup> Men recruited to the infantry were organised in provincial regiments. Swedish noblemen filled a number of officers' posts, but during the military campaigns on the Continent many of the growing numbers of such posts were taken by non-Swedes, in particular by German officers.

The economy of the Swedish state was to a large extent based on natural resources, and a state of military readiness was partly financed by diverting some of the income from these natural resources to defray particular military expenses. This was known as *indelning* (allotment). Gustav II Adolf put this principle into practice in the 1620s in the so-called older *indelningsverk*, which has been totally overshadowed by the younger *indelningsverk*, which the Swedish absolutist state created in the 1680s in connection with alterations to the structure of state finances. The older *indelningsverk* took care of the payment and recruitment of the cavalry. Farms were assigned to produce and maintain a trooper for the cavalry. The proprietor could perform the cavalry service himself or hire a cavalryman, and it was also possible for one person to take care of the financing of a hired cavalryman, while a third ran the farm. Officers in the army and the cavalry were allotted farms (*boställen*) and other sources of income, and similarly up to eight infantrymen were allotted the income from one farm, in addition to a money wage, clothes, etc.<sup>13</sup>

From 1560 onwards Sweden experienced almost constant war with its neighbours, and in some years it fought several neighbours at the same time. The Swedish state was geared up for war and has been aptly characterised as a military state.<sup>14</sup>

12 S. A. Nilsson, *Krona och frälse i Sverige 1523–1594, Rusttjänst, länsväsende, godspolitik* (Lund, 1947).

13 P. Danielsson, *Från gård till slagfält. Det äldre militära indelningsverket. Ett krigsfinansiellt experiment under svensk stormaktstid*, Rapporten från Växjö Universitet, Humaniora, 7 (Växjö, 2000).

14 S. A. Nilsson, 'Militärstaten i funktion', in S. A. Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid. Om Sverige som militärstat och bondesamhälle*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 161 (Uppsala, 1990), pp. 226–44; S. A. Nilsson, 'Den karolinska militärstaten. Fredens problem och krigets', in G. Ekstrand (ed.), *Tre Karlar, Karl X, Karl XI, Karl XII* (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 29–51; cf. S. A. Nilsson, 'Imperial Sweden, Nation-building, War and Social Change', in A. Losman et al. (eds.), *The Age of New Sweden* (Stockholm, 1988), pp. 9–39; cf. J. Lindegren, 'The Swedish Military State, 1560–1720', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10 (1985), pp. 305–36.

The Swedish nobility, who were not dependent to the same degree as their Danish counterparts on the running of their estates, held military posts on a large scale or were involved in the apparatus of administration, which played an important role in the drawing up and financing of the military.

The monarch rewarded the nobility for their service to the state by handing crown estates over to them. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the nobles had had crown estates as fiefs, but from the time of Gustav II Adolf they received these estates as donations, as payment or by purchase. This radically altered the way in which estates were distributed. While the nobility at the beginning of the seventeenth century had possessed one-third of the land, by the middle of the century their share had grown to two-thirds.<sup>15</sup>

Part of the state's income was in the form of payment in kind. It has often been asserted that a growing military machine needed money income; but it has been shown that payment in kind could also be a suitable method of payment in wartime.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand donations of estates were an expression of the scarcity of liquid capital and a desire – at least from the 1630s – for a conscious change to money-based state finances. The state would not itself manage estates and levy payment in kind, but would devolve this into private hands and levy taxes and duties instead. Furthermore, in the years 1618–35 private persons were given contracts for the collection of taxes.<sup>17</sup>

The value of Sweden's iron exports had been rising during the sixteenth century with the changeover from osmund to the more intensively worked iron bar. In the seventeenth century copper became the most important export article, and Sweden became Europe's biggest exporter of copper. Ensuring her own supplies of these militarily vital raw materials and importing foreign experts – especially Walloons – created the basis for a Swedish arms industry and export trade.<sup>18</sup> By leasing out the running of the mines, the government converted raw materials into internationally valid

15 S. A. Nilsson, 'Från förläning till donation. Godspolitik och statshushållning under Gustav II Adolf', in S. A. Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid. Om Sverige som militärstat och bondesamhälle*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 161 (Uppsala, 1990), pp. 117–49.

16 B. Odén, 'Naturaskatter och finanspolitik – ett statsfinansiellt dilemma', *Scandia*, 33 (1967), pp. 1–19.

17 M. Hallenberg, *Statsmakt till salu. Arrendesystemet och privatiseringen av skatteuppbörden i det svenska riket* (Lund, 2008).

18 K. Kilbom, *Vallonerna. Valloninvandringen, stormaktsväldet och den svenska jernhanteringen* (Stockholm, 1958); B. Douhan, *Arbete, kapital och migration. Valloninvandringen till Sverige under 1600-talet* (Stockholm, 1985).

currency. Throughout the seventeenth century the Swedish kingdom was also a large-scale exporter of another militarily vital raw material, tar, which was mostly produced in Pohjanmaa (Österbotten), in the Finnish part of the kingdom.<sup>19</sup>

The founding of a string of towns in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was also designed to increase the state's money income. The building of these new towns was concentrated in the first half of the seventeenth century, especially in the economically important mining areas and the Gulf of Bothnia, with the purpose of stimulating and controlling trade.<sup>20</sup> Trade regulations were introduced in 1614, 1617 and 1636. Towns were divided into *uppstäder* and *stapelstäder* (staple towns), and only the latter were allowed to participate in foreign trade. For towns in the Gulf of Bothnia, this meant that their foreign trade would have to go via Stockholm or Turku (Åbo).

The favouring of Stockholm was also due to the fact that centralisation, with the capital as the centre, was a prerequisite for an expansionist policy and for Great Power status. Stockholm increasingly became the centre for regional trade, but did not receive a greater share of foreign trade than the rest of the staple towns.<sup>21</sup>

According to the doctrines of the time, war should 'feed itself'. This meant that war should be conducted on foreign territory, and that armies, at intervals, should be moved to new, productive areas. The problems of financing war gave it a momentum of its own. The Swedish government took various measures in order to obtain a high degree of self-financing, including the imposition of customs duties (*licenter*) in the Prussian ports in the years 1627–35. Sweden's efficient administrative apparatus exacted contributions from the occupied areas, just as it levied taxes, etc. from them. Sweden's participation in the Thirty Years War was moreover financed by subsidies from France and the Netherlands and with loans from business houses, officers and others. Arrears in paying the troops meant that the financing of the war was always to some extent in arrears. This was a dangerous stratagem, reflecting a balancing act between credit and mutiny,

19 N. E. Villstrand, 'Med stor möda i en hop gropar i marken. Tjärbränning kring Bottniska Viken under svensk stormaktstid', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* (1992), pp. 31–72.

20 B. Ericsson, 'De anlagda städerna i Sverige (ca. 1580–1800)', in G. A. Blom (ed.), *De anlagte steder på 1600- og 1700-tallet. Det XVII nordiske historikermøte, Trondheim, 1977* (Oslo, Bergen and Tromsø, 1977), pp. 106f.

21 Å. Sandström, *Mellan Torneå och Amsterdam, En undersökning av Stockholms roll som förmedlare av varor i regional- och utrikeshandel 1600–1650* (Stockholm, 1990).

although the lack of liquidity led to the development of an advanced system of credit employing bills of exchange, whereby the Swedish army command could obtain an advance on future income.<sup>22</sup>

Despite all these measures, the war never financed itself. Preliminary operations had in the nature of things to be supported by the homeland's resources. Continuing military operations demanded economic sacrifices from the Swedish population, but nevertheless there developed a growing deficit. When the war came to an end, the Swedish leadership was faced with huge expenses in connection with paying off the troops. With the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, Sweden received compensation (*satisfactio*) of 5 million *Reichstaler*. This was far from sufficient, and the deferral of the costs of the war has been aptly described as 'the problem of peace'.<sup>23</sup>

From the ascension of Gustav II Adolf to the throne in 1611, but most of all from the 1620s onwards, the number of taxes and duties grew steadily. Several of the taxes offended the privileges of the nobility, but on the recommendation of Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, the nobles accepted these impositions. The tenants of the crown and noble estates were not the least affected by the frequent taxation, and many nobles presumably helped with the payment of their taxation in order to prevent their farms from becoming deserted.<sup>24</sup>

The burghers had to bear their share of the burdens imposed by the expanding tax-levying state. Some burghers, especially in the capital, benefited from the fact that Stockholm was the seat of the court, the administration and the fleet. The large numbers of royal servants represented a large public with money to spend; but as they were at the same time exempted from certain burdens, provided that they did not engage in commerce or trade, the growing burdens had to be paid by the small band of burghers.

In the second half of the seventeenth century the wages of craftsmen in Stockholm stagnated or fell, while their outgoings for the necessities of life, taxes and duties rose. Compared to conditions in other European capitals like

22 H. Landberg et al. (eds.), *Den kontinentala krigets ekonomi. Studier i krigsfinansiering under svensk stormaktstid* (Stockholm, 1971).

23 Nilsson, 'Den karolinska militärstaten'; P. Karonen, 'Konsten att vinna ett krig- och att förlora ett annat: fredens kriser efter trettioåriga kriget och stora nordiska kriget', in C. Kuvaja and A.-C. Östman (eds.), *Svärdet, ordet & pennan – kring människa, makt och rum i nordisk historia*, Skrifter utgivna av Historiska Samfundet i Åbo, 12 (Åbo, 2012), pp. 189–209.

24 Nilsson, 'Militärstaten i funktion', p. 231. As to Axel Oxenstierna's and the nobility's attitude towards the king's war policy, see J. Holm, *Konstruktionen av en stormakt. Kungamakt, skattebönder och statsbildning 1595–1640*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studies in History, 90 (Stockholm, 2007), esp. pp. 65–80.

London, Paris or Vienna, where many financial burdens were borne in practice by many different groups in the capital, in Stockholm they weighed to a greater degree on the burghers alone.<sup>25</sup>

This disparity between increased taxes and an ever smaller group of taxpayers led to demands for lowering the tax burden by a more effective utilisation of the crown's resources. From the mid-seventeenth century the lower classes demanded a *reduktion*, i.e. a repossession by the crown of estates which had been given away. A limited *reduktion* took place in 1655 (*fjärdepartsräfsten*); but when it was neither implemented in full nor gave evidence of its adequacy, the demands for a more wide-ranging *reduktion* continued.

This took place in the 1680s in connection with the introduction of absolutism. Such extensive tracts of land were confiscated that the relationship between the crown and noble estates was reversed, so that the nobility now possessed one-third of the land against the crown's two-thirds. Whereas the crown, during the earlier *indelningsverk* in the 1620s, had possessed too few estates to fully implement the principle of income from crown estates being earmarked for specific outgoings, the repossession of estates made possible the implementation of domain-based state finances. This administrative system as a whole is known as the later *indelningsverk*; but in its narrower sense it refers to the recruitment and upkeep of the armed forces – the military *indelningsverk*.<sup>26</sup>

Officers of the cavalry and infantry were remunerated with a *boställe* (abode), supplemented by other forms of income. As for the mounted troops, certain farms were designated, whose tenants had to recruit and maintain one mounted trooper (*rusthållet*). Infantrymen and boatswains were recruited by means of two to five farms being amalgamated into recruitment areas (*roter*), which were required to produce and maintain an infantryman and a boatswain respectively. The *indelningsverk* was an expression of a state authority which lacked liquidity, together with a degree of military readiness which was designed for defence. In this way Sweden created a professional army which was not mobilised in peacetime. The system demonstrated its insufficiency during the offensive warfare of the Great Northern War (1700–20/21), where, among other things, it was difficult to replace the soldiers who were killed.

25 A. Jansson, *Bördor och bärkraft. Borgare och kronotjänare i Stockholm 1644–1672* (Stockholm, 1991).

26 See Wolke, *Svenska knektar*, with references; cf. Danielsson, *Från gård till slagfält*, pp. 43–56; F. Thisner, *Indelta inkomster. En studie av det militära indelningsverket 1721–1833* (Uppsala, 2014).

During this war, the year 1709 became an *annus horribilis* for Sweden. While since 1560 the Swedish leadership had largely succeeded in waging war on foreign soil, after 1709 the war was conducted on Swedish territory. It therefore posed new problems for the Swedish leadership. Not only did Sweden lose its Baltic provinces and parts of the German ones, except Swedish Pomerania, but in addition parts of Finnish Karjala (Karelia). This unleashed 'the Great Flight', where thousands fled to the Swedish part, and in particular to Stockholm. They brought with them disease epidemics; in the years 1710–12 an estimated 100,000 died of plague. In Stockholm, around one-third of the inhabitants may have lost their lives.<sup>27</sup>

The Great Northern War was largely fought by Swedish manpower. In 1709 Sweden lost an army of 23,000 men at Poltava in the Ukraine.<sup>28</sup> Only around 1,400 made it to Turkey together with Karl XII. And in 1713 a Swedish army of 10,000 men was forced to surrender to the Danes at Tønning, near Husum. It has been estimated that Sweden lost 100,000 men during the Great Northern War. As these men were recruited in Sweden and in Finland, this meant a dramatic rise in the number of deserted farms.

During the Great Northern War Sweden also experienced more years of crop failure. After the loss of the corn-producing Baltic provinces Sweden could no longer make up for this by imports from there. And the financing of the war had to be taken care of exclusively with Swedish resources. Up until 1709 the war was financed by, among other things, contributions, loans and *skatteköp* (sums paid by crown farmers to buy the status of freemen and become proprietors in their own right). After this date, these were supplemented by a series of direct and indirect taxes and monetary exactions. In 1713 several extra taxes were converted to a capital tax,<sup>29</sup> and generally speaking the remainder of the war years were characterised by a state-led economy, a state capitalism, which in real terms distanced Sweden from the domain-based economy of the *indelningsverk* to an economy based on money. By the time of the peace settlements of 1720–1, Sweden was so exhausted that it had to accept the harsh peace conditions imposed on it.

27 J. Aminoff-Winberg, *På flykt i eget land. Internflyktingar i Sverige under stora nordiska kriget* (Åbo, 2007); G. Behre, L.-O. Larsson and E. Österberg, *Sveriges historia 1521–1809* (Stockholm, 1985), p. 180; J. Rosén, *Svensk historia, 1: Tiden före 1718*, 3rd edn (Stockholm, 1969), p. 554; P. Ullgren, *Det stora nordiska kriget* (Stockholm, 2008)

28 Englund, *The Battle of Poltava*.

29 Å. Karlsson, *Den jämlike undersåten. Karl XII:s förmögenhetsbeskattning 1713* (Uppsala, 1994).

In the mid-sixteenth century, Denmark-Norway was the leading power in Scandinavia; but in peacetime its military apparatus was not impressive. It maintained no standing forces, apart from minor garrisons in its fortresses. The mounted troops of the crown and the nobility (*rostjeneste*) could be mobilised at short notice. The crown provided about 1,500 mounted men from its fiefs, and as repayment for its extensive privileges the nobility had to match that number. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the crown's tally of mounted men was almost halved, and the total numbers of these men were by then under 2,000.

At the same time the reduced cavalry underwent structural changes. The heavy, armoured troopers were replaced by a more mobile cavalry, equipped with firearms. From 1609 onwards the force was divided into tactical wings, led by a dedicated officer corps. The reform mirrored a transition from individual fighters to co-operative tactical units, organised by the state. This development can be viewed as part of the 'military revolution' whereby an earlier institution dominated by the nobility survived by adjusting to new tactical and technological demands of a military nature under the direction of the state. From 1625 onwards cavalry service was definitively linked to ownership of property, so that such service by the nobility now became a fixed, transparent burden imposed on such ownership. The institution of cavalry service was tied in more tightly to the aristocracy. Cavalry service was abolished with the introduction of absolutism in 1660–1, but revived in 1666–9 and 1673, finally disappearing in 1679.<sup>30</sup>

Denmark-Norway in the mid-sixteenth century was not blessed with awe-inspiring military forces. If a war was approaching, the Danes – like other nations – could mobilise the peasantry for local and defensive actions, and call on the armed burghers in the trading towns. A powerful army for offensive operations was called into being by means of recruitment of mercenaries, and this expensive war-machine was disbanded as soon as the danger had passed.

This system took for granted that Denmark had at its disposal liquid capital or access to credit, that the country was not exposed to surprise

30 K. J. V. Jespersen, *Rostjenestetaksation og adelsgods, Studier i den danske adelige rostjeneste og adelens godsfordeling 1540–1650*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 48 (Odense, 1977), chs. 3–4; K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Social Change and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Some Danish Evidence', *The Historical Journal*, 26 (1983), pp. 1–13. The development of the military format in Denmark is described in K. J. V. Jespersen *et al.*, *Danmarks krigshistorie 700–2010* (København, 2010). See further G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovations and the Rise of West, 1500–1800*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1996).

attacks, but was effectively alerted by a declaration of war, and that any warfare was both infrequent and of short duration.<sup>31</sup> In comparison to Sweden in the sixteenth century, Denmark had a more developed money economy and easier access to international capital markets (*Kielerumschlag*). By virtue of the Sound Due the Danish monarch also had at his disposal liquid capital in internationally valid currency. The king's personal fortune put him in a position to finance the first phase of a war – and to threaten to declare war as duke of Holstein – while the subsequent phases had to be financed by taxes and loans.<sup>32</sup>

However, in the seventeenth century the constant danger of war made a permanent country-wide state of military readiness a necessity. In 1614, after the Kalmar War, a national peasant militia was set up, numbering 5,000, and later 7,500 men. The unsettled conditions of the Thirty Years War and the consideration of a defensive union with the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein motivated the setting up of a permanent army of mercenaries from 1637. These forces were to a large extent armed with firearms, and the state saw to their organisation as well as their financing.<sup>33</sup>

Denmark-Norway's leading position in Scandinavia was most conspicuously demonstrated by its fleet. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, after Christian IV's accession to the throne, the fleet was massively expanded, and in 1621 a system of defensive ships was put in place to supplement the regular warships. This system remained in place, with certain interruptions, until the end of the seventeenth century, when demands on the size of ships made it obsolete.<sup>34</sup>

Up until the 1630s the fleet was manned by sailors conscripted from the trading towns and coastal parishes, and in particular it was able to draw on Norwegians with sea-going experience, which meant that the crews of the

31 K. Krüger, 'Die Staatsfinanzen Dänemarks und Schwedens im 16. Jahrhundert – ein Strukturvergleich', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 15 (1988), pp. 129–50.

32 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'War, Finance and the Growth of Absolutism: Some Aspects of the European Integration of Seventeenth Century Denmark', in G. Rystad (ed.), *Europe and Scandinavia: Aspects of the Process of Integration in the 17th Century* (Lund, 1983), pp. 33–49; E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Defence, War and Finance: Christian IV and the Council of the Realm 1596–1629', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 7 (1982), pp. 277–313.

33 See generally K. C. Rockstroh, *Udviklingen af den nationale Hær i Danmark i det 17. og 18. Aarhundrede*, 1: *Tiden 1614–1670* (København, 1909), and G. Lind, *Hæren og magten i Danmark 1614–1662* (København, 1994).

34 N. M. Probst, *Christian 4.s flåde. Den danske flådes historie 1588–1660*, Marinehistoriske Skrifter (København, 1996); H. Becker-Christensen, 'Flådemagt og protektionisme – træk af defensionsskibsordningen i Danmark-Norge i 1600-tallet', in F. H. Lauridsen (ed.), *Festskrift til Vagn Dybdahl* (Aarhus, 1987), pp. 30–55.



Danish-Norwegian wartime fleet were better qualified than their Swedish counterparts. Nevertheless there could be problems finding enough qualified personnel. Local populations saw an advantage in holding back their best seamen, and in the 1630s the conscription of boatswains was altered to a boatswains' tax, so that professional boatswains could be enlisted.<sup>35</sup> The ordinance was valid only in peacetime, and in the following years boatswains were enlisted not only in Denmark-Norway but also in the Netherlands. In the 1630s the navy as well as the fortresses were enlarged.

In 1631, in the context of the expansion of the fleet during the 1630s and the changed method of recruiting boatswains, and as something unique in Europe, the district of Nyboder, which still exists, was set up in København to provide accommodation for boatswains. København was the centre for the fleet. The Bremerholm shipyard, the largest workplace in the country, was also here. Naval officers were recruited from the burghers as well as from the nobility. There were, to be sure, only a few nobles who pursued a naval career; but the highest posts in the navy were filled by the nobility.

The reorganisation from conscription to recruitment of boatswains was yet another sign of professionalisation and of the development whereby civic duty became converted to monetary payment. Products of the crown estates and taxes in kind could be used for the benefit of the fleet; but otherwise the expansion of the fleet and the recruitment process, like the rest of the military apparatus, demanded increased money income, which was achieved by frequent levying of taxes. The development was gradual; but after the Kalmar War of 1611–13 in particular, Denmark-Norway changed from a domain- to a tax-based state.

Apart from the annual land and town taxes, the new taxes were looked on as extraordinary, and the letters detailing the taxes referred to the reason for levying that particular tax. The nobility were not taxed until the introduction of absolutism in 1660–1, but made a series of voluntary contributions. Together with the burden of cavalry service, these could amount to considerable sums.

The peasants on the estates of the nobility could only be taxed with the consent of the nobility; they, too, were affected by the more frequent tax

35 J. H. Barfod, *Så til søs! Orlogslådens søfolk i tiden før 1700* (Varde, 2004); L. Jespersen, 'Bådsmandsudskrivning og bådsmændsskat i fynske købstæder i 1500- og 1600-tallet', in C. Kuvaja and A.-C. Östman (eds.), *Svärdet, ordet och pennan – kring människa, makt och rum i nordisk historia*, Skrifter utgivna av Historiska Samfundet i Åbo, 12 (Åbo, 2012), pp. 161–87; V. A. Secher (ed.), *Corpus Constitutionum Danicæ*, 4 (København, 1897), p. 627.

levies, and the nobles, in their own interests and to avoid the danger of deserted farms, had to come to the aid of their peasantry. They tried to protect them from the frequent taxes by means of tax-speculation, which involved a fiscal reclassification and lowering of the peasants' status. The large number of manors founded and expanded by the nobility was presumably also an attempt to increase the numbers of tax-free *ugedagsbønder*, i.e. tenants who lived in the parish of a manor and were liable to weekly labour service.<sup>36</sup>

In the medieval domain state, the king was expected to live off his own income, from the domain and from dues. As the sixteenth century wore on, this proved to be more and more difficult. It helped that the crown's domains trebled in size by the confiscation of church properties during the Reformation in 1536. From the mid-sixteenth century a series of rationalisations was introduced into the fief system – the amalgamation of fiefs and alteration of the conditions under which fiefs were granted – so that the crown received a greater share of the proceeds. The growth in the crown's income was largely due to the rising prices of agricultural products.<sup>37</sup> In the 1570s the Sound Due was converted into a due on cargoes, and the amount of income generated increased. This increased yield helped to balance the state's ordinary income and outgoings in the second half of the sixteenth century.

But the state's undertakings and consequent expenditure continued to grow in the seventeenth century, while its income was unable to increase correspondingly within the parameters of the existing domain state. Fief reform had been carried through with the support of sections of the nobility (the council of the realm), which – being rewarded with fiefs – profited from the larger ones. But the reforms had created tensions between the group of provincial governors and the growing crowd of noblemen without access to the income-generating fiefs. The fief reforms therefore stopped after 1600. From the 1630s Christian IV certainly threatened to restart them; but when he made good his threat in 1646, he quickly had to backtrack again as otherwise the nobility threatened not to elect his son as heir to the throne.

The king's dependence on the consent of the council for extraordinary taxes forced him to use alternative sources of income. Dues gained in

<sup>36</sup> See generally E. Ladewig Petersen, 'From Domain State to Tax State: Synthesis and Interpretation', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 23 (1975), pp. 116–48; also, M. Venge, *Danmarks historie*, 2:1 (København, 1980); H. Gamrath and E. Ladewig Petersen, *Danmarks historie*, 2:2 (København, 1980), which contains references to relevant literature. Taxation during the Age of Aristocracy (1536–1660), cf. L. Jespersen, *Adelsvældens skatter 1536–1660*, *Dansk skattheorie*, 3 (København, 2004).

<sup>37</sup> S. Balle, *Statsfinanserne på Christian 3.s tid* (Aarhus, 1992).

importance. Partly this involved the Norwegian timber due and the due on the Elbe, partly the rises in due in the Sound from the 1630s onwards. The growing rates in the Sound Due caused some friction with the Netherlands, and in the 1640s the Danish state undertook special arrangements with the Netherlands – the Kristianopol Treaty of 1645, and the Redemption Act of 1649 – which led to a fall in income from the Sound.<sup>38</sup>

From 1615 onwards, the king had tried his own hand at mercantilist policies. The venture was largely a failure, and in the 1620s he made way for private initiatives.<sup>39</sup> Nor did the fact that the king was producing poorer-quality coin improve the state finances. After the defeat in the Thirty Years War (the so-called Imperial War of 1625–9), when the king had drawn on his personal fortune, and the increased state of defensive readiness took up a huge amount of resources, the king was to a large extent forced to rely on taxes granted by the council of the realm.

Economically and politically, King Christian IV was dependent on the council. It granted so few resources, which from 1625 were administered by institutions under the supervision of the council or the estates, that he could not regain his former freedom of action. But at the same time the tax impositions were such a heavy burden for the lower classes that they stirred up reaction. The extraordinary taxes were used in particular for extraordinary purposes, and chiefly to increase military preparedness.<sup>40</sup>

This distinction between ordinary and extraordinary imposts together with the accompanying discussion about the boundaries between the duties of the king and those of the realm were the dying convulsions of a domain state whose bounds in reality had been breached.<sup>41</sup> As a consequence of the nobility's tax privileges and their attitude to taxation, the more frequent taxes came to be a burden on an ever smaller section of the population.

After the Imperial War of 1625–9 there was comprehensive devastation in Jylland, which had been occupied by the emperor's troops. But the inhabitants seemed to get back on their feet again relatively quickly. After the war the national debt amounted to about 3 million *rigsdaler*, and after Torstensson's campaign of 1643–5, to about 5 million. Around 1650 the government

38 M. Venge, *Fra åretold til toldetat. Middelalderen indtil 1660, Dansk Toldhistorie*, 1 (København, 1987).

39 The standard work is still A. Nielsen, *Dänische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Jena, 1933), although more works on trade and companies have been published.

40 S. Heiberg, 'De ti tønder guld. Rigsråd, kongemagt og statsfinansier i 1630'erne', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 76 (1976), pp. 26–58.

41 Ladewig Petersen, 'From Domain State to Tax State'.

started to sell off crown property. The sale comprised only limited amounts of property; but it was a warning of what was to come, and a clear signal of the domain state's development towards a money-based economy.

The domain state fell apart once and for all after the Karl X Gustav wars of 1657–60. To be sure, the national debt had only grown to 4–5 million *rigsdaler*; but opportunities for obtaining credit had been exhausted. When acknowledgement of the obvious deficiencies in the prevailing financial structure of the state merged with social and political protests about the privileges of the nobles, the way was prepared for the tax-financed absolutist state. In the second half of the seventeenth century the monarchy sold off royal estates for around 8 million *rigsdaler*.

After the introduction of absolutism the Danish state's income was based on direct and indirect taxes, which now also affected the nobles, whose exemption from taxation had been suspended.<sup>42</sup> In 1670, however, tax exemption was introduced for manors; but in 1682 this exemption was narrowed down to include only proper manor farms, i.e. manors with property extending to around 2,726 acres within a circumference of 6 miles.<sup>43</sup>

Even if it is not possible to make a direct comparison of the national budgets before and after the introduction of absolutism, the tendency is clear. While income from its domains made up about half of the crown's ordinary income in the first half of the seventeenth century, this fell by between 3 and 12 per cent in the second half of the century. The ordinary taxes now made up around 40 per cent of income and had thus taken the place of the domain income. And if one adds in income from dues, direct and indirect taxes, they made up about 85 per cent of the national budget.

Roughly speaking about half of the total income came from Denmark, while about one-third was from Norway prior to 1676.<sup>44</sup> In the period 1676–99 it was only one-fifth. The rest came from the duchies. In the years 1671–99 half of the ordinary and extraordinary taxes came from Denmark, while Norway contributed with one-fifth and the duchies a little more. The agrarian character of Denmark can be seen in the fact that around 70 per cent of Danish tax income came from the inland districts. A copyholder on an

42 Taxation after the introduction of absolutism in Denmark is dealt with in C. Rafner, *Enevælde og skattefinansieret stat 1660–1818*, *Dansk skatthehistorie*, 4 (København, 2008).

43 T. Munck, *The Peasantry and the Early Absolute Monarchy in Denmark 1660–1708* (Copenhagen, 1979).

44 Ø. Rian, 'Hva og hvem var staten i Norge?', in E. Ladewig Petersen (ed.), *Magtstaten i Norden i 1600-tallet og dens sociale konsekvenser, Rapporter til den XIX nordiske historikerkongres*, Odense 1984, 1 (Odense, 1984), pp. 73–98 demonstrates, how Norway in the first half of the seventeenth century experienced rising taxes.

aristocratic estate, whose (monetary) tax burden had increased sixfold in the first half of the seventeenth century, was paying four to five times as much in the second half of the century.<sup>45</sup>

The scale of the armed forces was also thoroughly revised after the introduction of absolutism. Huge efforts were made to build up the fleet again from the mid 1660s, and similarly a comprehensive programme of fortress-building was undertaken. After the Karl X Gustav Wars of 1657–60, Denmark-Norway was completely exhausted. To the financial misery was added the devastation caused by the wars, the many deserted farms and the huge loss of population, primarily as a consequence of epidemics. In 1661–2 some of the enlisted troops were dismissed and a new national militia was formed, with five peasant farms (of about 8 acres) made responsible for producing one soldier. This provided a force of 5,000 men. Deserted farms were exempted, and it reflects the scope of both the devastation and the cheating that went on that from 1670 it was enacted that one soldier should be provided from every 9.5 acres, including deserted farms.

Mounted service by the nobility was abolished after the introduction of absolutism. As noted above, it was revived for short periods; but with access to privileged estates by the non-nobles, the burden now lay on those estates and not on the nobility. At the same time some enlisted cavalrymen were retained, and, inspired by conditions in Sweden, the crown from 1670 onwards designated cavalry estates, which were to maintain 4,000 cavalrymen. In the 1670s conscripts provided 11,000 infantrymen and 5,000 cavalrymen without a significant increase in military expenditure.<sup>46</sup>

In the context of the Great Northern War, the country militia was reorganised. In 1701 peasant farms were divided up into units of around 27 acres, each of which had to provide a soldier. In this way the strength of the armed forces increased by 16,000 men. Although in 1702 serfdom (*vornedsskab*) was abolished on the Sjælland island group, the landowner's duty to provide soldiers implied that he still had a tight grip on his workforce.<sup>47</sup>

45 L. Jespersen, 'The *Machtstaat* in Seventeenth-century Denmark', *The Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10:4 (1985), pp. 283–90, based on figures from C. Christiansen, *Bidrag til dansk Statshusholdnings Historie under de to første Enevoldskonger*, 1–2 (København, 1908–22), and, for the tax burden of the peasantry, H. Bennike Madsen, *Det danske skattevæsen. Kategorier og klasser, Skatter på landbefolkningen 1530–1660*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 53 (Odense, 1978).

46 G. Lind in K. J. V. Jespersen et al., *Danmarks krigshistorie 700–2010* (København, 2010), p. 304.

47 G. Lind in K. J. V. Jespersen et al., *Danmarks krigshistorie 700–2010* (København, 2010), p. 336; Munck, *The Peasantry*, pp. 88–92; Rockstroh, *Udviklingen af den nationale Hær*, 1–2.

At the same time a great number of mercenaries were kept. At the end of the seventeenth century the total number of the armed forces made up 30,000–35,000 men, equivalent to one soldier per fifty inhabitants. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the armed forces were doubled to 70,000 men, equivalent to one soldier per twenty-five inhabitants. Thus, the Danish state was highly militarised, only surpassed by Sweden and Brandenburg-Prussia.<sup>48</sup> No wonder that the British envoy Robert Molesworth in his ‘An Account of Denmark as It was in the Year 1692’ wrote that ‘Denmark resembles . . . a Monster that is all Head and no Body, all Soldiers and no Subjects’.<sup>49</sup>

48 G. Lind, ‘Military and Absolutism: The Army Officers of Denmark-Norway as a Social Group and Political Factor, 1660–1848’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 12:3 (1987), pp. 221–43; cf. K. J. V. Jespersen, in C. Due-Nielsen *et al.* (eds.), *Revanche og neutralitet 1648–1814*, *Dansk udenrigspolitik historie*, 2 (København, 2006), pp. 153–5.

49 Lind, ‘Military and Absolutism’, p. 222; G. Lind in K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks krigshistorie 700–2010* (København, 2010), p. 334.

## From aristocratic regime to absolutism, 1660–82

LEON JESPERSEN

After the dissolution of the Kalmar Union in 1521, the social structure in both Scandinavian kingdoms was characterised by aristocratic privilege and by an inequality enshrined in law, whereby the members of each estate were defined by a whole series of duties and entitlements. In the Middle Ages the privileges in the Scandinavian countries were very alike, but during the reign of Gustav Vasa the privileges of the Swedish nobility were curtailed. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Danish nobility thus had greater privileges than their Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian counterparts. However, in 1646 the privileges of the Norwegian nobility were extended. In addition, the Danish nobility was far more exclusive than the Swedish nobility, who, particularly in the seventeenth century, received a large injection of newly ennobled burghers. As a consequence of their differing policies on internal and foreign affairs in the wake of the dissolution of the Kalmar Union, a number of constitutional differences between them emerged in the course of the seventeenth century.

In both Scandinavian kingdoms a new monarch had to fight for his legitimacy in the 1520s after the deposition of Christian II. In Denmark-Norway Christian had been deposed by his paternal uncle Frederik I, and the fact that Christian resided in the Netherlands and had family connections with the German emperor represented a threat to the new king. After Christian II's ill-fated attempt to reconquer Norway in 1531–2 and return to power, his imprisonment, and the civil war of 1534–6 known as the *Grevens Fejde* (Count's War), in which a group of non-noble supporters fought for his reinstatement, the Danish monarch sat securely on his throne. It has been stressed that while Gustav Vasa in Sweden soon initiated a militarisation by conscription of peasants, Christian III and his

noble council defended the status quo and kept small forces that did not strain the state budget.<sup>1</sup>

In the aftermath, Denmark-Norway experienced a period of stable development in the sixteenth century, and apart from the Northern Seven Years War (1563–70), the country was characterised by peace. The Danish council of the realm, which normally consisted of fifteen to twenty noblemen, ruled in concert with the monarch and was perceived to be the political representative of all the estates. Except on the odd occasion, the estates in Denmark were merely called upon to applaud the king whom the council had chosen. The peasantry was either not represented or played a passive role. However, in Norway general meetings of the estates as well as the peasantry played a greater role.<sup>2</sup>

Denmark was a 'free elective monarchy' in which the council of the realm could in principle freely choose a king; in reality, it was a hereditary monarchy in which the council chose the eldest son of the ruling monarch as his successor. As we have mentioned, even after the deposition of Christian II the council found a successor from within the ranks of the royal family. This peaceful succession was of a piece with the generally harmonious co-operation between king and council, despite their disagreement about, in particular, foreign and defence policy. Here, it was easy for the council to maintain a common front, in that it answered the king's written propositions in the form of a common resolution. And when in 1631 Christian IV came up with a proposal for individual votes from the members of the council, this was turned down.<sup>3</sup> In 1596 Christian IV ascended the throne with a coronation charter that was identical to his father's. Despite demands from those nobles who were excluded from it, the council had found no reason to change the conditions under which the royal authority was exercised.<sup>4</sup> It was not so much a question of the nobles in the council being cowed into submission; rather, there had developed a commonality of interest between themselves and the royal authority.

1 Ø. Rian, 'Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten 1536–1648', in E. Albrechtsen *et al.* (eds.), *Danmark-Norge 1380–1814*, 2 (København, 1997), p. 391. As to the prehistory of the Swedish military state, cf. G. Artéus, *Till militärstatens förhistoria. Krig, professionalisering och social förändring under Vasasönnernas regering* (Stockholm, 1986); S. A. Nilsson, *På väg mot militärstaten. Krigsbefällets etablering i den äldre Vasatidens Sverige*, *Opuscula Historica Upsaliensia*, 3 (Uppsala, 1989).

2 Rian, 'Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten', p. 76.

3 K. Erslev (ed.), *Aktstykker og Oplysninger til Rigsraadet og Stændermødernes Historie i Kristian IV's Tid*, 2 (København, 1885), pp. 279–92.

4 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Rigsråd og adelsopposition 1588. En socialhistorisk studie', in K. J. V. Jespersen (ed.), *Rigsråd, adel, administration 1570–1648*, *Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences*, 67 (Odense, 1980), pp. 123–68.



In both Scandinavian kingdoms, the upper strata of the nobility had a monopoly of posts in the council of the realm. But the councils of the two countries were affected by several constitutional factors and by the fact that the concept of a 'noble' differed between them, and that concept itself altered over time.

In a manner reminiscent of the Middle Ages, the Danish king could in principle ennoble individuals who had distinguished themselves on the battlefield. But otherwise the council was supposed to give its consent to any ennoblement, and in practice instances of ennoblement were relatively infrequent in the period of aristocratic rule. The Danish nobility was in reality closed to entry from below and it has been compared with an Indian caste. However, there was a certain degree of penetration by foreign nobles, by means of formal naturalisation or tacit acceptance. Around two-thirds of new members of the nobility entered by the latter method. In the age of aristocratic rule (1536–1660) the total number was only about 151, or roughly one a year. At the introduction of absolutism in 1660–1 the Danish nobility was made up of 155 noble families of which one-fourth had immigrated within the last thirty years.<sup>5</sup> Of these, roughly one-third gained access to the Danish nobility by service at court, a little over one-quarter by military service and about one-fifth by ownership of estates. For the latter, ennoblement was almost exclusively by tacit acceptance. Administrative service by contrast played no major role, and here it was almost entirely a question of ennoblement or naturalisation. (See Table 17.1.)

Just as the Danish and Norwegian nobility had different privileges, so the nobility of Schleswig-Holstein had privileges of their own.<sup>6</sup> In the kingdom of Denmark, all nobles enjoyed the same privileges, and a formal grading of the noble estate took place only after the introduction of absolutism, with the counts' and barons' privileges of 1671. The Danish nobility had undergone a powerful economic and social stratification, particularly from the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century. This was due in part to developments in economic life, with many nobles shifting over from arable production to the more capital-intensive cattle-rearing, and partly due to the hasty and speculative turnover in aristocratic properties in the first decades of the seventeenth century, which among other things reflected the exploitation

5 K. Prange, "'Den gamle danske adel" og dens "godstab". Nogle metodiske synspunkter og en kritisk vurdering', *Jyske Samlinger*, 6 (1963–5), p. 4; K. Prange, 'Review of Svend Aage Hansen. Adelsvældens grundlag', *Jyske Samlinger*, 6 (1963–5), p. 429.

6 U. Lange, *Die politischen Privilegien der schleswig-holsteinischen Stände 1588–1675* (Neumünster, 1980).

Table 17.1 *Entry to the Danish nobility, 1536–1660*

	1536–59	1559–88	1588–1648	1648–60	in all
Ennoblement/naturalisation	9	12	18	19	58
Tacit reception	13	27	48	5	93
	22	39	66	24	151
Court	10	12	17	7	46
Fief-holders	2	1	1	–	4
Admin. service	3	4	5	2*	14
Military service	–	11	17	13	41
Estate ownership	3	5	20	1	29
Scholarship	–	1	–	–	1
Unknown	4	5	6	1	16

\*Two diplomats

Source: This table is based on information in Albert Fabritius, *Danmarks Riges Adel. Dens Tilgang og Afgang 1536–1935. En Studie i dansk Adelshistorie* (København, 1946).

by the richer nobles of the problems suffered by financially straitened fellow-members of their estate during this process of readjustment.<sup>7</sup> The result was a marked polarisation. At the end of the sixteenth century the richest 10 per cent of the nobility owned roughly a quarter of the tax-exempt aristocratic land; but in 1625 it owned over 40 per cent.<sup>8</sup>

It was this group in particular which could afford to send its sons on expensive trips abroad, where they gained insights which qualified them for lucrative offices, which in turn made it possible for them to buy up estates, and which made them obvious candidates for the council of the realm. ‘The Age of Aristocratic Rule’ (1536–1660) is an umbrella term in the sense that it denotes the great privileges of the nobility, but it is less appropriate when one takes into consideration the pronounced stratification of that estate. There were great differences between the worlds inhabited by, on the one hand, the provincial nobility of the countryside with their limited amounts of landed property, and the great landowners with their cosmopolitan outlook and their political and administrative offices on the other.

In 1536 the political power in Denmark-Norway was monopolised by the Danish noblemen in the council of the realm and the king after they had defeated a coalition of burghers and peasants who wanted to restore

7 E. Ladewig Petersen, *The Crisis of the Danish Nobility* (Odense, 1967).

8 K. J. V. Jespersen, *Rostjenestetaksation og adelsgods. Studier i den danske adelige rostjeneste og godsfordeling 1540–1650* (Odense, 1977), p. 146.

Christian II.<sup>9</sup> In the same year the Reformation was introduced and the bishops were excluded from the council as well as the Norwegian council of the realm being abolished. Formally, Norway ceased to exist as a separate realm and was reduced to a province like Skåne and Sjælland. In practice, Norway consequently continued to be mentioned as a realm.<sup>10</sup> However, the aristocratic Danish noble council of the realm exclusively represented all estates. The subjugation of Norway was explained by the fact that Norway was too poor to maintain a prince; in actual fact, the Danish nobility wanted to eliminate Norway as a political factor. Norwegian noblemen were few in number, but a study has demonstrated that in many ways they resembled nobility elsewhere. A great deal of them received university education abroad, and more noblemen in Norway than in Denmark got a military education. They participated in conspicuous consumption, too, and income from officeholding became increasingly important.<sup>11</sup> According to calculations the Norwegian nobility had diminished to approximately fifty adult noblemen by around 1600; few of them became Norwegian fiefs, which to a great extent were given to Danish noblemen.<sup>12</sup>

The power of the Danish nobility rested on a community of interest between themselves and the monarchy. Building on their experiences during the Count's War of 1534–6, the monarch and the nobility had in 1536 wanted to create a 'continual regime' in which the nobility ensured a peaceful succession to the throne, and the king respected the economic, legal and political privileges of the nobility. Given the greater demands made on the crown and its greater need for resources, it became more and more difficult to maintain this community of interest. The council was not only a representative of the estates, but also an organ of state, which, in dealing with and financing matters of national interest had to balance the interests of the country against those of the estates, including the nobility. While the community of interest between the noble estate and the aristocratic council of the realm crumbled away, a degree of common interest developed between the

9 E. Ladewig Petersen and K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Two Revolutions in Early Modern Denmark', and especially E. Ladewig Petersen, 'The Revolution of 1536 and its Aftermath, the Domain State', both in E. I. Kouri and T. Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe: Essays for Sir Geoffrey Elton* (London, 1987), pp. 475–86.

10 Rian, *Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten*, p. 21. Cf. C. F. Wegener (ed.), *Aarsberetninger fra det kgl. Geheimearchiv indholdende Bidrag til Dansk historie af utrykte Kilder*, 2 (København, 1852–60), pp. 83f.

11 T. Weidling, *Adelsøkonomi i Norge fra reformasjonstiden og fram mot 1660*, *Acta humaniora*, 43 (Oslo, 1998); K. A. Seip, 'Jordguds og gyldene Kjeder', *Fortid og Nutid*, 2 (1998), pp. 106–36.

12 Rian, *Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten*, p. 120.

monarchy and the aristocracy who held administrative and political posts. This development was in many ways similar to that which has been described as a conflict between 'court and country' or 'ins *versus* outs'. Prominent among the causal factors of this development were the state's assumption of responsibility for defence, the wars of the seventeenth century and the need for a permanent and more advanced state of military preparedness.

In that respect the years around 1630 were to form a divide, in several ways, in the history of Denmark-Norway. Christian IV's participation in the Thirty Years War (1625–9) was followed by a series of structural changes in the political, economic and social field. It would appear that the devastation wrought by the imperial troops' occupation of Jylland in 1627–9 was quickly put right, and not until the 1640s, it seems, was there a new slump in the market for agricultural products.<sup>13</sup>

But Denmark's changed situation with regard to national security from the end of the 1620s demanded a greater and more permanent military preparedness, which was illustrated among other things by the establishment of peasant militias in Norway and Denmark in 1628 and 1631 respectively and the setting up of a standing army of mercenaries in 1637. The increased spending on defence together with the rising costs of the administration, the royal household and other items went far beyond the capacity of the domain state and necessitated the more frequent imposition of extraordinary taxes.

Christian IV had expended some of his private fortune on the war of 1625–9, and although in 1629 he extracted from the council 'war-damage reparations' amounting to ten barrels of gold, i.e. 1 million *rigsdaler*, the money soon trickled through the king's fingers, for in the course of constant discussions between the king and the council about the respective duties of king and state, the money went to cover various outgoings.<sup>14</sup> The council so adjusted their economic policy that the king was unable to win back his former strong financial position and political freedom of action, which had involved the country in Europe's military strife.

As part of this policy the council, from 1624 onwards, agreed to the king's request that he be allowed to check that the funds that had been granted were being put to the approved use. This policy was continued in the 1630s, when financing of the standing enlisted army resulted in extraordinary

13 E. Ladewig Petersen, *Dansk social historie*, 3: *Fra standssamfund til rangssamfund* (København, 1980), pp. 328–31.

14 S. Heiberg, 'De ti tønder guld. Rigsråd, kongemagt og statsfinanser i 1630erne', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 76 (1976), pp. 25–57.

taxation, the so-called union taxes. The council hoped to ensure its continuing political influence by granting the taxes, which made the monarch dependent on its right to approve them. It also chose the form in which taxes would be financed, as this put a check on the king's plans for a resumption of fief reform, which would increase the king's income at the expense of the provincial governors.

From the point of view of power politics, it was a well-justified policy. But at the same time it was a policy which was egoistical from a social point of view, as well as being narrow and selfish, in that the nobles and their tenants were not subject to tax and could only be taxed with their consent, like members of the council, who were rewarded with fiefs and who protected themselves and the other provincial governors by preferring taxation to rationalisation of the fief system.

The majority of the nobles, who had no access to supplementary income from the fifty or so Danish fiefs and twenty-five Norwegian fiefs, were, especially from the 1630s, affected by the increasing public burdens: partly because their peasants had difficulty paying the manorial dues, and the noble estate owners therefore had to help them out, and partly because the nobility – instead of tax – took it upon themselves to pay voluntary contributions. After the setting up of the standing enlisted army in 1637 the tax-screw was given a few extra turns, and when the economic slump set in shortly afterwards, the situation became precarious for many nobles who had also agreed to a doubling of their cavalry service in 1640.

The non-council nobility were not only squeezed economically. Socially, too, they had difficulty maintaining their status. The setting up of both a peasant militia and a standing army of mercenaries indicated that the nobles' military function, which was the justification for their great privileges, had lost some of its meaning. The nobles had developed out of an aristocratic warrior caste into an estate-owning and office-holding nobility. To a large extent they had sought other ways in which to serve the state, but they were still judged by their military functions. After the standing army had been set up, there were increased opportunities for holding office within the defence sector.

At the same time the economic strength of the burghers was growing, and many had acquired skills which qualified them for state service in line with the nobles. Thus, it was vital for the nobility to convince others that the nobility carried out important duties and that noblemen possessing the necessary skills were the most obvious candidates for state offices. In this way virtue and skills were supposed to be consistent with nobility. Noblemen acquired the demanded skills abroad and at the domestic Sorø

Academy. In vain the nobility tried to monopolise this education by excluding non-nobles from the academy.

Economically and socially the burghers also competed with the nobility. The prosperity of the burghers enabled them to enjoy luxury items to the same extent as, or even more than, the less well-off nobles. The laws relating to luxury items were of an older date, but they were intensified at the end of the sixteenth century in connection with the rise in the use of such items, which had been made possible by the price revolution.

These laws also affected the nobles, in that the royal authority made a distinction between nobility and royalty by reserving certain forms of clothing, ornaments and burial customs for the latter, with more limited use by the nobles at gatherings in connection with baptisms, weddings and funerals.<sup>15</sup> This battle over symbols mirrored the rivalry between those nobles who had profited from the price rises of the sixteenth century and a royal authority which tried by means of legislation to monopolise a prestige- and status-laden display of conspicuous wealth for the court, which to an ever-increasing degree had representative functions.

However, the Danish – and Swedish – legislation to curb the use of luxury items had several justifications which correspond well to those found elsewhere in Europe.<sup>16</sup> On religious and moral grounds, vanity was seen as something blasphemous, which could call down God's wrath and collective punishment on society. Christian IV's defeat in the Thirty Years War was even interpreted as 'the rod of God's wrath', justified by, among other things, the sins and vices of the people, including their attachment to luxury. The coupling together of these things, which made the daily life of the king's subjects a matter of concern to the state and its security, also made it possible for royal authority to intervene in people's daily life, as happened with a church ordinance of 1629, in which the most God-fearing individuals in each parish together with their pastor were to monitor the conduct of the parishioners.<sup>17</sup>

15 The Danish sumptuary laws are treated in E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Conspicuous Consumption: The Danish Nobility of the Seventeenth Century', *Kwartalnik Historii Materielnej* (1982), pp. 57–65; for more recent contributions, see L. Jespersen, 'Statuskonsumtion og luksuslovgivning i Danmark og Sverige i 1600-talet – en skitse', in M. Ramsay and S. Å. Nilsson (eds.), *1600-talets ansikte. Symposier på Krapperrups borg*, 3 (Lund, 1997), pp. 169–95; L. Jespersen, 'At være, at ville og at have. Træk af luksuslovgivningen i Danmark i 15–1600-tallet', *TEMP, Tidsskrift for historie*, 1 (2010), pp. 31–57. Regarding Norway, cf. Weidling, *Adelsøkonomi*, pp. 76–95; Seip, 'Jordegods og gyldne kjeder', pp. 106–36.

16 A. Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Laws* (New York, 1996).

17 The ordinance is printed in V. A. Secher (ed.), *Corpus Constitutionum Daniæ*, 4 (København, 1897), pp. 446–77.

These measures against over-indulgence in luxury were further justified on the grounds of maintaining the distinctions between the estates, in that each estate was supposed to have a 'natural' form of consumption, and the pattern of consumption of the better-off set an example to others and exerted social pressure on them. Consumption is in the final analysis economically conditioned, and with the economic redistribution of the seventeenth century, where the vertical differentiation between the estates was in the process of being replaced by a horizontal economic layering, the king was subjected to strong pressure from prosperous burghers who wished to display their wealth. In 1621 members of the bourgeois estate were forbidden to wear gold chains over their outer garments, with the implication that they were allowed underneath.<sup>18</sup>

Conspicuous consumption might imply a social pressure as well as reflect a social ambition. It was a fight over symbols that presupposed a community of values. This explains the lower estates' imitation of elite culture. In 1565 the Danish Admiral Herluf Trolle declared that the nobles wore gold chains and deserved more respect than others because they risked life and limb in defence of their country.<sup>19</sup> But fifty years later the nobles' functionally justified adornment had to be made the subject of an artificial monopoly, in that the burghers had to literally hide their riches. In the 1620s the king exploited the pressure for consumption by setting up an indigenous silk manufactory, which he further aided by granting a dispensation from paying duty. For the nobles, the pattern of consumption graduated by estates was an attempt to 'mark their territory' during the difficult process of changeover.

The nobles' acceptance of voluntary taxation was probably due to a recognition that the state finances were in a condition as precarious as their own. After the setting up of a national peasant militia and the state's centralisation of cavalry service at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the state sought a veritable monopoly of power. In addition, grants to the standing army which had been seen as a necessity in the 1630s could only be financed under state control. The preservation of the cavalry drawn from the ranks of the nobles has been seen as a justification for their privileges,<sup>20</sup> and the nobles' service in the standing army can be interpreted as compensation for the estate's declining military importance, and as a form of self-discipline.

18 V. A. Secher (ed.), *Corpus Constitutionum Daniæ*, 3 (København, 1889–90), p. 645.

19 G. L. Wad (ed.), *Breve til og fra Herluf Trolle og Birgitte Gjõe*, 1 (København, 1893), p. xxii.

20 See K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Fra krigerkaste til godsejeradel. Den adelige rostjenestes påligning og organisatoriske forhold i perioden 1525–1625', *Krigshistorisk Tidsskrift*, 2 (1974), pp. 5–19.

This can be seen among other things in the estate's attempts to neutralise the individual noble's freedom of choice by introducing binding majority decisions on the nobility.

The government's actual assumption of the defence function and the increasing expenditure on the military, on administration and on the royal household made the state the largest consumer in society. When in 1602–5 the Danish king built the castle of Frederiksborg to the north of København, its size and splendour were beyond the capacity of any nobleman. By the same token the naval dockyard at Bremerholm in København had become the biggest business concern in the country, and as the court, the administration and to a large extent the military were concentrated in the capital, København merchants in particular did well out of supplying these institutions. The state's collection and consumption of ever greater resources, together with developments in the trade situation, caused an economic redistribution in society which in turn set off economic, social and political reactions.

The nobles attempted in various ways to protect themselves against the increasing burdens placed upon them. The setting up and expansion of tax-free manors, the increasing numbers of equally tax exempt tenants of the nobility and the shift on the part of many peasants from freeholders to copyholders and from whole farms to half a farm – whereby they paid a reduced amount of tax – has been interpreted as tax speculation, and held to be a fictitious, purely administrative downgrading of their status.<sup>21</sup> On the political and administrative level the nobles reacted to the council's frequent tax impositions, which affected their peers, with protests and, like the council itself, by demanding to see for themselves how the funds were being spent. This last was achieved by the appointment of noble land-commissioners and the setting up of local treasuries in the individual provinces to hold the voluntary contributions of the estates.

Throughout the 1640s the land-commissioner institution grew into a political protest movement, which also, as a mouthpiece for the burgher estate, criticised tax policy and demanded public savings, not least in the defence budget.<sup>22</sup> After a stubborn tug-of-war the movement also obtained

21 See E. Ladewig Petersen, 'From Domain State to Tax State: Synthesis and Interpretation', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 23 (1975), with references.

22 The protest movement is treated in J. Engberg, 'Det 17. Århundredes generelle politiske krise og striden mellem det danske rigsråd og landkommissærerne 1647–49', *Fortid og Nutid*, 24 (1971), pp. 388–409 and L. Jespersen, 'Landkommissærinstitutionen i Christian IV's tid: Rekruttering og politik', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 81 (1981), pp. 69–99.



an oversight of the funds already being administered by the council, and the political mistrust between the nobles on the council and those outside it was made manifest.

After Christian IV's participation in the Thirty Years War, in which many nobles did not actively involve themselves when the enemy's troops advanced up through the Jylland peninsula, the mayors of towns in Jylland appealed to the king for assistance. But at the end of the 1630s the burgher estate became more outspoken and expressed criticism of the nobility's privileges, their failure to carry out their estate's military duties and their tax speculation.<sup>23</sup> In the 1640s the noble protest movement and the burgher estate made common cause against the government's tax and expenditure policies.

When Christian IV died in 1648, dissatisfaction flared up in connection with the formulation of his successor Frederik III's coronation charter. Basing their case on the regulations contained in former coronation charters, the non-council nobles tried to abolish the council's political monopoly by demanding that the estates be allowed to co-operate in law-making and imposition of taxes. The fulfilment of their demands would have brought about a political decentralisation in line with that which had already occurred within the administration.<sup>24</sup>

Precise source evidence and an understanding of the king's duty to preserve his predecessors' letters should have provided proof that there was a question of valid rights and a defence of well-acquired entitlements. The noble land-commissioners had collected documents relating to the nobles and their privileges, and this backward-looking mentality reflected the political horizons of noble reaction. They had certainly demanded that the estates be granted some influence over legislation and taxation, but their policies were in the main selfishly designed to promote their own estate. The discontented nobility had demanded savings in the national budget which would have brought about a 'minimalist state', but its concrete proposals – like for example an increase in the number of fief posts and thereby a partial cancellation of fief

23 Material from the Jylland burgher movement is unreliable; but new source-material shows that the burgher movement became radicalised from 1629 to 1638–41, so that, at the end of the 1630s, it was criticising the system of estates and their privileges. Cf. L. Jespersen, 'Ryresolutionen og den jyske borgerbevægelse 1629', *Historie, Jyske Samlinger*, Ny Rk., 17 (1987–9), pp. 1–34.

24 The negotiations over the coronation charter are discussed in L. Jespersen and A. Svane-Knudsen (eds.), *Stænder og magtstat. De politiske brydninger i 1648 og 1660*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 16 (Odense, 1989), pp. 43–76.

reforms – would to some extent increase the nobility's opportunities for making more income. Along with their demands for more official posts, which were to be preserved for the nobles, and what they considered to be a fairer distribution of these posts between members of the noble estate, they turned their attention to foreigners and on several occasions in the 1640s they issued demands for stricter naturalisation requirements for new members of the already rather tightly restricted ranks of the Danish noble estate.

The council of the realm agreed to several of the demands of the noble opposition. Among other things they promised less harsh taxation; the council's hitherto indeterminate number of members was fixed at twenty-three, and thereby expanded, and the right of nomination which the nobles had obtained several years earlier when occupying vacant places on the council was written into the coronation charter in a slightly altered form. Generally, however, the council defended its political monopoly as representative of the estates. Frederik III had to sign a coronation charter which, in comparison to that of his father, contained a series of limitations on the king's authority. The extra powers devolved solely on the council of the realm and not on the estates.

The coronation charter of 1648 was not only testimony to a confrontation between the estates and an emancipated royal authority. It also revealed internal tensions within the nobility between the elite of the council, who to a large extent profited from the prevailing division of political power as well as from opportunities for office and financial profit, and the non-council nobility, who were indirectly affected by their peers' taxation of the peasants, and who had only scanty opportunities to supplement the income from their estates with income from official posts. As part of the sovereign concept of 'Denmark's Crown', the council identified itself with the state authority, and the confrontations that went on throughout the 1640s exposed the problem it had deciding what and whom it was supposed to represent.

In principle, the noble council of the realm represented all the estates, but its clashes with the non-council nobility showed that the latter felt cheated by their peers in the council. The council found itself in a difficult situation which was only made worse by the constitutional cross-currents during the negotiations over the coronation charter and the coronation of the new king in 1648.

The nobility's discontent with Christian IV's policies and with the political and social exclusivity of the council led to demands for a decentralisation of power through the increased influence of the estates. For the council it was a dangerous road to travel, which, in the last resort, could render its very

existence superfluous. At the same time it had a functional problem in its relationship to royal power. The council met only rarely, and there was no close connection between the council and the expanding administration, which could become an instrument of royal power. Meetings of the council were considered onerous and the noble councillors were rewarded with fiefs in order that they did not have to attend assemblies of the estates etc. at their own expense.<sup>25</sup>

Frederik III called himself 'heir to Norway', which threatened Denmark's status as a 'free elective monarchy', as well as the political theories which applauded an absolute monarchy. At the coronation in 1648 – as well as at the previous coronation in 1596 – the bishop went so far as to deliver a theocratic oration in which he talked of the king as a god.<sup>26</sup>

For the council, the danger of a concentration of power was of benefit neither to the estates nor to royal authority. In 1648, however, the exclusive council succeeded in both maintaining and extending its power. The noble opposition saw its salvation in a 'minimal state' in which the nobility enjoyed extensive privileges. But only twelve years later some nobles seem to have preferred the alternative, an expansive state authority, led by an absolutist king. In 1648 the council had temporarily solved the crisis, but the structural problems had not been solved, and throughout the 1650s the council betrayed its unfitness and lack of effectiveness. The wars against Sweden, the Karl X Gustav Wars of 1657–60, became a catalyst for structural changes.<sup>27</sup>

25 Wegener (ed.), *Aarsberetninger fra det kgl. Geheimearchiv*, 2, p. 84.

26 K. Fabricius, *Kongeloven, Dens Tilblivelse og Plads i Samtidens natur- og arveretlige Udvikling, En historisk Undersøgelse* (København, 1920), p. 96; L. Jespersen, 'Teokrati og kontraktlære, Et aspekt af de statsretlige brydninger ved Frederik 3.s kroning', in C. Due Nielsen et al. (eds.), *Struktur og funktion. Festskrift til Erling Ladewig Petersen*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 174 (Odense, 1984), pp. 169–86; L. Jespersen, 'Knud Fabricius og den monarkiske bølge. Nogle kommentarer til de statsretlige brydninger i 15–1600-tallets Danmark', *Historie* (1997), pp. 54–85. Regarding hereditary right to Norway, see H. Kongsrud, *Den kongelige arveretten til Norge 1536–1661. Idé og politisk instrument* (Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger and Tromsø, 1984). As to the theocratic oration in 1596, see F. P. Jensen, 'Peder Vinstrups tale ved Christian 4.s kroning. Et teokratisk indlæg', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 12:2 (1966–7), pp. 375–92 and S. Olden-Jørgensen, 'Det genfundne originalmanuskript til Peder Vinstrups kroningstale 1596', *Danske Magazin*, 9:1 (København, 1999), pp. 245–70.

27 As to English surveys on the introduction of absolutism in Denmark, see Ladewig Petersen and Jespersen, 'Two Revolutions in Early Modern Denmark'; and especially K. Jespersen, 'The Revolution of 1660 and its Preconditions, the Tax-State', in E. I. Kouri and T. Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe: Essays for Sir Geoffrey Elton on his Sixty-fifth Birthday* (London, 1987), pp. 486–501; K. J. V. Jespersen, 'Absolute Monarchy in Denmark: Change and Continuity', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 12 (1987); L. Jespersen, 'The Constitutional and Administrative Situation', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000).

In this situation Denmark's political-administrative system was not only strained to its uttermost during the country's struggle for survival, but during the wars the balance of power also shifted to the king's advantage, enabling him to a large extent to bypass the council and confer with 'foreign' advisers, officers from abroad who in the years 1658–60 made their mark on the army and reduced the input by Danish nobles.<sup>28</sup> Sweden's occupation of the country – apart from København, which was besieged – only served to strengthen criticism of the nobility and their prerogatives.

War brought a whole series of problems in its wake, and after the peace settlement in the summer of 1660 which resulted in the surrender of Skåne, Halland, Blekinge and Bohuslän, a meeting of the estates in København in the autumn of that year was charged with solving the problems of the peace. On the agenda were the financing of the army, the royal household and the national debt, which amounted to around 5 million *rigsdaler*.<sup>29</sup> Under the prevailing political and economic system the state's financial problems could only be solved by direct and indirect taxation.<sup>30</sup> And at the beginning of the meeting of the estates a proposal was put forward for an excise duty.

As soon as the meeting had commenced, the nobles and the bishops asserted their exemption from taxation in connection with the excise duty, which the lower estates felt would be unreasonably high if they had to pay it by themselves.<sup>31</sup> The confrontations which followed took the form of a bidding auction where the king, as 'passive' participant, played the estates off against each other by accepting the highest offer. It took on the character of a discussion about principles, with the lower estates demanding that the nobles give up their tax exemption in this case and withhold their voluntary contributions in favour of a tax; and where the nobles on the contrary

28 G. Lind, 'Den politiske situation i Danmark efter Roskildefreden. Konge og rigsråd februar-august 1658', in G. Christensen *et al.* (eds.), *Tradition og kritik. Festskrift til Svend Ellehøj den 8. september 1984* (København, 1984), pp. 307–20; G. Lind, *Hæren og magten i Danmark 1614–1662* (København, 1994).

29 The literature about the meeting of the estates in 1660 is comprehensive. An overview can be found in K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks historie*, 3: *Tiden 1648–1730*, ed. S. Mørch *Danmarks historie* (København, 1989); A. Svane-Knudsen, 'Borgerstanden og arverigeforslaget på stændermødet 1660', in L. Jespersen and A. Svane-Knudsen, *Stænder og magtstat. De politiske brydninger i 1648 og 1660* (Odense, 1989), pp. 77–210.

30 See W. Reinhard, 'Staatsmacht als Kreditproblem', *Vierteljahreschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 61 (1974), pp. 218–31.

31 The sources from the meeting of the estates in København 1660 will be published in L. Jespersen and C. Larsen (eds.), *Aktstykker og oplysninger til rigsrådets og stændermødernes historie i Frederik III's tid* (forthcoming).

refused to be treated on an equal basis with the lower estates, not because of the burden of excise duty but on grounds of principle.

To a certain degree the course of the meeting reflected that royal power could exploit differences between the nobility and an ascending middle class. The principled discussion of noble privileges soon came to encompass the reasonableness of maintaining the nobility's grip on the political, administrative and financial system. The surviving source-documents do not give any clue about when a secret deal was reached between the monarch and the lower estates as to the proposal of hereditary right to the throne.

In 1659, during the siege of København, the burghers had managed to attain equal status with the nobles in a number of areas, including identical access to *officia et honores*.<sup>32</sup> In this way, then, the system of privilege had already been breached. During the meeting of the estates it was suggested that members of other estates, too, could fill the more important posts, including having representatives on the council of the realm. And with the looming prospect of intolerably high excise duties, it was also suggested that an alternative system of state finance be found. It seemed only reasonable to the lower estates that, before the government demanded higher taxes and duties, they should first exploit the crown's resources in a rational manner. One concrete proposal was that the nobles' monopoly of provincial governorships should be abolished in favour of the licensing out of the royal fiefs to the highest bidders.

Taken together, these proposals implied the abolition of noble rule. The nobles outbid the lower estates by means of higher voluntary contributions, which were countered by the lower estates' suggestion to change the king's status from that of an elected monarch to a hereditary one. Under military pressure the council was forced to accept the suggestion. When representatives of the estates met subsequently, they were almost paralysed by their continuing disunity, and could only unite round a vague formula about letting the king work out a new 'treaty' (*reces*).

It has been discussed whether by this they meant new privileges for the estates and the necessary updating of the coronation charter as a consequence of the introduction of the hereditary principle, or a completely new basic constitution. Probably, the non-noble estates intended to give the king more rights. At any rate Frederik III exploited the situation. He allowed the

32 L. Jespersen, 'Den københavnske privilegiesag og 1600-tallets strukturændringer', in P. Wessel Hansen and L. Jespersen (eds.), *Stormen på København. Den svenske belejring 1658–1660, København, Kultur og Historie*, 1 (København, 2009), pp. 117–45.

estates to sign the cancellation of the coronation charter, and without a formal ceremony the meeting of the estates came to an end. At the beginning of 1661 Frederik III circulated the 'Act concerning hereditary autocratic government' among the estates for their signatures. As the name implies, this gave the king not only the right of inheritance but also absolute power.<sup>33</sup> Four years later, in 1665, the *Lex Regia* represented – uniquely in Europe – an actual constitutional basis for absolutism and for succession. According to this, Frederik was 'a free, most highly authorised Absolute Hereditary King, so that everything that can best be said or written about an absolute, sovereign Christian Hereditary King shall also apply and be understood in the best and most favourable sense concerning Denmark and Norway's Absolute Hereditary King'.<sup>34</sup>

The introduction of absolutism in Denmark in 1660–1 may be viewed as a consequence of those structural changes which had long been under way, and which made it difficult to honour the new demands while retaining the existing system of privileges. The incidents which occurred at the meeting of the estates in 1660 and the practical resolution of these problems may both be ascribed to military pressure and to the monarch seizing the opportunity to exploit differences between the estates which arose in the course of the negotiations.

Numerically, and in an economic and social sense, the Danish nobility in general was not in retreat before 1660. But the introduction of absolute monarchy and the changed patterns of recruitment to official posts led to sections of the nobility encountering difficulties.<sup>35</sup> The court became, to a greater degree than before, the centre of culture as well as political and economic power, and many nobles looked to the court for offices and supplementary income.

From the 1520s onwards, after the dissolution of the Kalmar Union and the deposition of Christian II, the new monarch in Sweden, Gustav Vasa, had to

33 The declaration is printed in Wegener (ed.), *Aarsberetninger fra det kgl. Geheimearchiv*, 2, pp. 125–43; cf. the acts of sovereignty for Norway, Iceland and the Føroyar, Wegener (ed.), *Aarsberetninger fra det kgl. Geheimearchiv*, 2, pp. 143–50; cf. S. Ellehøj, 'Forfatningsspørgsmålet i Danmark fra oktober 1660 til januar 1661, Nordiska historikermötet Helsingfors 1967, Plenardebatter, Sektionsmöten', *Historiallinen arkisto*, 63 (Helsingfors, 1968), pp. 175–84; S. Olden-Jørgensen, 'Enevoldsarveregeringsakten og Kongeloven. Forfatningsspørgsmålet i Danmark fra oktober 1660 til november 1665', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 16:2 (1993), pp. 296–321.

34 *Lex Regia* is printed in J. Himmelstrup and J. Møller (eds.), *Danske forfatningslove 1665–1953* (København, 1958), pp. 14–27; quotation, *ibid.*, p. 22 (art. 26); cf. E. Ekman, 'The Danish Royal Law of 1665', *The Journal of Modern History*, 29 (1957), pp. 102–7.

35 S. A. Hansen, *Adelsvældens grundlag* (København, 1964).

struggle not only to assert his legitimacy but also against religious differences and opponents of both his foreign and domestic policies. In contrast to Denmark, Sweden in the sixteenth century experienced dramatic developments characterised by instability.

To be sure, Gustav Vasa secured the right of inheritance for his male successors at the Pact of Succession called at Västerås in 1544, and in 1604, at an equivalent meeting in Norrköping, Karl IX won acceptance of the right of inheritance for his male and female successors. This right was meant to ensure a peaceful dynastic continuation. But the very change in the right of inheritance reflected the turbulent developments in Sweden. Other differences are easy to see. In Denmark-Norway, instability allied to the civil war of 1534–6 known as the Count's War created a society based on the estates and built on a codified inequality, in which the non-noble estates lost political influence in real terms, and in practice were represented by the noble members of the council of the realm – the age of aristocratic rule.

Sweden, too, was a society based on estates who enjoyed unequal rights, but domestic and foreign policy problems led to a further development of the estates-based parliament and to a state dominated by the estates in which the lower orders also had a share of political-administrative power.<sup>36</sup> Because of dynastic circumstances, however, Sweden was ruled for long periods in the seventeenth century by regencies dominated by the higher reaches of the aristocracy. As mentioned earlier the privileges of the Swedish nobility had been curtailed from the 1520s.<sup>37</sup> At the same time their Danish peers obtained extended rights and after 1536 a monopoly of political power vis-à-vis the king.

Despite the fixed succession to the throne in Sweden after 1544, developments in the Swedish kingdom were more dramatic than in the elective monarchy of Denmark-Norway. Gustav Vasa's son Erik XIV, who followed his father on the throne in 1560, was deposed in 1568 by his brother Johan III, who at his coronation was forced to agree to increased privileges for the

<sup>36</sup> H. Schück, 'Riksdagens framväxt. Tiden intill 1611', in H. Schück *et al.* (eds.), *Riksdagen genom tiderna* (Stockholm, 1985), pp. 40–4; English version, M. F. Metcalf *et al.* (eds.), *The Riksdag: A History of the Swedish Parliament* (Stockholm, 1987). Sweden's dynastic problems are discussed in M. Roberts, 'On Aristocratic Constitutionalism in Swedish History, 1520–1720', in M. Roberts, *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1967), pp. 14–55; cf. A. E. Christensen, 'Det danske stændersamfundets epoker. Et rids', in S. Ellehøj *et al.* (eds.), *Festskrift til Astrid Friis på halvferdsårsdagen den 1. August 1963* (København, 1963), pp. 29–46.

<sup>37</sup> The history of the Swedish nobility is given in B. Eriksson, *Svenska adelns historia* (Stockholm, 2011).

nobles.<sup>38</sup> In that respect conditions in Sweden were to a degree reminiscent of the Danish elective monarchy, where the king had to sign a coronation charter, a ruler's contract, as a prerequisite for assuming power.

Johan III (regent from 1568 to 1593) married the Polish princess Katharina Jagellonica, and when their son Sigismund took over the Swedish throne after his father's death in 1593, he had already been king of Poland since 1587. With the prospect of a Catholic Swedish king who furthermore might be expected to remain abroad for lengthy periods, Sigismund was forced to sign a document which, among other things, guaranteed the preservation of Protestantism in Sweden, while, subsequently, parameters were set for the governing of Sweden in his absence.

During the increasing confrontations with the new king, his uncle, Duke Karl, who was to become regent and govern together with the council of the realm, positioned himself at the head of a rebellion which, after Sigismund's military defeat at Stångebro, led to his deposition in 1599. Not until 1603 did the duke adopt the title of King Karl IX, and a new Pact of Succession in Norrköping the following year transferred the right of succession to his descendants, but now both male and female. Sigismund's supporters in Sweden were persecuted, and in 1600 several members of the council were executed in the Linköping Bloodbath. The council and the high nobility were weakened under Karl IX, who relied on, among others, middle-class secretaries and the estates in the *riksdag*.

The ranks of Sweden's enemies were now swollen by Poland, whose regents up until 1660 kept alive their claim to the Swedish throne. Nor did the right of inheritance ensure stability in the future. At his death in 1611 Karl IX left as his successor the 17-year-old Gustav II Adolf, who was only declared of age after he had delivered a charter (*kungeförsäkran*) in 1611 followed the next year by a promise to the nobles of extra privileges, which had the effect of strengthening the nobles politically and in terms of their office-holding, by, for instance, reserving for them a number of top posts.

Up to the introduction of absolutism, the Swedish hereditary king – like the elective king in Denmark-Norway – had to sign a contract which regulated his authority. But the dramatic developments in the Swedish kingdom, which demanded a comprehensive mobilisation of the country's resources, are also part of the explanation for the importance of Sweden's estates-based *riksdag*. This national effort had necessitated Gustav Vasa's co-operation with

38 S. A. Nilsson, *Kampen om de adliga privilegierna 1526–1594*, Skrifter utg. av Vetenskaps-Societeten i Lund, 41 (Lund, 1952).



the estates, and in 1611 it was stated in Gustav II Adolf's *kungeförsäkran* that he could not start a war, conclude a peace, armistice or treaty or promulgate laws without the agreement of the estates or the *riksdag*. The levying of extra taxes or soldiers meant that the opinion of the council had to be consulted, but also that consent had to be obtained from 'those whom it concerns'.<sup>39</sup>

It was a limitation on the king's power; but the vague wording had not unambiguously stated that the *riksdag* was the representative of the estates which had to be consulted, even if in practice it came to function as the most important forum for the estates. The parliamentary ordinance of 1617 laid down the forms for negotiations between king and *riksdag*, which in the event took place separately with each estate. Each estate returned an answer. If these were different, they were if possible to work together. If this proved to be impossible, the king could choose between the answers.<sup>40</sup>

In the sixteenth century the Swedish and Finnish nobility like their Danish and Norwegian counterparts was a small estate. It made up less than 0.5 per cent of the entire population. In the Swedish realm noblemen were more evenly distributed between the Finnish and the Swedish part of the realm than was the case in Denmark-Norway.<sup>41</sup> As elsewhere in Scandinavia, the nobility of the Swedish realm was characterised by a significant socio-economic stratification: on the one hand, a small group of wealthy noblemen, on the other hand a great number of poor noblemen who often married commoners. In the sixteenth century, Swedish noblemen were landowners but income from state offices became increasingly important for the estate. Sixteenth-century Swedish nobility was absolutely not a closed estate; it grew fivefold during the seventeenth century.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast to the Danish-Norwegian nobility, the Swedish and Finnish nobles after 1561 were graded according to rank with the introduction of the

39 Swedish king's contracts can be found printed in E. Hildebrand (ed.), *Sveriges Regeringsformer 1634–1809 samt konungaförsäkningar 1611–1800* (Stockholm, 1891). As to the debate in Sweden regarding political theories on the distribution of power, see N. Runeby, *Monarchia mixta. Maktfördelningsdebatt i Sverige under den tidigare stormaktstiden*, *Studia Historica Upsaliensia*, 6 (Uppsala, 1962).

40 G. Rystad, 'Stormaktstidens riksdag (1611–1718)', in H. Schück et al. (eds.), *Riksdagen genom tiderna* (Stockholm, 1985), p. 65.

41 Eriksson, *Den svenska adelns historia*, pp. 166f.; I. Elmroth, *För kung och fosterland. Studier i den svenska adelns demografi och offentliga funktioner 1600–1900*, *Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis*, 50 (Lund, 1981).

42 J. Samuelsson, *Aristokrat eller förädlad bonde? Det svenska frälsets ekonomi, politik och sociala förbindelser under tiden 1523–1611*, *Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis*, 77 (Lund, 1993); Eriksson, *Den svenska adels historia*, pp. 215–18.

titles of *greve* (count) and *friherre* (baron), and in the House of Nobility ordinance of 1626 the noble estate was divided into three groups: *herreståndet* (counts and barons), *riddarståndet* (sons of members of the council of the realm) and *svenneståndet* (the rest of the nobility). Each group of nobles negotiated separately, which gave the high nobility an advantage. The Swedish estates-based *riksdag* was, like the Swiss parliament, special in that it contained representatives of not only the clergy, the nobility and the burghers, but also the peasant estate.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, as the king could in practice exert some influence on the choice of representatives of the burgher and peasant estates to sit in the *riksdag*, the ordinance provided major opportunities for the king to direct the work of the *riksdag* and play the estates off against each other. As in Denmark-Norway, the Swedish council of the realm had answered the king's propositions with *rådslag* (consultations), but now the king could participate in the council's discussions.

On paper the authority of the Swedish king had been weakened, but his abilities as a political leader and the fact that he worked closely with the politically adroit chancellor Axel Oxenstierna resulted in a strong royal authority in close co-operation with the high nobility. To be sure, the nobles reacted unfavourably to the extraordinary exactions which accompanied the country's almost constant wars and which undermined their newly won noble privileges. But the chancellor succeeded in disciplining the nobility, just as, with the king, he manipulated the *riksdag* by playing the estates off against each other.<sup>44</sup>

The king's presence during the council's deliberations gave him an opportunity for intimidation, and the ordinance had not removed the king's ability to play the estates in the *riksdag* off against each other. The interplay between the various threats from abroad, the constitutional system and Gustav II Adolf's political skills and close co-operation with the chancellor Axel Oxenstierna explain to a large extent the resolve that lay behind Sweden's expansive foreign policy, which was not possible for the Danish king.

43 P. Blicke, 'Peasant Political Representation in Sweden and Switzerland: A Comparison', in N. Sternquist (ed.), *The Swedish Riksdag in an International Perspective: Report from the Stockholm Symposium April 25-27, 1988* (Stockholm, 1989), pp. 24-32; Eriksson, *Den svenska adelns historia*, pp. 173-81.

44 S. A. Nilsson, 'Reaktionen mot systemskiftet 1611', in *På väg mot reduktionen. Studier i svenskt 1600-tal* (Stockholm, 1964), pp. 58-85, 141-8; G. Rystad, 'Stormaktstidens riksdag', p. 66; N. E. Villstrand, 'Stormaktstiden 1617-1721', in R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), p. 183.

As we have already mentioned, a long-standing and massive propaganda campaign had influenced the population in favour of intervention in the Thirty Years War. It was symptomatic that the Swedish estates gave Gustav II Adolf a free hand, while in 1625 his Danish counterpart had to circumvent the Danish constitutional system and to declare war in his capacity as duke of Holstein as he lacked the backing of his councillors.

When Gustav II Adolf was killed at the battle of Lützen in 1632, a noble council of regency had to assume power on behalf of his 9-year-old daughter Kristina. After a regency which lasted for twelve years (1632–44), she ruled only until 1654, when she abdicated and converted to Catholicism. Four years earlier she had managed to persuade the estates to appoint her cousin Karl (X) Gustav as her heir. A lung inflammation brought a sudden end to his short but eventful and war-dominated rule, which once again was followed by an aristocratic regency (1660–72) for his under-age son, Karl XI. Karl had only ruled for a few years when, in the 1680s, he achieved absolute power. Any question about his minority thereby disappeared, as it was defined by the newly appointed king himself.

The Swedish monarch could not only exercise influence on the composition of the *riksdag*, but, in contrast to his Danish counterpart, he could also on his own initiative confer noble rank and *högedla*, i.e. promote nobles to the two highest ranks of the nobility. And unlike the Danish nobility, the Swedish noble estate was open to new entrants from below. In the seventeenth century the conferment of noble rank became a part of an official career; a non-noble state official who climbed up the career ladder could be ennobled, which made the new nobility dependent on royal power.

Queen Kristina, who ruled from 1644 to 1654, was particularly inclined to make use of this right (see Table 17.2), and at the end of the seventeenth century no less than two-thirds of the nobility had been ennobled in the course of the century. On Queen Kristina's side it was a way to reward civil and military office-holders as well as a deliberate attempt to weaken the nobility, which became split between the old nobility and the new who owed their position to royal authority.

In the sixteenth century the Swedish nobility increasingly became involved in administrative tasks, but to a large extent royal authority came to rely on non-noble officials (the regiment of non-noble secretaries). On several occasions the Swedish nobility had tried to obtain a right of priority or monopoly on higher state offices. With the noble privileges in 1617, the Swedish nobility won the right to a number of posts. Furthermore, it was stated that they had to be manned by native-born Swedish noblemen, thus excluding foreigners.

Table 17.2 Sweden: Persons ennobled and introduced, together with the deceased and departed

	Military	Civil officials	Others	Total	Deceased/departed
1600–9	3	7	1	11	11
1610–19	3	8	–	11	9
1620–9	9	22	3	34	21
1630–9	33	32	6	71	60
1640–9	138	86	19	243	206
1650–9	119	96	21	236	206
1660–9	89	70	12	171	134
1670–9	78	98	22	198	166

Source: Ingvar Elmroth, *För kung och fosterland. Studier i den svenska adelns demografi och offentliga funktioner 1600–1900*, Bibliotheca historica Lundensis, 50 (Lund, 1981), p. 40, table 1.

If the Swedish aristocracy hesitated over the monarch's war policy, 1617 has been seen as a turning point after which it supported the royal policy against concessions.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, with the prospect of donations at home and abroad, the nobility closed their ranks about the war policy of the king.

Like their Danish peers Swedish noblemen acquired the necessary skills abroad as well as at the domestic academy, *Collegium Illustre*, which existed in the years 1626–9. Domestic institutions of education were discussed several times and reflected among other things a desire to establish an education exclusively for noblemen. Besides, burghers who went abroad to study met some criticism.<sup>46</sup> Swedish noblemen were well aware that they had to perform civil as well as military functions. It was reflected in the inscription *Arte et Marte* on *Riddarhuset* (the House of Nobility) in Stockholm where the nobility assembled.

The Swedish nobility enjoyed other privileges. Among other things the tenants of the nobility who lived within 10 kilometres of the noble manor

45 J. Holm, *Konstruktionen av en stormakt. Kungamakt, skattebönder och statsbildning 1595–1640*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studies in History, 90 (Stockholm, 2007), pp. 65–80; Eriksson, *Den svenska adelns historia*, pp. 179f.

46 L. Niléhn, *Peregrinatio academica. Det svenska samhället och de utrikes studieresorerna under 1600-talet* (Lund, 1983), pp. 100f.; L. Gustafsson, 'Dienstadel, Tugendadel und Politesse mondaine. Aristokratische Bildungsideale in der schwedischen Grossmachtzeit', in D. Lohmeier (ed.), *Arte et Marte. Studien zur Adelskultur des Barockzeitalters in Schweden, Dänemark und Schleswig-Holstein* (Neumünster, 1978), pp. 109–27, esp. p. 113; G. Wetterberg, *Levande 1600-tal* (Stockholm, 2003).

(*frihetsmilén*) were exempt from conscription and some payments to the crown, while tenants close to the manor (*inom rå och rör*) were exempt from all demands of the crown. Manors as well as farms within *rå och rör* made up *det ypperliga frälset*.

The Swedish nobility had fewer privileges than their Danish counterparts, and *vornedskab* on the Sjælland island-group (Sjælland, Lolland, Falster and Møn) shared some common features with serfdom as it was found east of the Elbe. The Danish nobility to a greater extent were dependent upon agriculture and were not such significant office-holders as their Swedish counterparts. By and large the Swedish nobility were poorer than their Danish counterparts. This was reflected, among other things, in the sumptuary legislation. While the Danish king, competing with the nobility at the end of the sixteenth century, had to rein in their use of luxury goods, there was no need for this in Sweden. Conspicuous consumption as a status symbol – and legislation against it – did not occur in earnest in Sweden until the mid-seventeenth century. In Sweden, in contrast to the situation in Denmark, it was a question of a degree of consumption that was both later in occurrence and more intensive, and which reached a peak after 1650, i.e. at a point in time when large swathes of the nobility were affected by taxes, the resumption by the crown of former royal estates (*reduktion*) and dismissal from their military posts.<sup>47</sup> It confirms the impression that conspicuous consumption might be perceived as a defence against social degradation. Opulence would convince the non-noble estates that the nobility still made up the elite. On the other hand, the resplendent buildings of the Swedish aristocracy in Stockholm at the end of the seventeenth century far outdid what their opposite numbers in Denmark were achieving.<sup>48</sup> The use of luxury items has often been judged in a negative way, but it seems to have an important social function as well; it had a beneficial effect in Sweden in that it breathed life into the Swedish economy.

47 M. Revera, 'En barock historia. Om den svenska 1600-tals-lyxen och dess plats i samhällsomvandlingen', in G. Ekstrand (ed.), *Tre Karlar. Karl X Gustav, Karl XI, Karl XII* (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 113–15; M. Revera, 'The Making of a Civilized Nation: Nation-building, Aristocratic Culture and Social Change', in Losman *et al.* (eds.), *The Age of New Sweden* (Stockholm, 1988), pp. 103–31; P. Englund, *Det hotade huset. Adliga föreställningar om samhället under stormaktstiden* (Stockholm, 1989), pp. 70–89; cf. Jespersen, 'Statuskonsumtion'. On conspicuous consumption in sixteenth-century Sweden, cf. Samuelsson, *Aristokrat eller förädlad bonde?*

48 Eriksson, *Den svenska adelns historia*, pp. 150–2, 212–18; A. Ellenius, 'Die repräsentative Funktion adliger Bauten und ihrer Ausstattung im schwedischen 17. Jahrhundert', in D. Lohmeier (ed.), *Arte et Marte. Studien zur Adelskultur des Barockzeitalters in Schweden, Dänemark und Schleswig-Holstein* (Neumünster, 1978), pp. 129–42.

The Swedish nobility in the seventeenth century were to a large degree engaged in civil and military service for the state. They were honoured with, among other things, donations of royal estates, so that their share of the total number of these estates rose from one-third at the beginning of the century to two-thirds by mid century. Nobles might also be awarded crown taxes from freeholders (*skattefrälsebönder*). This has led to criticism, both by contemporaries and later commentators, of their treatment of the peasants, a criticism which has turned out to be rather misplaced.<sup>49</sup>

As in Denmark, taxation sparked off a reaction in Sweden, where frequent extra taxes had been imposed earlier. As early as the 1620s, taxes seem to have reached such a height that the nobles' opportunities to exercise their rights were diminished in spite of the extended noble privileges as regards tax-exemption. As in Denmark-Norway, this meant that the more frequent taxes fell to be paid by an ever-decreasing group of people. For twenty-six of the forty years between the death of Gustav II Adolf in 1632 and Karl XI's assumption of power in 1672, Sweden was led by a noble council of regency. This created tensions between the estates and within the heterogeneous Swedish nobility, not only in regard to taxation but also in terms of the distribution of estates and of political-administrative power.

The first confrontation arose after the death of Gustav II Adolf when the chancellor Axel Oxenstierna presented a Form of Government (*regeringsform*) which lacked the king's signature, but which the chancellor maintained had been accepted by the king before his death. The Form of Government, which was intended to be valid in perpetuity, regulated both the regency and the administration. Although its wording implied that the rights of the king, the council of the realm and the estates would all be respected, power during the regencies came to be concentrated around a narrow circle of state officials. Together with members of the council, they also occupied the highest posts among the staff who administered the Form of Government. Despite the lack of unanimity, the Form of Government was accepted by the estates in 1634.<sup>50</sup>

49 M. Revera, '1600-talsbönderna och deras herrar. Om jordägande, skatter och samhällsförändring i ljuset av nyare forskning', in G. Inger (ed.), *Den svenska juridikens uppblomstring i 1600-tals politiska, kulturella och religiösa stormaktssamhälle*. Rättshistoriska studier, 9 (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 13–45.

50 The 1634 constitution is printed in Hildebrand, *Sveriges Regeringsformer*, pp. 21–41. The literature about the constitution is extensive; see S. A. Nilsson, '1634 års regeringsform i det svenska statssystemet', *Statsvetenskaplig Tidskrift* (1984), pp. 295–311; J. Holm, 'Skuldigt pligt och trohet'. Militärstaten och 1634 års regeringsform', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 2 (1999), pp. 161–95; Holm, *Konstruktionen av en stormakt*, p. 229.

The tensions which grew as a result of the policies on taxation, voluntary donations and ennoblement came to a head at the parliamentary session of 1650, when a coalition of the lower estates and the groupings of nobles who had not benefited from the policy of donations rejected the imposition of new taxes and demanded a *reduktion* – a restoration of those estates which had been donated by the crown.<sup>51</sup>

It was a demand that the crown exploit its resources more rationally before demanding new taxes. In principle, the discussion about contribution or *reduktion* resembled that which took place in Denmark in 1660 regarding the exploitation of fiefs. The action taken by the estates in 1650 bore fruit to some extent, in that a limited *reduktion* was carried out – the *ffjärdepartsräfsten* – which meant that the nobility had to restore a quarter of the crown estates which they had been allotted since the death of Gustav II Adolf. Discontent continued to smoulder, and faced with the prospect of a new, long-lasting regency after the sudden death in 1660 of Karl X Gustav, the lower estates and minor nobility had an addendum (*additamentet*) inserted in the form of government of 1634.<sup>52</sup>

It was intended to break the political and office-holding dominance of the aristocracy. The Swedish council of the realm made up an exclusive group of aristocrats, just like the council in Denmark.<sup>53</sup> According to the addendum, the council was to include no more than two persons from the same family, and the same person might not simultaneously fill two posts. Among its other points was the ruling that a parliament consisting of the estates was to be called every third year. An attempt to give the nobility the right of nomination to vacant seats on the council fell through; but these demands were in many ways reminiscent of those which the aristocratic opposition in Denmark had put forward in the 1640s. In Sweden, it was not only a question of a confrontation between the aristocracy and the minor nobility, but also between the old property-owning nobility and a new nobility of office-holders who were dependent on royal power.

Whereas researchers have for years conducted a lively discussion about the relevance of a general concept of crisis to explain the seventeenth century – such as, for example, what did the crisis or crises consist of – it seems more fruitful to focus on taxation and its consequences. It has been pointed out that

51 M. Roberts, 'Queen Christina and the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century', in M. Roberts, *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1967), pp. 111–37.

52 The addendum is printed in Hildebrand, *Sveriges Regeringsformer*, pp. 42–58.

53 U. Sjödell, *Riksråd och kungliga råd. Rådskarriären 1602–1718*, Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis, 38 (Lund, 1975).

many of that century's crisis symptoms and disturbances can be put down to the fact that taxes exceeded the amount of production that society was capable of, and might even lead to impoverishment, if those liable for taxation did not have the opportunity to supplement their sources of income.<sup>54</sup>

It is difficult to document such impoverishment as a result of taxation for a period before official statistics, but there are many indications that this did in fact occur. It is also important to underline the psychological aspect, the feeling of being subjected to something new and unjust, which violated well-earned rights. Imagined offences, just as much as real ones, could spark reactions on the economic, social and political fronts.

In the Swedish kingdom, too, the political-economic dominance of the aristocracy induced a state of dissatisfaction which prepared the way for absolutism. However, the dominance of the aristocracy had been weakened before the introduction of absolutism. Swedish noblemen were few in number and in practice they were not able to man the offices that were set aside for noblemen. Consequently, non-nobles were employed and ennobled. A case study has been made on the secretaries in the chancery.<sup>55</sup>

According to the Swedish historian Björn Asker, the body of officials created to serve a state dominated by the aristocracy ultimately dethroned the earlier economic, social and political elite.<sup>56</sup> At the *riksdag* of 1680, which was intended to solve the problems arising from Sweden's war with, among others, Denmark, King Karl XI managed to exploit the differences between the estates to his own advantage.<sup>57</sup> The king posed some leading questions to the estates, who stated in their declaration of that year that the king was bound only by the law of the land. The council's right to 'advise' was interpreted as advice which the king could avail himself of if he wished, and the members of the council were not mediators between king and people but simply the king's true men and subjects. By using this classical form of declaring existing rules invalid, the king's power was enlarged with a reinterpretation of the law of the land.

54 N. Steensgaard, 'The Seventeenth-century Crisis', in G. Parker and L. M. Smith (eds.), *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1968), pp. 26–56; H. G. Koenigsberger, 'The Crisis of the 17th Century: A Farewell?', in H. G. Koenigsberger, *Politicians and Virtuosi: Essays in Early Modern History* (London, 1986), pp. 149–68.

55 S. Norrhem, *Uppkomlingarna. Kanslijänstmännen i 1600-tals Sverige och Europa*, Acta Universitatis Umensis, Umeå Studies in the Humanities, 117 (Stockholm, 1993).

56 B. Asker, 'Aristocracy and Autocracy in Seventeenth-century Sweden: The Decline of the Aristocracy within the Civil Administration before 1680', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 15:1 (1990), p. 94.

57 Cf. A. F. Upton, 'The Riksdag of 1680 and the Establishment of Royal Absolutism in Sweden', *The English Historical Review*, 404 (1987), pp. 281–308.



The discussion about contribution or *reduktion* blazed up again, and further resumptions of crown lands were agreed to. Accordingly, there was 'silence in the hall' when the king, after the decision on *reduktion*, decreed yet another tax. In 1682 the king won the right to conscript soldiers as well as to repossess crown lands, and in real terms – with a rather unclear distinction between laws and decrees – the power to frame legislation. When, in 1689, the estates agreed to contribute in the event of war, and permitted the king to raise loans – an arrangement which was made permanent in 1693 – the king had obtained a free hand in the realm of grants too. Moreover, the conduct of foreign policy was made a prerogative of the king's too, and this whole development ended with the sovereignty declaration of 1693 in which the king was portrayed as an absolute monarch who was not bound to answer to any earthly power.

In both Scandinavian kingdoms, absolutism arose after a war which had operated as a catalyst for structural problems. During the war, power had in real terms shifted to the monarch, and after the war the estates had had to solve the problems of the peace, including, not least, the miserable state of the national finances, which demanded the abolition of the existing system of privileges. Large groupings in society – also within the nobility – had become dependent on royal power for offices and sources of income. In addition, the king was able selfishly to exploit differences between the estates.<sup>58</sup> In this way the Scandinavian countries strongly resembled each other in terms of the establishment of autocracy, although there were differences in its ideological underpinning.

<sup>58</sup> G. Rystad, *Johan Gyllenstierna, rådet och kungamakten. Studier i Sveriges inre politik*, Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis, 2 (Lund, 1955).

## The consolidation of the Nordic states: the Europeanisation of Scandinavia

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Scandinavia became more integrated into Europe during the seventeenth century in political, military, economic and cultural terms.<sup>1</sup> In the economic sphere, this reflected a shift in Europe's commercial centre of gravity away from Southern Europe towards Western and Northern Europe. The Baltic area became of vital significance to the European economy as a producer of food – grain and beef in particular – and as a supplier of products such as iron, copper, timber and tar which were of military importance.<sup>2</sup>

In the Low Countries, the Baltic Sea was considered to be 'the mother of all trade', and English ships also found their way to the Baltic area in increasing numbers. The Danish-Norwegian king controlled the Sound – 'the key to the Baltic'. His ships guarded the other two waterways from Kattegat to the Baltic, the Little Belt and the Great Belt. The king also sought to prevent trade in the Arctic region north of Norway. The Danes interpreted the doctrine of *dominium maris Baltici* to mean that Denmark had a right to collect dues from the increasing trade through the Sound and to prevent the passage of certain, especially militarily important, goods.

As a result of the growing significance of the Baltic area as a producer of goods and the Danish king's eagerness to exploit the Sound tolls as an important source of income, the Baltic Sea as well as access to it became of even greater importance to the Western powers in both a political and a military sense. Scandinavia became even more integrated into European high politics

1 See in general G. Rystad (ed.), *Europe and Scandinavia: Aspects of the Process of Integration in the 17th Century* (Lund, 1983).

2 For Scandinavia's integration into the European economy in the early modern period, see I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, 1–2 (New York/London/Toronto/Sydney/San Francisco, 1974); and A. Attman, *The Struggle for Baltic Markets: Powers in Conflict 1558–1618*, *Acta Regiae Societatis Scientiarum et Litterarum Gothoburgensis, Humaniora*, 14 (Lund, 1979); J. P. Maarbjerg, *Scandinavia in the European World-economy, c. 1570–1625: Some Local Evidence of Economic Integration*, *American University Studies*, Ser. 9, History 169 (New York, 1995).

when European powers sought to mobilise the resources of the Scandinavian powers in conflicts on the Continent and to assure themselves of access to a growing market. At the same time, the monarchs in the two Scandinavian states had ambitions to play a role on the European political stage.

Greater political, military and economic contacts between Scandinavia and the rest of Europe also resulted in widened cultural relations. The development of a governmental apparatus in the Nordic countries presupposed that Scandinavians to a larger extent than before travelled abroad in order to gain qualifications and that foreign experts found their way, and were invited, to Scandinavia.

In both Sweden and Denmark there was a large increase in the numbers of travellers abroad at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries,<sup>3</sup> despite the assertion of a Danish nobleman in 1643 – in a sort of guidebook for Danes travelling abroad – that Danes, as islanders, were reluctant to leave their own country.<sup>4</sup> This Danish guidebook plagiarised English books, but all of them were part of a literary genre, *ars apodemica*, the art of travelling or, more precisely, how to travel in a useful way.<sup>5</sup> The overall purpose of travelling abroad was to visit foreign societies and bring useful knowledge back home. In fact, travel was to be journey of self-knowledge.<sup>6</sup> The Thirty Years War reduced the number and the routes

3 See V. Helk, *Dansk-norske studierejser fra reformationen til enevælden 1536–1660. Med en matrikel over studerende i udlandet*, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 101 (Odense, 1987); V. Helk, *Dansk-norske studierejser 1661–1813*, 1–2, Odense University Studies in History and Social Sciences, 139 (Odense, 1991); L. Niléhn, *Peregrinatio academica. Det svenska samhället och de utrikes studieresorna under 1600-talet* (Lund, 1983); J. Nuorteva, *Suomalaisten ulkomainen opinkäynti ennen Turun Akatemian perustamista 1640* (Helsinki, 1997).

4 G. Akeleye, *Perigrinatoriæ prudentiæ Præcepta* (1643), Der Kongelige Bibliotek, København, Ny Kgl. Samling 14th, octavo. This guidebook has recently been published, see L. Jespersen, 'Gabriel Knudsen Akeleyes vejledning for udlandsrejsende', *Danske Magazin*, 51:2 (2012), pp. 453–81.

5 J. Stagl, 'Die Apodemik oder "Reisekunst" – als Methodik der Sozialforschung vom Humanismus bis zur Aufklärung', in M. Rassem and J. Stahl (eds.), *Statistik und Staatsbeschreibung in der Neuzeit vornehmlich im 16.–18. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, München, Wien and Zürich, 1980), pp. 131–202; J. Stagl, *Apodemiken. Eine rasonierte Bibliographie der reisetheoretischen Literatur des 16., 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Paderborn, München, Wien and Zürich, 1983); J. Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel 1550–1800* (Chur, 1995).

6 M. Harbsmeier, 'Reisebeschreibungen als mentalitätsgeschichtliche Quellen. Überlegungen zu einer historisch-antropologischen Untersuchung frühneuzeitlicher deutscher Reisebeschreibungen', in A. Maczak and H. J. Teuteberg (eds.), *Reiseberichte als Quellen europäischer Kulturgeschichte. Aufgaben und Möglichkeiten der historischen Reiseforschung* (Wolfenbüttel, 1982), pp. 1–2; the *ars apodemica* is mentioned in Swedish and Danish literature: G. Kármán, 'Främlingskapets grader. Claes Rålamb's resa till Osmanska riket 1657–1658', in *Karolinska Förbundets Årsbok* 2008, pp. 40–107; Jespersen, 'Gabriel Knudsen Akeleyes vejledning'.

of these peregrinations. Study journeys abroad were costly. For a Danish nobleman, the annual cost could amount to 1,000 *rigsdaler*. Less affluent noblemen often financed their journeys abroad by waiting at the table at the courts of foreign princes or by joining a foreign army.

Some Scandinavians fought the Turks, but many went to the Low Countries and brought back new ideas about tactics and the science of fortification which the Dutch had developed during their struggle for independence with Spain. From these periods of residence at foreign courts, noblemen gained knowledge of European court culture, but most information probably came from the diplomatic corps which developed during the early modern period. The Spanish and later the French courts were the favoured models. For example, the triumphal processions of Charles V and Philip II, which imitated those of the Romans in antiquity, were seen as models, and details from Charles V's entry into Breslau were copied at the coronation procession of King Christian IV in 1596.<sup>7</sup> The many similarities between Scandinavian and European processions show how a general European court culture was imitated by Scandinavians as best they could.<sup>8</sup>

King Erik XIV of Sweden, for example, asked his ambassador in England to report on the customs adopted at the English court. He also had a crown made with hoops in the European style.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, artists visiting different courts acted as spies.<sup>10</sup> At the funeral of King Frederik II of Denmark in 1588, the original planned ceremony became more extravagant to conform with foreign practice and the expectations of the invited foreign potentates.<sup>11</sup> The wedding in 1634 of Prince Christian, son of King Christian IV, was extravagant. The secretary of a French envoy, Charles Ogier, reported the

7 K. Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Danske konger og romersk herskersymbolik', in O. Steen Due and J. Isager (eds.), *Imperium Romanum. Realitet, idé, ideal*, 2 (København, 1993), pp. 407–32.

8 See M. R. Wade, *Triumphus Nuptialis Danicus: German Court Culture and Denmark*, Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung, 27 (Wiesbaden, 1996); Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Danske konger og romersk herskersymbolik'.

9 R. Cederström, *De svenska Riksregalierna och kungliga Vårdighetstecknen* (Stockholm, 1942), pp. 19–20.

10 B. Noldus and J. Roding (eds.), *Pieter Isaacs (1568–1625): Court Painter, Art Dealer and Spy* (Brepols, 2007); M. Keblusek and B. V. Noldu (eds.), *Double Agents: Cultural and Political Brokerages in Early Modern Europe* (Brill, 2011). The English used the same method at the Danish and Swedish courts, see E. I. Kouri, 'For True Faith or National Interest? Queen Elizabeth I and the Protestant Powers', in E. I. Kouri and T. Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe: Essays for Sir Geoffrey Elton* (London, 1987), pp. 419, 432, n. 28.

11 K. Erslev (ed.), *Aktstykker og Oplysninger til Rigsraadets og Stændermødernes Historie i Kristian IV's Tid*, 1 (København, 1883), p. 17.

splendour, but also the traits of barbarism – the heavy drinking. The funeral of Gustav II Adolf in 1634 was very modest and without the attendance of foreign ambassadors in order not to expose Swedish poverty.<sup>12</sup> At the same time Charles Ogier visited Sweden. When Swedish noblemen did not invite him to their private houses it was explained in the same way. In the next fifty years, however, Sweden underwent a dramatic development. According to the judgement of the Italian ambassador Lorenzo Magalotti, Sweden in the 1680s measured up to the European standard.<sup>13</sup> The governments in Scandinavia and the rest of Europe published descriptions of celebrations and ceremonies. These descriptions were meant to uphold the prestige of the state in the eyes of a foreign audience, but they also contributed to create a common European court culture. The royal household expanded in the early modern period and became an object of conflict as well as a means of integrating king, noblemen and burghers.<sup>14</sup> From several viewpoints, the court became the focal point in the absolutist era; different traditions met at the court. Autocratic Scandinavian kings were not crowned by the people but were anointed.<sup>15</sup>

Foreign influence also manifested itself in the buildings and ornamental decorations created by Scandinavian monarchs.<sup>16</sup> Ideological symbolism offers a good example. In Denmark, the palace and palace chapel of Frederiksborg north of København are striking examples of lavish ornamentation inspired from abroad and expressing ideas of a more independent monarchy enjoying greater power than the limited authority of the Danish elected king. These palace buildings and several others commissioned by King Christian IV deliberately intermingled Denmark's glorious past with the

12 G. Wetterberg, 'Stockholm – rikens styrke och rikedom', in G. Wetterberg, *Levande 1600-tal* (Stockholm, 2004), pp. 209–18, esp. p. 216.

13 L. Magalotti, *Sverige under år 1674* (Stockholm, 1986); cf. C. Ogier, *Från Sveriges storhetstid. Franska legationssekreteraren Charles Ogiers dagbok under ambassader i Sverige 1634–35* (Stockholm, 1978).

14 The Danish court and Volker Bauers court typology is analysed in S. Olden-Jørgensen, 'State Ceremonial, Court Culture and Political Power in Early Modern Denmark', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 27:2 (2002), pp. 65–76; cf. L. Jespersen, 'Court and Nobility in Early Modern Denmark', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 27:3 (2002), pp. 129–42; L. Jespersen, 'Office and Offence, Crisis and Structural Transformation in 17th-century Scandinavia, I: Scandinavia and the Crisis of the 17th Century', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 18:2 (1993), pp. 97–120; as regards the Swedish court cf. F. Persson, *Servants of Fortune: The Swedish Court between 1598 and 1721* (Lund, 1999).

15 S. Olden-Jørgensen, 'Ceremonial Interaction around the Baltic around 1700', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 28:3–4 (2003), pp. 243–51.

16 M. Andersen, E. Nyborg and M. Vedsø (eds.), *Masters, Meanings & Models: Studies in the Art and Architecture of the Renaissance in Denmark: Essays Published in Honour of Hugo Johannsen* (Copenhagen, 2010).

splendours of antiquity.<sup>17</sup> In Sweden, Drottningholm outside Stockholm was inspired by Versailles.

To the public, statues of Neptune represented Christian IV as the ruler of the sea (more precisely, the Baltic).<sup>18</sup> The Swedish warship *Vasa*, which sank on her first voyage in 1628, contained rich ideological and political decorations almost turning her into a seafaring propaganda statement.<sup>19</sup> But one looks in vain for Neptune who perhaps was omitted in respect for Christian IV. During the Danish–Swedish wars at the end of the 1650s a Neptune fountain was removed from Frederiksborg castle and is today to be found at Drottningholm. Recourse could be made to European handbooks to produce decorations with cohesive ideological message of the kind required, but foreign craftsmen were often employed instead. Dutch master builders and craftsmen were invited to Denmark, and the so-called ‘Christian IV style’ was influenced by the Dutch Renaissance.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, many Englishmen worked in Denmark as shipbuilders.

The Dutch came to play an important role in the fields of art, culture, trade and finance in both Sweden and Denmark.<sup>21</sup> Dutch philologists were invited to present the glorious past of both countries to the European public in beautiful and impeccable Latin. The Scandinavian kings were portrayed by Dutch painters and engravers. Furthermore, Sweden witnessed an immigration of Walloons, thus improving the production of iron and copper and giving Sweden a dominant position on the European market concerning these products.<sup>22</sup> Dutch bankers like Louis de Geer and the de Beesche brothers played an important part in the pre-industrial development of Sweden, and de Geer even gave money to the Swedish government, enabling the country to pay compensation to Denmark after the Kalmar War (1611–13).<sup>23</sup>

17 H. Johannsen, ‘Regna Firmat Pietas, Eine Deutung der Baudekoration der Schlosskirche Christian IV zu Frederiksborg’, *Hafnia: Copenhagen Papers in the History of Art 1974* (1976), pp. 67–119.

18 Jespersen, ‘Court’, pp. 129f.

19 H. Soop, *The Power and the Glory: The Sculptures of the Warship Vasa* (Stockholm, 1992).

20 J. G. Roding, ‘The Myth of the “Dutch Renaissance” in Denmark: Dutch Influence on Danish Architecture in the 17th Century’, in J. P. S. Lemmink and J. S. A. M. Konningsbrugge (eds.), *Baltic Affairs: Relations between the Netherlands and North-eastern Europe 1500–1800*, *Baltic Studies*, 1 (Nijmegen, 1990), pp. 343–53.

21 Cf. K. A. Ottenheim, ‘Dutch Contributions to the Classicist Tradition in Northern Europe in the Seventeenth Century: Patrons, Architects and Books’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 28:3–4 (2003), pp. 227–42.

22 K. Kilbom, *Vallonerna* (Stockholm, 1958); B. Douhan, *Arbete, kapital och migration. Valloninvandringen till Sverige under 1600-talet* (Uppsala, 1985).

23 L. Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm, c. 1640–1800: A Comparative Study of Early Modern Entrepreneurial Behaviour*, *Studia Historica Upsaliensia*, 188 (Uppsala, 1981); cf. the standard work of E. W. Dahlgren, *Louis de Geer. Hans lif och verk*, 1–2: *Faksimileutgåva med inledning av György Novátny* (Malmö, 2002).

Factories and trading companies based on Dutch models were established in both countries, and the Dutch were often brought in as skilled workers, partners and managers.<sup>24</sup> This combination of manufacturer, contractor to the state and loan provider was personified in Denmark by the brothers Gabriel and Selio Marselis. They were involved in Norwegian mining, shipbuilding, trade – and in providing loans to the state.<sup>25</sup> Dutch dairy production, *hollænderi*, and Dutch peasants had arrived in Denmark during the sixteenth century and they among other things provided København with agrarian food products. These are just a few examples of the vital importance of the Dutch to the construction of the modern Nordic states.<sup>26</sup> European intellectuals and artists also visited Scandinavia. Descartes came to Sweden, and the well-known German conductor Heinrich Schütz worked for a period in the Danish king's court orchestra.

New ideas regarding constitutional law also found their way to Scandinavia. At the end of the sixteenth century, 'the young generation of noblemen' in Sweden represented by Erik Sparre and Hogenskild Bielke, were influenced by the ideas of the French monarchomachs about the sovereignty of the people and the defence of their rights against princely power. In Denmark, these ideas were reflected in *Danmarks Riges Krønike* (Chronicle of the Danish Kingdom) published in the years between 1595 and 1604 by Arild Huitfeldt, a member of the Danish council. His prefaces drew on the tradition of the *speculum regale* literature, and contained borrowings from Machiavelli and the monarchomachs. However, constitutional debate in Scandinavia in the seventeenth century was also clearly influenced by Jean Bodin and other European spokesmen for a strengthening of royal power.<sup>27</sup>

Strong foreign influence could also be seen in the civil service. In Sweden, the Italian double-bookkeeping system was introduced at an early stage, and the Swedish collegiate administration which was codified in the 1634 Form of Government was created in accordance with European examples, though it is not possible to be more precise about the particular nature of this

24 The Danish standard work is still A. Nielsen, *Dänische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Jena, 1933).

25 J. T. Lauridsen, *Marselis-konsortiet. En studie over forholdet mellem handelskapital og kongemagt i 1600-tallets Danmark* (Århus, 1987).

26 For Dutch influence in Denmark, see K. Fabricius *et al.* (eds.), *Holland-Danmark. Forbindelserne mellem de to Lande gennem Tiderne*, 1–2 (København, 1945).

27 The political theories of the period are discussed in P.-E. Bäck, *Herzog und Landschaft. Politische Ideen und Verfassungsprogramme in Schwedisch-Pommern um die Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Lund, 1955); and N. Runeby, *Monarchia Mixta. Maktfördelningsdebatt i Sverige under den tidigare stormaktstiden* (Stockholm, 1962). For Denmark, see K. Fabricius, *Kongeloven* (København, 1920; repr., 1970).

influence. The collegiate system of administration in Denmark was created later primarily with Sweden as an example, but was also inspired by conditions in some German states.<sup>28</sup>

While Scandinavia's exports to the rest of Europe mainly consisted of grain and beef, the major imports to the Nordic region were spices, salt and wine. In the seventeenth century, it also became fashionable to 'drink' tobacco. The imported luxury items also included different kinds of cloth. Fashions in dressing at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries were influenced by Spain, but the lead was soon taken by France. This fact was reflected in a sarcastic remark by King Christian IV in 1641, that clothes were now made in such a French manner that no scoundrel could either move nor bend over in them.<sup>29</sup>

The increased contact with other countries had an impact on the language too. Denmark's close proximity to the Holy Roman Empire naturally resulted in a constant German linguistic influence. The Danish monarch ruled over German-speakers in the duchies; queens were often chosen from German states, and the monarchs themselves mainly spoke German. This applied, naturally enough, to Frederik I (1523–33), who came from the duchies. It is perhaps more surprising that Christian IV (1588–1648) was the first Danish monarch, who fully mastered the Danish language. German was, nevertheless, the language often used in large parts of the Danish central administration.

In the sixteenth century, there had been a 'German period' in the kingdom of Sweden which to this day is reflected in a number of words. That Latin was the international language of the time is evident from the fact that this was the language in which Scandinavian rulers communicated with the European public in order to spread knowledge of the history of the Nordic countries. The style of the time meant that documents were often full of Latin sentences, but through the seventeenth century French words became most frequent. When a French envoy visited the Nordic countries in 1634–5,

28 E. Hildebrand, *Sveriges Regeringsformer* (Stockholm, 1891), p. 6; G. Lind, 'Den heroiske tid? Administrationen under den tidlige enevælde 1660–1720', in L. Jespersen and E. Ladewig Petersen (eds.), *Dansk Forvaltningshistorie, 1: Fra middelalderen til 1901, Stat, forvaltning og samfund* (København, 2000), pp. 159–225; K. Fabricius, 'Kollegiestyrets Gennembrud og Sejr 1660–1680', in A. Sachs (ed.), *Den danske Centraladministration* (København, 1921), pp. 113–251.

29 L. Jespersen, 'At ville, at være og at have – træk af luksuslovgivningen i Danmark i 15–1600-tallet', in *TEMP, Tidsskrift for historie*, 1 (2010), pp. 31–58, esp. p. 43; cf. H. Frøsig, 'I fløj eller vadmel', in A. Steensberg (ed.), *Dagligliv i Danmark i det syttende århundrede 1620–1720* (København, 1969), p. 389.



his secretary praised the nobility for mastering not only French, but also other languages.<sup>30</sup> Christian IV mastered Danish, German, Latin, French and Italian. Europe as a whole became more closely integrated in various ways in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Scandinavian countries were part of this process, but – and this is hardly surprising – more as recipients of foreign influences than as providers to others.

### The ideology of absolutism – and opposition?

Absolutism was introduced to the Nordic countries in different forms, and this naturally resulted in different ideological explanations during its first phase. Swedish absolutism evolved through interpretations of the law which presented the power of the council of the realm (*riksråd*) as usurped and absolute monarchy as a return to an earlier form of government.<sup>31</sup> It soon became theocratic in nature and *Jus Regium*, the work of the Danish bishop, Hans Wandal, was often quoted.<sup>32</sup> In contrast to this transcendent, divine explanation, Denmark and Norway viewed absolute monarchy as a transfer of power (*translatio*) from the estates of the realms based on natural law.

The abolition in 1660 of the coronation charter (*håndfæstning*), which the Danish aristocracy had used in order to control the crown, was clearly based on contract theories derived from natural law. The monarchy strongly emphasised that the abolition of the coronation charter and the transfer of power had taken place with the consent of the estates. The contribution made by the monarch during the recent war with Sweden had encouraged the estates to accept this, but they had also indirectly been guided by God. At this particular time, the theocratic explanation was eclipsed by one based on natural law, and the king carefully ensured that the abolition of the old coronation charter as well as the introduction of the new principles of government were carried out according to the formalities which were applied by the contract doctrine.

However, the Danish constitution of 1665 (*Lex Regia*), which placed few restrictions on the absolute monarch's power, was kept secret for a long time. It was unique that Danish absolutism was based on a constitution. Danish absolutism soon assumed theocratic traits, and in the testament of the

<sup>30</sup> Jespersen, 'At ville', p. 53 with references.

<sup>31</sup> See G. Barudio, *Absolutismus – Zerstörung der 'libertären Verfassung', Studien zur 'Karolinischen Eingewalt' in Schweden zwischen 1680 und 1693*, Frankfurter Historische Abhandlungen, 13 (Wiesbaden, 1976).

<sup>32</sup> S. Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria*, 1: *Stormaktstiden* (Stockholm, 1975), pp. 366ff.

later absolute monarch, Christian V, the earlier power of the *rigsråd* was presented as usurped. Theocratic thinking also pervaded the writings of Bishop Hans Wandal in the 1660s. The two Nordic countries offered similar theoretical explanations for absolutism by the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>33</sup>

The personal and arbitrary nature of absolute monarchy resulted in the creation of a close link between financial and social opportunities and the absolute monarch. The introduction of distinctions within the Danish nobility in 1671 by the formal creation of the titles of count and baron was thus meant to add lustre and *gloire* to the monarchy.<sup>34</sup> Social status and ceremonies reflected a hierarchy among the people surrounding the monarch, but were ultimately an expression of submissiveness towards the king. Furthermore, the 'sumptuary laws', which carefully regulated the consumption of luxury goods by different groups (ranks) in society, created social distinctions making the nobility highly dependent on the king's grace.

The introduction of absolutism in Scandinavia was a result of long-term structural changes which created conflicts, and the crown was able to exploit the meetings of the estates where the discussion of financial problems easily gave rise to questions relating to the different privileges of the estates. Attempts had also been made to trace an absolutist mode of thinking – a 'monarchical wave' – back to earlier historical periods. In the case of Sweden, Gustav Vasa's regime in the 1530s took the shape of theocratic absolutism before he began to collaborate with the estates of the realm. The constitutional debate in Sweden primarily focused on *monarchia mixta*.<sup>35</sup> In the Danish elective monarchy, the election of the king presupposed that the next monarch would accept a number of conditions. However, when the law of succession was introduced in Sweden in 1544, the estates of the realm did not renounce this right. When Sigismund ascended to the throne he had to accept additional obligations. At first he refused to do so, referring to the difference between an elective and a hereditary king. But in the end he had to give in.<sup>36</sup>

33 E. Ekman, 'The Danish Royal Law of 1665', *The Journal of Modern History*, 29 (1957), pp. 102–7; J. Hougard et al. (eds.), *Dansk litteraturhistorie*, 3: *Stænderkultur og enevælde 1620–1746* (København, 1983), pp. 35–6, 191–6.

34 N. Bartholdy, 'Adelsbegrebet under den ældre enevælde, Sammenhængen mellem privilegier og rang i tiden 1660–1730', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 5:12 (1971), pp. 577–650.

35 M. Roberts, 'On Aristocratic Constitutionalism in Swedish History 1520–1720', in M. Roberts, *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1966); K. Nordlund, *Den svenska reformationstidens allmänna statsrättsliga idéer i deras samband med den politiska utvecklingen* (Stockholm, 1900); and Runeby, *Monarchia Mixta*.

36 F. Lagerroth, 'Revolution eller rättskontinuitet? Till belysning av det juridiska utgångsläget för de stora författningsändringarna i Sverige', *Scandia*, 9 (1936), p. 7.

In Denmark, attempts have been made to identify the sources of inspiration for the *Lex Regia* of 1665 in order to find evidence of an early, absolutist ideology. However, this teleological goal and the somewhat unsystematic and incomplete investigation of the surviving sources have resulted in erroneous conclusions and have delivered a distorted picture. In truth, one can speak of Swedish or Danish political ideologies to the extent that ideas received from abroad were especially adapted to Nordic conditions. The way in which foreign impulses were received can show whether absolutist ideas evoked any response in Scandinavia. However, in both Sweden and Denmark, a wide spectrum of intellectual currents from abroad made an impact in the first half of the seventeenth century and the most influential favoured the existing separation of powers. Young noblemen travelling abroad became acquainted with absolutist ideas and defended them in rhetorical exercises, but this cannot be taken as evidence of an increasing monarchism among young noblemen. The content of these exercises was of secondary importance and often determined by the tutor and not the student.<sup>37</sup>

It is equally difficult to find evidence for the existence of widespread opposition to absolutism after its introduction. In the case of Denmark, it goes without saying that the acceptance, under intimidation, of hereditary monarchy by a meeting of the council of the realm at which some members were absent amounted to a coup d'état.<sup>38</sup> The king's subsequent attempts to clothe his manner of proceeding in legal forms do not change its fundamental nature. Indeed, it reveals his fear of opposition, and the same applies to the *Lex Regia*, which set out punishment to be inflicted on anyone seeking to limit royal power.<sup>39</sup>

Most of the proposals put forward at the meeting of the Danish estates in 1660 pointed towards a constitution in which the estates would have a significant place as in the Swedish model. The nobility had stubbornly defended their privileges, and the king probably was aware of the wishes of the estates and that the constitutional outcome did not match their expectations. The document endorsing the introduction of an absolutist hereditary monarchy was brought forward by a strong retinue to noblemen individually so that each should sign. All possible opposition was to be stifled

37 Fabricius, *Kongeloven*. For a criticism of Fabricius's arguments, see L. Jespersen, 'Knud Fabricius og den monarkiske bølge, Nogle kommentarer til de statsretlige brydninger i 15–1600-tallets Danmark', *Historie*, 1 (1997), pp. 54–85.

38 K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks historie*, 3: *Tiden 1648–1730*, ed. S. Mørch, *Danmarks historie* (København, 1989), p. 164.

39 Himmelstrup and Møller, *Danske Forfatningslove*, pp. 22–3.

at birth, but the conspicuous absence of a number of noblemen from the list of signatories does not necessarily reflect a silent protest.<sup>40</sup> The personal and arbitrary nature of absolutism was demonstrated by the manner in which the crown dealt with real or potential enemies.

King Frederik III's half-sister, Leonora Christina, and her husband, Corfitz Ulfeldt, who had co-operated with the Swedish occupying forces between 1657 and 1660, were the first to be hit by the suspicion of the absolute monarch. After a brief period of imprisonment on Bornholm, Ulfeldt swore the oath of allegiance to the king, but in the course of a journey abroad for the sake of his health he offered the Danish throne to the Elector of Brandenburg in 1662. His treachery was unmasked and Ulfeldt was obliged to spend the rest of his life as a fugitive in Europe until his death in 1664. Leonora Christina was less fortunate: she was tricked to return to Denmark, and was imprisoned from 1663 to 1685 because of her presumed knowledge of her husband's treason.<sup>41</sup>

The Danish nobleman Kaj Lykke also experienced the king's anger – in his case, because of a letter he had written ten years earlier with disparaging remarks about the queen. He was condemned to death, but escaped. His property and whole fortune were confiscated by the king. In 1662 a member of the council, Gunde Rosenkrantz, fled to Sweden to escape the king's wrath. He had gone bankrupt, and the king had pressed him to resign from the council and the supreme court, the body which would deal with cases brought up against him. Somewhat imprudently, Rosenkrantz visited the duke of Gottorp, which aroused the king's displeasure, and he sought refuge in Sweden, where he did not find himself particularly welcome because of his earlier activities as an anti-Swedish pamphleteer.

In contrast to these incidents, the first real opposition to absolutism came from another nobleman, Oluf Rosenkrantz, who anonymously published a few pamphlets in the 1660s in which he argued that the nobility ought to have a share of political power. However, he only provoked the king's wrath when he published his *Apologia nobilitatis danicæ* in Lübeck under his own name in 1681. He lost all his posts and had to pay a fine which brought him to the brink of bankruptcy. The fate of such men obviously deterred others from venturing anything similar.

40 A. Fabritius, 'Adelen og Arvehyldningen 1661', in A. Friis and A. Olsen (eds.), *Festskrift til Erik Arup den 22. november 1946* (København, 1946), pp. 187–93.

41 S. Heiberg, *Enhjørningen Corfitz Ulfeldt* (København, 1993).

To avoid the fate of Lykke, any criticism of the new political arrangements had to be put forward in a more indirect manner. A handwritten manuscript *Grevens og friherrens komedie* ('The Comedy of the Count and the Baron'), which probably was composed by the nobleman Mogens Skeel in the late 1670s, attacked the introduction by the crown of distinctions within the Danish nobility in 1671 and satirised those noblemen who had received the titles of count or baron. It also castigated merchants from the burgher estate who had cheated the crown for years by charging inflated prices for the goods they provided, but who now could aspire to a higher rank than many honest noblemen. One of the main characters in this work was Baron Klingbeutel (*Beutel* means 'purse'), and this was a clear reference to Poul Klingenberg, a merchant and supplier of goods to the state. Klingenberg became postmaster general in the 1650s and was ennobled in 1671. The author, however, was careful to avoid criticising the king himself.<sup>42</sup>

Many of the leading men from the period of aristocratic dominance within the Danish state remained in senior posts after 1660, but the king's suspicion of the old nobility manifested itself partly through the appointment of several commoners to high office; partly through the creation of the titles of count and baron, which served to divide the nobility; and partly through the introduction of a table of ranks in 1671, which made the holding of office and relations with the crown, not noble birth, the main criteria for determining a man's rank in society. In his political testament, Christian V advised his son to continue the practice of conferring titles of count and baron on well-deserving persons as the previous, damaging state of equality among the nobility had merely served to reinforce the existence of an aristocratic regime. He also warned his son not to make the holding of state office dependent on noble status.<sup>43</sup>

The new set of noble privileges introduced in 1661 under the absolutist regime deprived the nobility of its exemption from taxation and its exclusive right to occupy most of the senior offices of state. As a result, the influx of commoners into the central administration largely obliged noblemen to seek

42 J. T. Lauridsen, 'Adelsreaktion og politisk satire under den tidlige enevælde', *Danske Studier* (1987), pp. 9–25.

43 For the introduction of the titles of count and baron, see Bartholdy, 'Adelsbegrebet'; J. J. A. Worsaae (ed.), *Kong Christian V.s Testamenter som Tillæg til Kongeloven* (København, 1860); K. J. V. Jespersen, "'Welmeente Erindringer oc Maximer for Wore Kongelige Arfve-Successorer"', Christian 5.s testamenter – En fortolkningsskitse', in H. Jeppesen *et al.* (eds.), *Søfart politik identitet. Tilegnet Ole Feldbæk* (København, 1996), pp. 127–42; S. Olden-Jørgensen, 'Christian V's og Frederik IV's politiske testamenter', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 96:2 (1996), pp. 313–48.

employment as army and navy officers. The monarchs of the new absolutism mistrusted the old nobility but treated them in general with some caution. The titles of count and baron, for example, were conferred on members of the old nobility as well as on new men. The fact that some members of the old nobility declined the titles offered can be taken as another sign of circumspect opposition.

The crown's treatment of some members of the burgher estate also demonstrates that it was not merely a question of victimising the old nobility. In the 1660s, some of the crown's creditors among the burghers had received royal estates in lieu of debt repayment. A decade later, in the 1670s, an audit commission systematically went through the claims of the crown's creditors. Very few accounts were able to pass the test of an audit, and many of the creditors belonging to the burgher estate were presented with demands for large repayments, demands which proved financially ruinous.<sup>44</sup>

The best-known examples are Henrik Müller and the above-mentioned Poul Klingenberg, who lived in poverty after the audit commission had fulfilled its work. It might be difficult to discern a pattern in the activities of the audit commission, but the king seems to have used it as a means of freeing himself not only from his most substantial creditors and his largest debts, but also from the circle of creditors who no longer were needed. Klingenberg had briefly been imprisoned during the clash with Corfitz Ulfeldt in the early 1650s, i.e. before Frederik III became an absolute monarch, but the fact that the charges were dropped reflect the crown's continuing need for Klingenberg at that time as a supplier of loans. Many creditors – both noblemen and commoners – had their claims accepted and honoured by the audit commission and were also able to advance further in the hierarchy of the absolutist state.

In Sweden too, the old nobility and the conciliar aristocracy seemed cowed by the coalition established when absolutism was introduced between the crown, the lower estates and the new, office-holding nobility. The absence of opposition was presumably due to the fear of further resumptions of alienated crown land and of the so-called 'great commission', which was set up to investigate the financial measures taken by the regency government during the minority of King Karl XI (1660–72). The members of the regency government were held personally accountable for expenditure, gifts and

44 C. S. Christiansen, 'Den store Revisionskommission og dens Forløbere, Et Bidrag til vor indre Historie under Kong Christian V', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 4:7 (1902–4), pp. 1–120.

income alienated while they were in power. This audit reduced several of the leading men of the pre-absolutist regime to penury. The best-known example is the former chancellor, Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, who lost all the enormous sources of income he had previously enjoyed.

Members of the burgher estate had played an important role in securing the powers of an absolute monarch for Karl XI, but this did not protect them from the inquisition of the auditors. As in Denmark, the Swedish king turned against his earlier supporters, and in this case, too, the explanation must be sought in a mixture of naked treachery and a desire to strengthen the finances of the state and the political power of the crown. Taken together, the resumption of alienated crown land, the work of the great commission and the 'self-financing' nature of the new *indelningsverk* system of army recruitment gave the crown greater economic latitude under absolutism than it had enjoyed before, while the great noblemen, who had previously flaunted their position by erecting splendid palaces for themselves, were financially ruined.<sup>45</sup>

As the resumption of alienated crown land gradually became more extensive in nature and came to affect the lower and the new nobility, dissatisfaction with the measures taken by the absolute monarch presumably began to grow beneath the surface, but for the time being there was no open resistance.

The province of Livonia was an exception. The Livonian nobility refused to recognise a decision on *reduction* made by the Swedish *riksdag*, where Livonians did not have a seat. Furthermore, they claimed the observance of Livonian noble privileges was to be a precondition for Livonians' contractual association with Sweden. The Livonian protest against the reduction had clear constitutional traits.

In Livonia an aristocratic institution was established to safeguard the privileges of the Livonian nobility. As they publicly announced they would prefer war rather than agree to the king's demands, Karl XI regarded this as an uprising and found the leaders guilty of high treason. One of the leaders, Johan Reinhold Patkul, was later executed. There were other examples of criticism; more importantly there existed a widespread dissatisfaction with absolutist rulers' constant warfare which had a devastating impact on society. However, this dissatisfaction did not evolve into opposition or uprisings.<sup>46</sup>

45 S. Dahlgren, *Karl X Gustaf och reduktionen* (Stockholm, 1964); L. Magnusson, *Reduktionen under 1600-tallet, Debatt och forskning* (Malmö, 1985).

46 J. Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1: *Tiden före 1718*, 3rd edn (Stockholm, 1969), pp. 526, 553–8; 2 (Stockholm, 1980), pp. 76–92; N. E. Villstrand, *Sveriges historia 1660–1721* (Stockholm, 2011), pp. 279–89.

During the many years Karl XII spent abroad, the estates attempted to act on their own – for example, by calling a meeting of the estates in 1713–14 – but they gave in when the king's opposition became known. An opposition in the real sense of the word only emerged after the death of Karl XII, when the unsolved succession problem was exploited to turn against absolutist rule. Based on the theory of natural law, in 1719 the estates took back their legitimate power.<sup>47</sup>

### The growth of bureaucracy

In the late sixteenth century, the central administration in both Nordic kingdoms was essentially concentrated around the king and the council of the realm along with the chancery, the treasury and a law court. Within a generation, the administrative apparatus in Sweden however underwent sweeping structural changes which were connected with the protracted wars in which the kingdom had been involved and the frequent absence of the monarch. In the 1590s, this absence was due to Sigismund's accession to the throne. He was also king of Poland and it was expected that he would spend long periods outside the kingdom of Sweden. This required a new approach to managing the affairs of the kingdom in order to make the administration function efficiently and serve with continuity.

Sigismund's reign was brief, and administrative reforms on a large scale only began under Gustav II Adolf. His incessant absence in foreign theatres of war also placed demands on the administrative apparatus for efficiency and permanence. His reign witnessed the introduction of a more specialised and diversified administrative apparatus divided into colleges, each with its own particular field of activity and staffed by professionals, who in principle were equal members of the governing board of the college led by a president. Within the legal system, the first step was the creation of a central court of appeal, *Svea Hovrätt*, in Stockholm in 1614, and this was followed by the establishment of other courts of appeal in provincial centres of the kingdom. The chancery was reorganised and several other colleges were set up. These developments were codified in 1634, which the chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, presented to the estates after Gustav II Adolf's death as a 'Form of Government' which the late king had accepted, even though he had not officially authorised it. It is worth noticing that the collegial system enshrined in the

<sup>47</sup> Lindroth, *Svensk lärdoms historia*, p. 370.



Form of Government of 1634 entrenched the power of the aristocratic council and especially of the holders of the principal offices of state. Each college was headed by one of the main officers of state and several other members of the council sat in the board.

A collegial system with closely defined areas of jurisdiction and established routines and procedures ensured the existence of a permanently functional administrative apparatus, regardless of whether the monarch was at home or abroad. It also tended to render the monarch superfluous. For our purpose, the much-debated question concerning the role Gustav II Adolf played in devising the Form of Government of 1634 is only interesting because of his opposition in the 1620s to a comprehensive codification of the existing administrative arrangements. No later Swedish monarch reaching the age of majority ever recognised the Form of Government, and after the introduction of absolutism the crown was not bound by it.<sup>48</sup>

After the establishment of absolutism in the 1680s the collegial system of decision-making broke down in practice both among councillors, who were now called royal councillors, and within the colleges themselves. The king increasingly relied on experts, some from the ranks of the councillors of the realm and members of the colleges, others drawn from outside the administration.<sup>49</sup> In this connection, the king made great use of special commissions, and the chancellery often merely issued formal notifications of decisions already taken by the king's personal experts. Several offices of state disappeared, and the number of councillors who were members of a college declined. The career structure of councillors also changed in the course of the seventeenth century. In the first half of the century, councillors often experienced a 'divided' career, serving in different sectors of the administration and joining the council in the middle of their careers, but in the latter part of the century appointment to the council became the final mark of approbation after a long and more specialised career.<sup>50</sup>

The need for expert knowledge had as early as in the 1620s led to the establishment in Stockholm of an institution for training servants of the state

48 The literature on the 'Form of Government' 1634 is extensive; see S. A. Nilsson, '1634 års regeringsform', *Scandia*, 10 (1936), and the sources cited there; recent contributions are to be found in J. Holm, "'Skyldig plikt och trohet': Militärstaten och 1634 års regeringsform', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 119 (1999); G. Wetterberg, *Axel Oxenstierna, Makten og klogskapen* (Malmö, 2010), pp. 301–4.

49 A.-B. Lövgren, *Handläggning och inflytande, Beredning, föredragning och kontrasingering under Karl XI:s enväld* (Lund, 1980).

50 U. Sjödel, *Riksråd och kungliga råd. Rådskarriären 1602–1718*, *Bibliotheca Historica Lundensis*, 38 (Lund, 1975).

(the *Collegium Illustre*). In practice, it proved of little significance, but the system of placing young administrators as observers (*auskultanter*) within the legal system proved more effective. The growth of collegial administration reflected the emergence of bureaucracy in the Weberian sense of the term.

Another feature of the Swedish administrative system was centralisation. The Finnish part of the kingdom was separated from the remainder by the Gulf of Bothnia and the two sections of the realm were joined by land only in the far north. In practice, however, the sea bound south-western Finland to the heart of the Swedish realm far more effectively than the inadequate roads in the north. The Finnish part of the kingdom was ruled in the same way as the rest of the realm. The same laws and decrees applied throughout the kingdom – though the ideal was that the clergymen and state servants with direct contact with the local population in Finland should be able to speak Finnish, or rather should be bilingual, so that they could transmit both the government's orders to the people and the latter's wishes and reactions to the central authorities. The Finnish part of the kingdom was subject to the same national institutions as the rest of the realm. In reality, however, the consequent language policy of the Stockholm government in favour of Swedish caused a rapid decline in the use of Finland's national language, and many of the civil servants were not able to understand Finnish, spoken by the majority of the population.<sup>51</sup>

However, some features of Finland's position did confer a special status on this part of the kingdom. The establishment of a court of appeal at Turku (Åbo) in 1623 (like that of Åbo Akademi in 1640) was not particularly significant in this respect. There were separate courts of appeal in other parts of the far-flung kingdom for practical reasons. What mattered more, was Finland's status as a grand duchy and the appointment of a governor-general for short periods at various times. Even so, one should not exaggerate the importance of the governor-generalship. The short-lived and infrequent nature of the office reflected its character as 'a symptom of illness', its role as a means of addressing immediate administrative problems, rather than

<sup>51</sup> See generally R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), p. 134; Villstrand, *Sveriges historia 1660–1721*. For the question of language cf. E. I. Kouri, 'Die politisch-administrative Rolle der finnischen Sprache im Schwedischen und Russischen Reich', in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 53 (2005), pp. 338–43; E. I. Kouri, 'Die Stellung des Finnischen als Verwaltungssprache bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in T. Nicklas and M. Schnettger (eds.), *Politik und Sprache im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Mainz, 2007), pp. 138–40.

Finland's special status. This does not render the governor-generals insignificant; not least Per Brahe played an important role in the years 1637–40 and 1648–54. To some extent he helped to cultivate Finland in more than one sense.

Conditions were somewhat different in Denmark-Norway,<sup>52</sup> where the Danish chancery (*Danske Kancelli*) continued to function as a centre for all incoming and outgoing correspondence for the whole central administration right up to the introduction of absolutism in 1660–1. Its chief, the royal chancellor (*kongens kansler*), and its personnel therefore dealt with virtually all kinds of official business. There had, however, been a gradual move towards creating more specialised administrative institutions. A so-called German chancery (*Tyske Kancelli*) had been established in 1523 to handle all foreign correspondence written in German and Latin, while the Danish chancery remained responsible for correspondence with Sweden and Russia. In the middle of the sixteenth century, a discrete office, the treasury (*Rentekammer*), had been set up to control the collection of revenues, expenditures and the auditing of the accounts of subordinate administrative bodies. It was headed by its own officer of state, the treasurer (*rigshofsmester*), but all correspondence was still handled by the Danish chancery.<sup>53</sup>

The three other officers of state – the marshal (*rigsmarsk*), the lord high admiral (*rigsadmiral*) and the lord chancellor (*rigskansler*), who was responsible for the administration of justice – did not have independent offices of their own. It was only in the 1650s, the very last years of the period of noble dominance within the Danish state, that any further administrative specialisation occurred. A board of admiralty (*admiralitetsskollegium*) and a war council (*krigsråd*) were established in 1655 and 1658 respectively. Both institutions were organised on a collegial basis, but remained integrated in the existing administrative system according to which the Danish chancery continued to deal with all correspondence.

These first moves towards a collegial system meant that the central role of the Danish chancery was becoming outmoded. It had many obvious weaknesses – officials often lacked adequate instructions and a clear indication of

52 For a discussion of administrative developments in pre-absolutist Denmark, see the classic account in Fabricius, 'Kollegiestyret' and the revised interpretation presented in L. Jespersen, 'Tiden 1596–1660: Mellem personlig kongemagt og bureaukrati', in L. Jespersen and E. Ladewig Petersen (eds.), *Dansk Forvaltningshistorie*, 1: *Fra middelalderen til 1901, Stat, forvaltning og samfund* (København, 2000), pp. 95–158 and the works cited there.

53 Jespersen, 'Tiden 1596–1660'; cf. L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000), pp. 70–6.

their responsibilities. The nobility had an exclusive right to occupy the great offices of state and also the post of chancery secretary (*kancellisekretær*) and the right of precedence when certain other posts were to be filled. The recruitment of a large proportion of the state's administrative personnel from a numerically limited social group raised natural doubts whether they possessed the necessary qualifications for the posts they occupied, and the noble officials had indeed been accused of insufficient expertise and competence. It was also the case that some young noblemen used a brief period of service in the central administration as a springboard for some other form of career.

There were, of course, incompetent noblemen within the central administration, and it was sometimes difficult to find qualified candidates from the ranks of the nobility to posts like lord high admiral or lord chancellor. Moreover, there were sometimes more qualified candidates belonging to the burgher estate, which increasingly was providing its sons with a good education. However, the harsh structures of posterity on the competence of noble officials also reflects the anti-aristocratic prejudice of earlier times. Most of the noblemen occupying the chief offices of state had travelled abroad and acquired general education and training. Even so, from the 1630s onwards, a meritocratic way of thinking gained increasing resonance, and its emphasis on qualifications contained an implicit criticism of noble privileges which rested on the criterion of birth.

The administrative system during the period of noble dominance within the Danish state suffered from other structural weaknesses which have often been overlooked. One example is the short term of office served by many chancery secretaries, which resulted from an interplay of different factors. Some naturally regarded the post as just a further step on the career ladder and others left when they married and took over the ancestral estates. However, others left the post because the personnel of the chancery were a part of the royal household who could be moved at the king's discretion. Moreover, in times of war, the king encouraged or ordered the secretaries to enrol for military service. The king's habit of placing officials from one post to another and the lack of a sufficient distinction between the royal household and the central administration inhibited professionalisation and the emergence of a well-qualified corps of civil servants.<sup>54</sup> The establishment of the Sorø academy in 1623 created an educational institution on Danish soil

<sup>54</sup> Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution*, p. 73.

which might replace or delay the need for foreign travelling. The academy aimed to provide general education and only in this sense can it be described as a preparation for a career within the central administration.

The first moves towards a Danish collegial system thus occurred in the 1650s, just a few years before the fall of noble dominance within the state, when the council of the realm explicitly acknowledged the shortcomings of the administrative system centred on the chancery and suggested it be replaced by a collegial system. The council sought to reassure the king by pointing out that even the most absolute monarchs in Europe were content to rule through colleges – an observation which must have reflected a belief in some quarters that a collegial system working in accordance with fixed procedures and regulations might become a threat to royal power.<sup>55</sup>

After Denmark's defeat in the wars against Sweden between 1657 and 1660 and the triumph of absolutism in 1660–1, a collegial system of administration was introduced in Denmark.<sup>56</sup> In this respect, Sweden served not as an enemy but as a model. The efficiency of the Swedish military and administrative apparatus had taught the Danes a lesson in the need to adapt, and the collegial system established under Danish absolutism was to a great extent an imitation of the Swedish system. Some historians have argued that the inability of the Danish chancery to pay state officials on time during the 1650s was a clear sign that the administrative system based on the chancery had broken down in practice. However, both the Danish and the German chanceries were not reorganised on a collegial basis until 1670, which suggests that the young absolutist regime had other priorities – especially the financial and military sectors.

Despite the reorganisation of the central administration, it rapidly became clear that the absolutist state was incapable of performing its wide-ranging administrative responsibilities without assistance. As a result, the new regime was obliged to make use of the administrative apparatus and the local expertise which were to be found in the manor-houses of the nobility. The landowners were made responsible for the assessment and collection of taxes from the residents on their estates and also for the payment of taxes, including arrears, to the state. In return, the land tax – the so-called *hartkorn* tax, which was based on the estimated productivity of land as measured in *tønder hartkorn* (*thk*) – was abolished in 1670 on the manorial lands farmed directly by the landowner. In the following year, a new high nobility of

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.      <sup>56</sup> Lind, 'Den heroiske tid'

counts and barons was created whose manorial lands were to be worth a minimum of 2,500 and 1,000 *thk* respectively. The manors of counts and barons as well as their peasant tenants up to a value of 300 and 1,000 *thk* respectively did not pay taxes. In 1682, manorial tax privileges were further reduced so that only the larger manorial estates (i.e. those with 200 *thk* of peasant land within a 2-kilometre radius) remained exempt from paying land tax.<sup>57</sup> The fact that counts and barons were not subordinated to the county governor (the *amtmand*, the successor to the former *lensmand*) and paid the taxes they had collected directly to the treasury should be seen as an attempt to bind them to the crown as a loyal corps of officials. A register of all landed property in Denmark was drawn up in 1688, and it came to serve as the basis not only for taxation, but also for the conscription of male peasants to the new militia established in 1701. It was the private landowner who was given the responsibility of finding one soldier for every 20 *thk* on his land, and this form of 'devolved' state authority was a typical expression of the limited administrative capacity of the Danish state.<sup>58</sup>

Even so, there were other tendencies towards greater centralisation at the end of the seventeenth century. King Christian V largely bypassed the colleges by relying on various special commissions like the 'Commissions for the council room at the castle'. Moreover, he warned his son against colleges in his political testament and advised him to replace them with commissions. When his son, Frederik IV, took over the throne in 1699, he tried to practise a system of personal absolutism by dealing himself with all kinds of official business.

The coronation charter (*håndfæstning*) of 1536 had formally deprived Norway of her independence and reduced the country to a part of Denmark with the same status as other provinces of the Danish kingdom. However, the Danish government seems to have refrained from taking this stipulation to its logical conclusion. The terminology used did not reflect a subordination of Norway; in treaties with other powers Norway continued to be a 'kingdom' in the same way as Denmark, and the term 'the crown of Norway' was used in contemporary sources. Norway also retained its own laws and legal system.<sup>59</sup>

57 K.-E. Frandsen and L. Dombernowsky, *Det danske landbrugs historie*, 2: 1536–1810, ed. C. Bjørn *et al.* (Odense, 1988), pp. 182f.

58 B. Løgstrup, 'Den bortforpagtede statsmagt', *Bol og By* (1985), pp. 21–58.

59 As to Norway's constitutional position, see Ø. Rian, *Danmark-Norge 1380–1814*, 2: *Den aristokratiske fyrrestaten 1536–1648* (Oslo, 1997), pp. 21–6.

After 1536, there was still an official called the chancellor of the Norwegian realm, whose most important duties related to the administration of justice.<sup>60</sup> A second office whose remit covered the whole of Norway was created in 1572, when the post of governor (*statholder*) was established. In the 1640s, when Hannibal Sehested was *statholder*, a general commissariat with wide-ranging responsibilities was set up. It was organised on a collegial basis and was the first collegial institution in Denmark-Norway. In administrative terms, Norway led the way in several respects. For example, institutions covering the whole country were established earlier in Norway than in Denmark. The tax revenue in Norway became increasingly important during the 1640s when the finances of the Danish state were in a particularly poor state. It had a perceptible effect when it was decided that half of the Norwegian tax revenue should remain to pay for the Norwegian forces and to pay off the public debt.<sup>61</sup>

After 1536, Norway had been governed from København as a collection of counties until this system was replaced in the 1640s by rule through the *statholder* and the general commissariat. A third method of ruling Norway was adopted after the disbandment of the commissariat and the introduction of absolutism with the creation of a number of specialised administrative bodies based in Christiania. This measure established an administrative centre in Norway which was subordinate to the king and the central administration in København. Norway was no longer a province, but one part of a dual monarchy. The introduction of absolutism placed the inhabitants of Denmark and Norway on an equal footing – they were now all reduced to the status of subjects of the absolute ruler.

<sup>60</sup> For administrative developments in Norway, see K. Myklund, *Skiftet i forvaltningsordningen i Danmark og Norge i tiden fra omkring 1630 og inntil Frederik den tredjes død* (Bergen, Oslo and Tromsø, 1974); K. Myklund and S. Bagge, *Norge i dansketiden* (København, 1987), pp. 140–5; Rian, *Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten*; H. Kongsrud, *Det norske kanslerembetet. Kompetanse, funksjoner, arkivdannelse og overleveringsveier*, Riksarkivaren, Skriftserie 34 (Oslo, 2011).

<sup>61</sup> J. Engberg, *Dansk finanshistorie i 1640'erne* (Aarhus, 1972), p. 193; Rian, *Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten*, pp. 286–98.

## Centre and periphery

ØYSTEIN RIAN

Within the Nordic area, particular regions had such a peripheral position for geographic, linguistic, social and historical reasons that the precise nature of their relationship with the central authorities in the two Scandinavian states is a subject that merits special investigation.

The way in which Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland developed led to their both becoming so-called 'conglomerate states'. The Danish-Norwegian state had long been such a state, while Sweden became one as a consequence of its military expansion from the 1560s to the 1650s.

From 1536 until 1660 Norway was a kingdom under Danish rule without any permanent representative organ for any part of the Norwegian population.<sup>1</sup> Only Denmark had a council of the realm – the king and the Danish council had abolished the Norwegian one in 1536. The Danish council chose the king to rule over both the Danish and the Norwegian kingdoms, but social conditions in Norway were different from those in Denmark: politically, in that the peasantry had a stronger presence in the local administration,<sup>2</sup> and also in so far as the essence of the legal system was still the old Norwegian Land Law. Until 1661 there were separate Norwegian proclamations of allegiance when a new king was elected, and from 1628 to 1660 separate meetings of the Norwegian estates. In 1660 the king dissolved the Danish council too and made himself the sole ruler of the state. From then on the Oldenburg ruler was king over two kingdoms, which in formal terms were equally powerless under the absolute monarchy.

Iceland, the Føroyar Islands and Greenland were parts of the Norwegian kingdom. The connection with Greenland was broken during this period and

1 Ø. Rian, *Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten 1536–1648. Danmark-Norge 1380–1814*, 2 (Oslo, 1997); S. Dyrvik, *Truede tvillingriker 1648–1720. Danmark-Norge 1380–1814*, 3 (Oslo, 1998).

2 S. Imsen, *Norsk bondekommunalisme fra Magnus Lagabøte til Kristian Kvart*, 2: *Lydriketiden* (Trondheim, 1994).



not resumed until the eighteenth century. Iceland had had a special status within the Norwegian kingdom, but was now, like Norway herself, ruled directly from København.<sup>3</sup>

In the south lay Schleswig, a duchy under the Danish crown, united with Holstein, which was a duchy of the Holy Roman Empire. The king in København was duke of Schleswig and Holstein. A diet and a council were dominated by the German-speaking nobility in the two duchies, where circumstances were further complicated by the fact that a branch of the Danish royal family, the house of Holstein-Gottorp, had its own principality side by side with that of the duke/king. From the 1650s onwards, the Gottorp family was allied to the Swedish king.<sup>4</sup>

Finland was an integral part of the Swedish kingdom, a state of affairs underlined in the political sense by the fact that representatives from Finland were elected to the *riksdag* in the same way as those from the provinces that lay to the west of the Gulf of Bothnia. The Finnish coastal areas on the same latitude as Stockholm belonged to the nucleus of the Swedish kingdom, as communications and transport were easier and cheaper by sea than by land.<sup>5</sup>

When Sweden secured the greater part of Estonia in 1561, this happened as a result of an agreement between Erik XIV and the Estonian estates, and the privileges of the Estonian estates were guaranteed. Estonia was kept outside the kingdom. The other Baltic areas which came under Swedish rule were acquired by right of conquest: Ingermanland (Ingria) and the county of Käkisalmi (Kexholm) from Russia in 1617, Livonia from Poland in 1629. The areas won from Russia became almost deserted when the Russian Orthodox population fled eastwards. Even if they were replaced by Finnish peasants, Ingermanland and Käkisalmi were kept outside the kingdom in the same way as Estonia, and this became the pattern for all the Swedish conquests, apart from those provinces taken from Denmark and Norway, which were incorporated into the kingdom of Sweden. The nobility and the towns in Livonia had ancient privileges. These were not explicitly ratified, but continued in force.<sup>6</sup>

The conquests Sweden made in the Holy Roman Empire, which were confirmed by treaty in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, came into a category of their own. These principalities and towns continued to have a place in the

3 B. Thorsteinsson, *Island* (København, 1985).

4 H. V. Gregersen, *Slesvig og Holsten før 1830* (København, 1981).

5 R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993).

6 M. Roberts (ed.), *Sweden's Age of Greatness 1632–1718* (London, 1973).

German political system. The Swedish king functioned in these areas as a German prince caught in a tug-of-war with the local estates and town councils, and acting in co-operation or rivalry with neighbouring princes. These events in Sweden's north German provinces will not be examined more closely in this chapter.

One feature of the growth of the two great Scandinavian powers was the development of two capital cities. København's population grew from barely 20,000 in c. 1600 to around 30,000 in 1660 and around 70,000 in 1710, i.e. it almost quadrupled in the space of about a hundred years. Stockholm grew from barely 10,000 in c. 1600 to almost 55,000 in 1674, six times as many. But a further increase at the end of the seventeenth century was wiped out by the Great Northern War, so that Stockholm had no more inhabitants in 1720 than it had in 1674. København's quadrupling in size came about despite the fact that the population of the Danish-Norwegian state as a whole showed only insignificant growth as a result of territorial losses to Sweden. In the seventeenth century, Stockholm's growth was far more vigorous than population growth in the Swedish kingdom, but it was then adversely affected by the collapse of the Swedish empire. Both capital cities sucked vitality into themselves, especially København. At the beginning of the eighteenth century its share of the population of the Oldenburg monarchy, including Holstein, was almost twice as large as Stockholm's share of the population of the Swedish empire: almost 5 per cent compared to 3 per cent.<sup>7</sup>

Why did København expand more than Stockholm? The institutions of the Oldenburg monarchy were more centralised in the capital than was the case in the Swedish empire. The armed forces weighed heaviest. The Danish-Norwegian navy was stationed in København, with a growing proportion of forcibly conscripted Norwegians. The Danish part of the armed forces was dominated from the 1630s by enlisted professional soldiers, and during the period of absolutism many of them were concentrated in the capital city. After 1613, by contrast, the bulk of the Swedish army was stationed in the provinces, while the homeland forces consisted of a decentralised peasant militia. The headquarters of the navy shifted from Stockholm to Karlskrona. Only a small part of the Swedish armed forces was concentrated around Stockholm. That was consistent with the offensive character of the Swedish military state up to 1660 and with the forward defence of the empire after

7 K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks historie, 3: Tiden 1648–1730*, ed. S. Mørch, *Danmarks historie* (København, 1989); J. Söderberg et al., *A Stagnating Metropolis: The Economy and Demography of Stockholm, 1750–1850* (Cambridge, 1991).

1660. The large military installations in København were partly defensive, with special emphasis on defending the capital, which had to survive a Swedish siege during the 1658–60 war.

The historical background to the respective positions of Norway and Finland in the two Scandinavian states was very different. Norway had been a kingdom in union with Denmark, but became more and more dominated by the Danes, as the king lived in Denmark and ruled with the help of the Danish aristocracy. There was only one state after 1536, but the regime shelved the proposal that Norway should no longer be a kingdom.<sup>8</sup> It strengthened the king's legitimacy to be able to appear as heir to two old dynasties, both the Danish and the Norwegian. Christian IV and Frederik III used their Norwegian royal dignity against the Danish council in an ideological offensive designed to show that Norway had originally been a hereditary kingdom,<sup>9</sup> and this was probably one of the reasons why Frederik III so stubbornly opposed the cession of Norwegian lands in 1658 and 1660, while quickly giving up the eastern Danish provinces. The Norwegian provinces were very much crown lands, whereas the eastern Danish ones were dominated by the nobility. The fact that there were rich newly discovered copper mines in Trøndelag provided additional motivation for holding on to this part of the country, which, after its handover at Roskilde in the winter of 1658, was won back in the Peace Treaty of København in 1660.<sup>10</sup>

Finland was separated from what later became known as 'Sweden proper' by virtue of its situation east of the Gulf of Bothnia, and it was the kingdom's borderland with Russia. The Swedes had frequently conquered larger areas. Finland's borderland position had both an integrative and a disintegrative effect: integrative in that it became important for the Swedish state to mobilise the resources of the community and maintain a high state of readiness; disintegrative in that the population of Finland's forested interior was difficult to control. Among other things, they could flee across the border into Russia.<sup>11</sup>

8 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Norgesparagraffen i Christian III's håndfæstning 1536. Studier over det 16. århundredes fortolkning', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 12:6 (1973), pp. 393–464; Ø. Rian, 'Why Did Norway Survive as a Kingdom?', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 21 (1996), pp. 49–62.

9 H. Kongsrud, *Den kongelige arveretten til Norge 1536–1661. Idé og politisk instrument* (Oslo, 1984).

10 Ø. Rian, 'Foreningen med Danmark', in N. Bjørgø et al., *Norsk utenrikspolitiks historie*, 1 (Oslo 1995), pp. 175–80.

11 N. E. Villstrand, *Anpassning eller protest. Lokalsamhället inför utskrivningarna av fotfolk till den svenska krigsmakten 1620–1679* (Åbo, 1992).

Norway's status as a dependency from 1536 to 1660 also had an integrative and a disintegrative effect. It was integrative in the sense that governmental control over both Denmark and Norway definitely resided in København. Despite the fact that Norwegians and Danes were closely related in every way – ethnically, linguistically and culturally – nevertheless the Norwegians were barred to such an extent from important offices that their position in that regard resembled that of the Irish in relation to England. We can only point to one exception. Out of a pure instinct for self-preservation, the Oldenburg monarchy always had to nominate Norwegian naval officers to high office in the navy.

But the king and the Danish aristocracy carried this discrimination to such lengths that they indirectly emphasised Norway's special position. The Danish nobility's collaboration in keeping the Norwegians out was consistent with the efforts of the great families to secure the best jobs and fiefs for themselves, something that they managed to do, with the help of the council of the realm, up to 1660.

Only crumbs were left over for other Danish noblemen, and in particular for the whole of the Norwegian nobility. The many minor aristocratic families of late medieval Norway were so neglected that most of them gradually came to see no reason to assert their noble titles any longer. Yet the Norwegians were not entirely without spokesmen in the København government as several of the greatest Danish noble families had property and fiefs in Norway, so that they had some knowledge of Norwegian conditions and to some extent advocated wishes and demands which had their source in Norway. But for the most part people in Norway were reduced to furthering their own interests by pressure of opinion, especially with the help of petitions to regional and central authorities.<sup>12</sup>

Paradoxically, the Norwegians were excluded from the administration of their own country more than the Icelanders, who continued to supply recruits to their regional and local civil service.<sup>13</sup> The incidence of Danish county governors' servants was high among local officials in Norway.<sup>14</sup> The difference was probably due to the fact that linguistic considerations favoured the recruitment of Icelanders in Iceland, while Danish had become the written language of Norway. Moreover, service in Norway was a tempting prospect on account of the excellent opportunities it offered for a good income.

12 S. Supphellen, 'Suppliken som institusjon i norsk historie. Framvokster og bruk særleg først på 1700-talet', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 57 (1978), pp. 152–86.

13 H. Gustafsson, *Mellan kung och allmoge. Ämbetsmän, beslutsprocess och inflytande på 1700-talets Island*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studies in History, 33 (Stockholm, 1985).

14 R. Fladby, *Fra lensmannstjener til Kongelig Majestets Foged* (Oslo, 1963).

In this context, the difference between Schleswig and Holstein on the one hand and Norway on the other was enormous. On average during this period the two duchies and Norway had about the same number of inhabitants (Norway's population began to exceed that of the duchies in the seventeenth century). But only half of Schleswig-Holstein was ruled by the king in København. Despite the fact that his Schleswig-Holstein subjects were less numerous than his Norwegian ones, the nobility in Schleswig and Holstein made their presence felt at all levels of his government apparatus. The key position of the Schleswig-Holstein nobility was institutionally secured by virtue of the ducal council and the German chancery, and the court was also a place where they could easily advance themselves. The royal family had been Germanised from the fifteenth century, and the queens regularly came from a German princely house. German nobles and burghers offered their services as royal servants, and during the period of absolutism after 1660 the German contribution to the government was strengthened at the expense of the old Danish nobility. The king felt surer of the Germans' loyalty.

The Swedish political system was more open than that of the Oldenburg monarchy. The Swedish crown was constrained by the constitution, by virtue of the parliamentary system, but it was strengthened by the fact that the Swedish crown carried parliament along with it on a far more ambitious project than the Oldenburg monarch had in its sights: continual warfare and imperial expansionism.<sup>15</sup> This was carried out by mobilising a far larger proportion of the population to become involved making and implementing policy. Sweden had been less developed administratively than the Oldenburg monarchy, but the Vasa monarchy had set in motion a continuous transformation of the administration in order to master the art of waging war. At the outset the Swedish nobility were not as strong as their Danish counterparts, and they were weakened by their involvement in many conflicts. The demand for recruits to the military-administrative elite also shattered the confines of what the nobility represented. The officer corps in particular attracted men from every corner of the kingdom, and the regime found it opportune to ennoble many non-noble officers.<sup>16</sup>

15 Ø. Rian, 'Conclusions', in L. Jespersen (ed.), *A Revolution from Above? The Power State of 16th and 17th Century Scandinavia* (Odense, 2000), pp. 315–42.

16 S. A. Nilsson, *De stora krigens tid. Om Sverige som militärstat och bondesamhälle*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 161 (Uppsala, 1990); G. Arteus, *Till militärstatens förhistoria. Krig, professionalisering och social förändring under Vasa-sönernas regering* (Stockholm, 1986).

The Finnish nobility won more advancement than their Norwegian counterparts and were at least twice as numerous (over one hundred, compared to around fifty families), despite the fact that the proportion of estates owned by the nobility at the end of the sixteenth century was far larger in Norway than in Finland: c. 15 per cent in Norway as against c. 3 per cent in Finland. The Finnish nobles played an important role militarily. What had originally been the main characteristic of the nobility, the performance of military service, continued to be a decisive factor in the Swedish military state, while the management of landed estates remained secondary.<sup>17</sup> In addition to the nobility's 15 per cent, at least another 15 per cent of the land in Norway belonged to other well-off landed proprietors. Apart from the fifty nobles, there were in Norway about ten times as many people who owned at least as much land as the majority of the Finnish nobility. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Norway had more proprietors than Denmark, which had twice the population.<sup>18</sup> If ownership of land had been decisive, the percentage of nobles in Norway would have been correspondingly much greater than in Denmark – but instead it had sunk to one-fifth of the percentage of nobility in Denmark.

In Sweden army officers were recruited from all over the empire. As it happened, the Baltic provinces were over-represented in relation to Sweden west of the Baltic. Up until 1640 Finland was also at least as well represented as the western parts of the kingdom, but by the end of the period the Finns were under-represented, especially in relation to the people of the Baltic countries, but also to the Swedes.<sup>19</sup> The army was a consistent recruiting base for the nobility, and many aristocratic officers acquired large estates. Even if the law distinguished sharply between the kingdom and the provinces, the crown's policy of granting fiefs had an integrating effect on the elite, in so far as Swedish noblemen obtained large fiefs in the Baltic and vice versa. Finland and Finnish nobles were also involved in these transactions.<sup>20</sup>

Donations of land became a mainstay of the Swedish crown's fiscal policy. It meant that crown and taxable properties were permanently granted in fief.

17 E. Anthoni, *Finlands medeltida frälse och 1500-tals adel* (Helsinki, 1970); E. Anthoni, *Konflikten mellan hertig Carl och Finland. Avvecklingen och försoningen* (Helsinki, 1937).

18 T. Weidling, unpubl. ms., Historisk institutt, University of Oslo (1995).

19 S. Carlsson, 'Finlands ämbetsmän och Sveriges rike under 1700-talet', in S. Carlsson, *Grupper och gestalter. Historiska studier om individ och kollektiv i nordisk och europeisk historia* (Lund, 1964).

20 M. Jokipii, 'Feodalismen i Finland under nya tiden', in N. E. Villstrand (ed.), *Kustbygd och centralmakt 1560–1721* (Helsingfors, 1987); E. Jutikkala, *Bonden – Adelsmannen – Kronan. Godspolitik och jordegendomsförhållanden i Norden 1550–1750* (København, 1979).

If the Baltic provinces were particularly affected, this was owing to the fact that the Swedes at the time of their conquest had confiscated large noble estates there. The Baltic estates became the most valuable donations, as Swedish noblemen there were enabled to take over the whole Baltic-German system of oppression which had squeezed the last drops out of the local serf farmers.<sup>21</sup>

In Finland donations signified a complete revolution in conditions of ownership in that the nobility's share of landed property increased twenty-fold from 3 to 60 per cent in the middle of the seventeenth century. This has traditionally been seen as a negative development for the peasants in that it has been claimed that the nobles exploited them. More recent historians have asserted that donations were of advantage to the peasants in so far as the privileges of the nobility also gave the nobility's peasants protection against the full weight of the state's demands for higher taxes and more military manpower. This protection disappeared when donations were confiscated by the crown in the 'reduction' (*reduktion*) of the 1680s. In Finland, the nobility's share of landed property sank from 60 to 5 per cent.<sup>22</sup>

In Norway, and even more in Finland, the administrative districts were larger than in Denmark and Sweden proper. This meant that officials had greater problems in controlling the population. In Norway each judge (*sorenskriver*) had to travel around to many local assizes, which comprised smaller districts than rural assizes in the rest of Scandinavia. In this way, his ties to the local community were loosened, something which strengthened his bond with the authorities, but it was difficult to exercise routine control over the common people in each assize district. In each of the larger Danish and Swedish rural assizes there was a resident judge, and at the same time there was a larger contingent of people from the upper classes than was the case in the smaller Norwegian local assizes. The distance between the official and the ordinary people became greater in Norway than in Denmark and Sweden. To some extent this meant that the officials had greater authority, but it was also more common in Norway than in Denmark or Sweden for the peasants to disobey official regulations.<sup>23</sup>

21 S.-E. Åström, 'The Swedish Economy and Sweden's Role as a Great Power 1632–1697', in M. Roberts (ed.), *Sweden's Age of Greatness* (London, 1973), pp. 58–101.

22 Jokipii, 'Feodalismen i Finland under nya tiden'; M. Revera, '1600-talsbönderna och deras herrar. Om jordägande, skatter och samhällsförändring i ljuset av nyare forskning', in G. Inger (ed.), *Den svenska juridikens uppblomstring i 1600-tals politiska, kulturella och religiösa stormaktssamhälle* (Stockholm, 1984).

23 S. Supphellen (ed.), *Administration in Scandinavia in the Eighteenth Century* (Oslo, 1985).

The Finnish administrative districts were much larger again than the Norwegian ones. The Finnish counties were about four times bigger in terms of geographical extent and population, and the Finnish bailiwicks and local jurisdictions were twice the size of those in Norway. The large Finnish-speaking majority had problems in getting to know what had been decreed, as the government's decrees were only issued in Swedish, so that it became the task of priests to translate them into Finnish when announcing the laws from the pulpit. If the Swedish system was able to function effectively, this was due in large part to pressure from the military, channelled through the local assemblies where the peasants were forced to share responsibility for levying taxes and enlisting men for the army.<sup>24</sup> This system, the so-called *indelningsverk*, meant that the military, who were supposed to receive the contributions of the peasantry, had a personal interest in extorting them. In Denmark-Norway after 1660, the military were used as a means of forcing those liable for taxation to fork out their arrears.<sup>25</sup>

Governments could achieve a better grip on the reins of power by appointing governors. From 1572 the Oldenburg king had a governor-general in Norway. The office was permanently occupied from 1588 to 1739. During the Great Northern War the governor was assisted by a council, *slottsloven på Akershus*, consisting of one military and four civil members. There was some variation from time to time in the nature of the important functions the governor was required to fulfil. Both before and after 1660 he was a Danish aristocrat with close ties to the crown, and in periods when the government demanded a large degree of activity and effectiveness in the running of Norway, they relied on the office of the governor to achieve this. They were successful between 1625 to 1680, when the governor-general gave the lead in organising the Norwegian military forces and in stepping up taxation in Norway.<sup>26</sup>

A modern army was established very late in Norway. The ruler of the united kingdoms had long been interested in disarming the Norwegians in order to reduce the danger of Norwegian separatism. It became too risky to maintain this situation in the shadow of the Swedish military state. A new

24 Villstrand, *Anpassning eller protest*, pp. 49–218.

25 Ø. Rian, *Bratsberg på 1600-tallet. Stat og samfunn i symbiose og konflikt* (Oslo, 1997), pp. 206–16.

26 Ø. Rian, *Jens Juels stattholderskap 1618–1629* (Oslo, 1975); R. L. Låg, 'Statsvekst og stattholder. Stattholderembetets funksjoner og utvikling i første halvdel av 1600-tallet, med vekt på perioden 1629–42', unpubl. PhD thesis (Oslo, 1997); O. H. Gjeruldsen, 'Niels Trolles stattholderskap 1656–61', unpubl. PhD thesis (Oslo, 1997).



Norwegian military apparatus was organised in the 1640s and 1650s, under the king's supreme authority. Individual Norwegian military detachments were despatched to Denmark, mostly on permanent assignment to a growing section of the king's guard, as Norway offered the best and cheapest access to strong young men. But the army in Norway had to be organised as a separate entity under the high command in Christiania. As part and parcel of the fact that the Oldenburg state waged a less ambitious foreign policy than Sweden, the Norwegian army spent more time at home than the Swedish-Finnish one did. Norwegians were used during wartime in the sporadic battles that flared up in the border areas between Norway and Sweden. At the beginning the great majority of the senior officers were foreign, especially Danish and German. But the geographical distance from Denmark led to the development of the army's own Norwegian officer corps, highlighting the distinctive Norwegian element in the Oldenburg monarchy.<sup>27</sup>

While the administration of Norway as an entity in its own right reached a low ebb in the sixteenth century, Finland had to some extent a semi-autonomous status after Gustav Vasa made southern Finland into a duchy for one of his sons, and there were periods when a governor-general ruled the land in co-operation with the Finnish nobility. The Finns had supported King Sigismund, who suffered defeat at the hands of Duke Karl (later Karl IX) in the 1590s, and many Finnish nobles were severely punished.<sup>28</sup> In the following centuries the experiment of dividing the Swedish kingdom up into semi-autonomous principalities was not repeated. Finland came to be governed to a greater degree than previously from Stockholm, in line with the rest of Sweden, and the special features that characterised the administration of Finland became insignificant in the Age of Greatness. Finland continued to be ruled at country level, supplemented at times by a governor-general with supreme power, but this came to be the exception, something which may simply signify that the governance of Finland was not particularly problematic at that time.

As a consequence of the fact that the Swedish army was chiefly employed on garrison duties and in waging war beyond the borders of the kingdom, there was no development of a Finnish army as a peculiarly Finnish institution like the Norwegian army. The government in Stockholm was not bothered about Finnish separatism. This had a lot to do with the fact that

27 Ø. Rian, 'State and Society in Seventeenth-century Norway', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10 (Oslo, 1985), pp. 350–6.

28 Anthoni, *Konflikten mellan hertig Carl och Finland*, pp. 1–291.

those who participated in national and regional government and politics from the Finnish side often saw themselves as Swedes, while the Norwegian sense of identity was more of a serious threat as an alternative to Danishness. Those people who managed to succeed in Finnish society were Swedish-speaking or bilingual in Swedish and Finnish. Unfortunately, many of the civil servants sent from Sweden did not understand the language of the majority and this caused continuous troubles. Also peasant representatives in the *riksdag* only spoke and understood Finnish. Parliamentary representation from Finland was in any case proportionally less than from the western part of the Swedish kingdom. This was connected to the fact that the Finnish electoral districts were larger and fewer in number.<sup>29</sup>

Swedish lack of concern about Finnish separatism was manifested by the establishment of two Finnish institutions at Turku (Åbo): the high court (1623), which was the supreme court for Finland, and the academy (1640), which was the second university in Sweden. The third was Lund (1668), after the conquest of Skåne (Scania) from Denmark. In addition, a university was set up in Tartu (Dorpat) in 1632. The only right of appeal from the high court in Turku was direct to the king, in the same way as from the three other high courts which were set up in the Swedish empire: one in Stockholm, one in Jönköping and one in Tartu. Sweden proper, in other words, was divided into two higher legal jurisdictions (Stockholm and Jönköping). Even if these institutions became important for the Finns, it cannot be said that Finland had received any special treatment. As far as the university was concerned, it was nevertheless the case that many young people from the western part of the kingdom studied at Turku.<sup>30</sup>

Centralisation went much further in the Oldenburg monarchy, partly because of fear of Norwegian separatism. As a civil counterpart to the military concentration of power in København, the university there remained the only one in Denmark-Norway. The university at Kiel which was founded in 1665 was established by the duke of Holstein-Gottorp to prevent his subjects

29 N. E. Villstrand, 'Stormaktstiden 1617–1721', in R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), pp. 190–5; G. Rystad, 'Stormaktstidens riksdag (1611–1718)', in H. Schück *et al.* (eds.), *Riksdagen genom tiderna* (Stockholm, 1985). For the underrated role of Finnish see E. I. Kouri, 'Die politisch-administrative Rolle der finnischen Sprache im Schwedischen und Russischen Reich', in *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 53 (2005); E. I. Kouri, 'Die Stellung des Finnischen als Verwaltungssprache bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in T. Niclas and M. Schnettger (eds.), *Politik und Sprache im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Mainz, 2007).

30 M. Klinge *et al.*, *Kungliga akademien i Åbo 1640–1808. Helsingfors universitet 1640–1990* (Helsinki, 1988); M. Klinge, *A European University: University of Helsinki 1640–2010* (Helsinki, 2010); Roberts (ed.), *Sweden's Age of Greatness 1632–1718*, pp. 1–57.

taking themselves off to København. When in 1661 the citizenry of Norway asked for a university to be set up to facilitate opportunities for higher education and scholarship, the king turned them down. Even if a growing number of Norwegians studied in København, the implication for Norway was that the threshold for accessing the most advanced level of education was higher there than in most other countries, higher even than in Finland, despite the linguistic handicap of Finnish-speakers. Moreover, the centralisation of culture in København meant that the city became completely dominant in terms of the printing and publishing of books and other writings, and these were subject to censorship by the university.<sup>31</sup>

The development of the legal system in Norway was ambiguous. In contrast to Finland, Norway had its own code of laws from the time when it was an independent kingdom. But the trend in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was increasingly in the direction of laws being granted validity for both Denmark and Norway. Yet there was a kernel of Norwegian laws which formed the foundation for important social relations, especially in the countryside. They were retained, something which contributed to the fact that even the absolutist government distinguished between Danish and Norwegian law, when in 1683 and 1687 it published a Danish and a Norwegian law-book, which moreover contained many harmonised decrees.

Before 1660 it was important both for the king and for the Danish council to mark their authority over Norway, and it was possible to appeal to the king and the council as supreme judges. As a rule, however, it was neither practical nor reasonable to refer Norwegian court cases to Denmark. It was difficult enough to find a place in Norway where legal appeals from all over the country could be heard. Accordingly commissioners appointed by the king at three-year intervals travelled between different localities in Norway where they sat in judgement (*satt retterting*) in the so-called *herredag*, i.e. acted as the highest court in Norway. The commissioners were members of the Danish council and a couple of officials based in Norway: the chancellor of the Norwegian kingdom and the governor.

In 1666 a permanent court of appeal for the whole of Norway – the *overhoffrett* – was set up in Christiania, with the right of appeal in more serious cases to the supreme court in København. The *overhoffrett* thus had a weaker standing as a supreme court than the Swedish high courts. Moreover, there was no initiative to develop an environment for juridical scholarship

31 J. P. Collett, *Historien om Universitetet i Oslo* (Oslo, 1999), pp. 11–32; A. B. Amundsen and H. Laugerud, *Norsk fritenkerhistorie 1500–1850* (Oslo, 2001).

like that in Turku (Åbo), so that young men in Christiania could not combine practical learning with theoretical university studies.

Powerfully incompatible tendencies asserted themselves in the economic development of Europe. International trade grew from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. On the other hand, wars were constantly becoming more large-scale, and in many countries taxes and restrictions were an increasing burden on the economy. The Swedish empire held its own in terms of economic warfare as Sweden was one of the military conquerors of the period. This was advantageous to, among others, the large trading towns of the Swedish Baltic area.<sup>32</sup>

Finland also benefited, in that exports of tar were constantly increasing. The Swedish government's urban policy was ambiguous in Finland's case. On the one hand, a succession of new Finnish towns was set up so that the number increased from eight to twenty-five. But very few were granted the right to engage in foreign trade, and in any case tar exports were placed under the aegis of a Stockholm-based monopoly, the Norrland tar company. This contributed to the stabilisation of prices by regulating production, something which was advantageous to the Finnish peasants as producers, but Finnish merchants came to play a secondary role during this period. Tar bought up by local merchants in Finnish settlements had to be entrusted to the company in staple towns. Direct foreign trade with Finland was overwhelmingly carried by Dutch vessels. It was unusual for Finnish citizens to have ships of their own making voyages overseas.<sup>33</sup>

In the Oldenburg monarchy, Schleswig-Holstein, like Denmark, had a large middle class involved in trade. Exports were almost exclusively confined to agricultural products, with good trading conditions which only experienced a consistent decline in the 1640s.

In Iceland there was no domestic middle class subsisting on trade. The large farmers, who also recruited the local officials, received support from the king to hinder the growth of an indigenous merchant class. Traditionally,

32 G. Nováky, 'Handeln, produktionen och staten i Östersjöområdet i 1500–1700', in K. Tønnesson (ed.), *Det 22. nordiske historikermøte. Rapport I: Norden og Baltikum* (Oslo, 1994); J. Ahvenainen, 'Östersjöhandelns roll i den internationella handeln på 1500- och 1600-talen', in K. Tønnesson (ed.), *Det 22. nordiske historikermøte. Rapport I: Norden og Baltikum* (Oslo, 1994); D. Lindström, 'Statsbildningsprocesser och handel i Östersjöområdet ca. 1500–1700', in K. Tønnesson (ed.), *Det 22. nordiske historikermøte. Rapport I: Norden og Baltikum* (Oslo, 1994), pp. 69–110.

33 A. Hallberg, *Tjärlexport och tjärhandelskompanier under stormaktstiden*, Historiska och litteraturhistoriska studier, 34 (Helsingfors, 1959); S.-E. Åström, *From Tar to Timber: Studies in Northeast European Forest Exploitation and Foreign Trade 1660–1860* (Helsinki, 1988).

the peasants sold fish direct to foreign skippers. As early as the sixteenth century, the government had begun to obstruct foreigners in order to clear the way for Danish merchants, who were granted sole rights in 1602. From 1620 the whole of Iceland's trade was granted as a monopoly to a company consisting of burghers of København, and this monopoly was kept in force until 1786. Its strong grip on the Icelandic economy became a new factor in København's advance as a metropolis. Moreover, the monopoly included the Føroyar, and the fact that Iceland and the Føroyar no longer had trading contacts with Norway involved a dismemberment of the old Norwegian state – to the disadvantage of Icelanders, Føroyar Islanders and Norwegians. The monopoly became a source of riches for merchants in København, while Iceland slid into a lengthy period of stagnation.<sup>34</sup>

Back in Norway itself, things developed differently – the government supported the middle classes in the towns in their efforts to take over the growing export trade, and the nobility and the middle rank of officials came to play a vital role in the organisation of Norwegian foreign trade. The nobility had set this development in motion in the sixteenth century. Now they were overtaken by their servants, i.e. men who came to occupy public positions as bailiffs, customs officials and mayors. They combined their official duties with the cultivation of trade on a large scale, and from the mid-seventeenth century they formed the nucleus of a new upper middle class which in the first instance combined service to the state with self-seeking, especially in so far as they advanced the constantly increasing taxes for the peasants who delivered goods to them and saw to it that the equally rapidly increasing tolls were paid. In this way, the process whereby merchants domiciled in Norway took over an ever larger share of foreign trade was accelerated.<sup>35</sup>

Earlier, foreign merchants and skippers had bought a large part of their goods direct from the peasants. It continued to be the case that foreigners, first and foremost the Dutch, carried the majority of exports in their ships. But many smaller Norwegian ships took part in the trade before 1660, and from the 1660s onwards Norwegian tonnage increased considerably, until Frederik IV precipitated Denmark-Norway into the Great Northern War in 1709.<sup>36</sup>

34 G. Gunnarsson, *Monopoly, Trade and Economic Stagnation: Studies in the Foreign Trade of Iceland* (Lund, 1983); Thorsteinsson, *Island*, pp. 154, 163–5, 180f.

35 T. Weidling, *Adelsøkonomi i Norge fra reformasjonstiden og fram mot 1660*, *Acta humaniora*, 43 (Oslo, 1998); Rian, *Den nye begynnelsen 1520–1660*; A. Lillehammer (ed.), *Aschehougs Norgeshistorie*, 5 (Oslo, 1995).

36 S. Dyrvik et al. (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie 1500–1970*, 1: 1500–1850 (Bergen, 1979), pp. 101–9.

At the very beginning of the period of absolutism, the new Norwegian elite had, paradoxically enough, begun to be more assertive in its relationship with the state. Prior to 1660 the contribution made by immigrants had been a large one – the Danes in particular had enjoyed success as clients of Danish aristocrats. But they quickly put down roots in the Norwegian towns, by continual intermarriage with other elite groups. Their wives were often Norwegian. The mercantile-bureaucratic elite were the regime's indispensable supporters in Norway. They obtained for themselves major privileges in terms of production and trade, acquired a liberal share of those crown properties which were offered for sale after 1660, avoided as best they could the sharp end of the state's policies on taxation and tolls and bombarded the regime with one petition after another about rights and dispensations.<sup>37</sup>

A similar development can be observed in the officer corps. The new Norwegian army had made a sterling contribution in the wars against Karl X. It also functioned well in the Skåne (Scanian) War of 1675–9, but two factors combined to blunt its contribution to the Great Northern War. The government had economised on military expenditure in Norway at the same time as the officers had devoted so much attention to their civil responsibilities as landowners and merchants that both preparations for war and the conduct of the actual military operations were carried on with little zeal. This gives an early glimpse of the growing problems the regime was to have throughout the eighteenth century in trying to assure itself of the loyalty of the Norwegian elite.<sup>38</sup>

Urban development in Norway was less organised than in Finland. In Norway, new towns were founded on the initiative of and under pressure from merchants and officials in those places which aspired to town status. Active foreign trade was a more important factor in the development of towns in Norway than in Finland. København was too remote to be able to grab the Norwegian export trade to itself, but the capital's trading companies and makers of luxury goods nevertheless managed to sell their niche products to the growing Norwegian market. Much of the remaining trade between Denmark and Norway bypassed the voracious capital city. Merchants in the

37 H.-J. Jørgensen, *Det norske tollvesens historie, 1: Fra middelalderen til 1814* (Oslo, 1969), pp. 107–64; Rian, *Bratsberg på 1600-tallet*, pp. 179–440; O. Teige, 'En torn i øyet. Det store tollsviket og Inkvisisjonskommisjonen i Christiania 1705–09', unpubl. PhD thesis, University of Oslo (2001).

38 J. Schiøtz, *Elleveårskrigenes militære historie. Avslutningen av Den Store Nordiske Krig* (Oslo, 1936); H. Sognli, 'Den norske hærledelsens opptreden i krisesituasjoner høsten 1709', unpubl. PhD thesis (Oslo, 2000).

Danish provinces, who were being pushed aside more and more by the more favoured merchants in København, found salvation in increased trade with Norway, in particular by selling their corn there and buying timber and iron goods in return. The government took care to favour Danish corn sales to Norway by absolving them from the tolls which were exacted on corn from other countries. Together with the sale of luxury goods from København this gave Denmark a large surplus on trade with Norway, while Norway had an even larger surplus on trade with foreign lands outside the Oldenburg monarchy. The sum total of tax revenues transferred from Norway, of Danish noblemen's income from their offices and estates in Norway and from fees, bribes and travel – and maintenance payments for Norwegians in the capital – gave Denmark a large part of the Norwegian payment surplus,<sup>39</sup> something which led to Norway, which had such a rich trade, suffering from a chronic lack of liquidity.

In spite of the sizeable draining away of the Norwegian trade surplus to Denmark and in spite of the fact that three of Norway's original ten towns lay in Bohuslän, which Sweden took by force in 1658, the number of towns in Norway rose to twenty-five, the same number as in Finland. In the mid-eighteenth century more than three times as many people lived in the Norwegian towns as in the Finnish ones. In 1720 the population of the Norwegian towns was probably five times as big, around 50,000 compared to 10,000.

Which was better – to be a province in a state which was on the downward slope or in a victorious military state?

The position of the Baltic nobility was partly strong, partly insecure. Their strength was that the nobles, as landlords, commanded as much authority over their tenants as they could wish for. Their insecurity consisted in the fact that the Livonian magnates had not had their privileges confirmed when the province was conquered in the 1620s.

We can distinguish between two schools of thought both in Sweden and in the Baltic provinces regarding how these provinces should be governed.<sup>40</sup> Around 1630, some Swedish officials advocated full incorporation into Sweden, to the extent that Swedish laws and Swedish institutions were to

39 Ø. Rian, *Vestfold's historie. Grevskapstiden 1671–1821* (Tønsberg, 1980), pp. 1–38, 179–99; Ø. Rian, 'Taxation through Trade in Seventeenth-century Norway', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 21 (1996), pp. 309–14; I. Bull, *Thomas Angell, kapitalisten som ble byens velgjører* (Trondheim, 1992).

40 S. Lundkvist, 'The Experience of Empire', in M. Roberts (ed.), *Sweden's Age of Greatness 1632–1718* (London, 1973), pp. 20–57.

be fully introduced into the Baltic provinces. This would entail the considerable privileges of the Baltic nobility being reduced to the Swedish level.

Another school favoured keeping the provinces outside the kingdom. The fact that many among the Baltic nobility felt that this, in spite of everything, would be best, was no doubt bound up with their fear of losing their special status altogether. But great uncertainty about this prevailed, and many also thought they would be able to assert themselves best within the kingdom, and in the 1640s the Livonian nobility asked to be incorporated into Sweden in order to have their privileges confirmed.

This request was turned down by the government in Stockholm. The government's attitude was partly connected to the fact that leading Swedes, led by Axel Oxenstierna, had acquired large estates in the Baltic provinces. They did not want to incorporate these provinces for fear of losing some of the power they enjoyed as Baltic landowners. Oxenstierna spelled out the other reason himself when he justified the refusal of the Baltic nobles' request for incorporation: he feared that the Baltic nobles would reduce his freedom of action as leader of the government if they were allowed into the *riksdag*.

Those Baltic nobles who feared that their privileges would be reduced if they stayed outside the kingdom found at first that their fears were unjustified. After all, leading Swedes were interested in those privileges themselves. Moreover, the Swedes were not in such a strong position that they could afford to offend the Baltic nobility. This could have affected morale in the army, where many of the officers were from the Baltic provinces, and could give other powers opportunities for recruiting followers in the Swedish Baltic provinces. The only peasants who managed to avoid harsh Baltic serfdom were the Swedish peasants who were imported to coastal areas of Estonia.

The Baltic towns also retained their privileges. The semi-autonomous status previously enjoyed by the old Hansa towns was only slightly weakened under Swedish rule, which gave them the advantage of strong military protection in an empire which assured them continued trade.

Karl XI's absolutist rule broke with the cautious policies previously pursued in the Baltic provinces. Large financial contributions were exacted, Swedish laws and language and Swedish officials were brought in, something which gave rise to sharp protests from the nobility in Livonia, though the Estonian nobility resigned itself to it. The indignation of the Livonian nobility became a factor in Sweden's eventual decline as a Great Power, mainly because of Johann Reinhold Patkull's contribution to mobilising a confederation of princes against Karl XII.



There has been some discussion about the degree to which the peripheral areas were of genuine benefit to the two Scandinavian states. It has been claimed that control of the German towns and principalities did not answer Sweden's strategic needs, as she had little to gain from becoming involved in German politics and attracting the rivalry of other German princes. The threat which the Oldenburg monarchy felt exposed to from the Swedes in northern Germany ensured their continuing enmity. Sweden, however, gained the advantage of easier access to soldiers in the Holy Roman Empire recruitment market.

The manner in which the state's accounts were kept has given rise to some confusion regarding the profit gained from distant lands and far-flung provinces. Entries in the accounts of the organs of central government show only those sums which were transferred after local expenses had been covered. This has given the impression that successive governments gained no benefit from expenditure in the provinces. Moreover, not all forms of income lend themselves to calculation in monetary terms. In both states, covering military expenses was the main consideration, but it was done in different ways, and to some extent also with variations within the same state system.

The purely military significance of the provinces in the Swedish empire was that wars could be waged far from the heart of the kingdom – and preferably they should pay for themselves. Such was also the case with military preparedness. The large contingents of troops gathered in the Baltic provinces and in the Holy Roman Empire were financed by the taxes and duties which were levied in these provinces. The same was true of Sweden itself, where different forms of income were earmarked for particular military outgoings. The system reached its ultimate refinement with the *indelningsverk* of the 1680s. Another factor also came into play. Donations had reduced the income of the state, not least in the outer districts, but this was how the state financed its outgoings, which had run up a deficit. However, this disturbing factor was greatly reduced after the *reduktion*. It then became abundantly clear that the income from the estates which the crown commandeered in Livonia was immense.

Estimates of the Swedish state's total income in 1699 show that it had an income of 6.5 million silver *daler*. Sixty-three per cent of this is traceable back to the Swedish kingdom, and 37 per cent to the external provinces. These provinces thus accounted for 50 per cent more than their proportion of the population was liable for, as a result of the high taxation in Livonia and the German provinces, while taxation in Estonia was lower than the size of

the population should have made it liable for. Within the kingdom itself, the income from Sweden proper was six times greater than from Finland, while Sweden had four times the population of Finland. The disparity simply mirrors the different economic levels of the two countries, the 1690s being years of particularly hard crisis for Finland.<sup>41</sup>

If we now look at the Oldenburg monarchy, Iceland was a special case, in that the state's direct income from here consisted of the dues paid by the merchants in København who had the monopoly on trade – *c.* 10,000 *rigsdaler* at the end of the seventeenth century, something which in itself was not much for a population of *c.* 50,000. Another consideration was that the monopoly system was of little advantage to the Icelanders.

In the sixteenth century the Danes had paid a good deal more tax per head than the Norwegians, but from the 1590s onwards taxation in the two kingdoms was co-ordinated, at the same time as fiscal dues in Norway were ratcheted up much more than in Denmark. In the 1630s the state's income per head of population, as entered in the accounts, had reached the same level in Norway as in Denmark, and during the Danish crisis in the 1640s and 1650s it was about 50 per cent higher in Norway. This changed again after 1660. In the period 1676–99 the state collected *c.* 3 million *rigsdaler* in officially entered income, 47 per cent from Denmark, 23 per cent from Norway, 19 per cent from the royal portion of Schleswig and Holstein and 11 per cent from miscellaneous income, first and foremost the Sound Dues.<sup>42</sup> Denmark had *c.* 30 per cent more inhabitants than Norway, which meant that *c.* 50 per cent more in taxes and duties was gathered per inhabitant in Denmark than in Norway. The level of taxation and duties in Schleswig-Holstein, where scarcely half of the Schleswig-Holsteiners paid tax to the king, was about the same as in Denmark. The other half paid their taxes to the duke of Holstein-Gottorp. The comparison between Denmark and Norway broke down. The armies of the two kingdoms were organised and financed differently. In Denmark the army consisted of enlisted troops who were wholly paid for out of the state exchequer. In Norway it was a question of an essentially peasant militia which put the common people to a good deal of extra trouble, in that the soldiers were drawn out of the workforce, not only

41 Lundkvist, 'The Experience of Empire', p. 23; S.-E. Åström, 'The Role of Finland in the Swedish National and War Economies during Sweden's Period as a Great Power', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 11 (1986), pp. 135–47; Åström, 'The Swedish Economy and Sweden's Role as a Great Power 1632–1697', pp. 58–101.

42 L. Jespersen, 'The *Machtstaat* in Seventeenth-century Denmark', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 10 (1985), pp. 271–304.

in wartime, but also for training and work on fortresses. Moreover, those peasants who subsidised them had to fork out supplementary payments in addition to what was paid for out of the public purse.

Another factor which also played a part was that money not used in Norway was transferred to the central exchequer in København and spent there. The same was true of all districts outside the capital in both states, including the Swedish and Danish heartlands. This meant large transfers of money to the capital. One can profitably discuss the net tax burden which applied in different regions and provinces. It has been calculated that, in the years 1600–48, c. 6 million *rigsdaler* of official state revenue were transferred from Norway to Denmark. This can be compared with the Älvsborg ransom, i.e. 1 million *rigsdaler* which Sweden had to pay to Christian IV in the years 1613–19. Sweden had three to four times the population of Norway, so in proportion to population the monetary transfers from Norway to Denmark meant an annual exaction per inhabitant which was two or three times as large as the ‘Älvsborg ransom’.<sup>43</sup>

The great advantage which the regime gained from Norway was that toll and tax income was derived from an easily taxable export trade – as long as the elite of merchants and officials co-operated to milk the exports. This also afforded access to supplies of capital from the Norwegian exporters’ customers in London and Amsterdam, as transfers of money from Norwegian regional exchequers were gradually replaced by bills of exchange drawn on London and Amsterdam.<sup>44</sup>

Both Finland and Norway were drawn into the export trade, but the Norwegian exporters were independent, while the Finnish merchants were subordinated to the tar company in Stockholm. Moreover, the Norwegian export trade was less vulnerable in time of war, which disturbed shipping in the Baltic more than exports from Norway. The Dutch and the British were the dominant importers from Norway, and at the same time their navies exercised control of the North Sea. Accordingly, even during the wars in which Norway was most affected by land, shipping to Norway from the western powers continued almost undisturbed. During the final phase of the Great Northern War, the Norwegian timber export trade set new records, something which made it possible for the Norwegians to pay large additional sums of money to finance the regime’s struggle against Karl XII. Viewed from

<sup>43</sup> Rian, *Den aristokratiske fyrstestaten*, pp. 290–2.

<sup>44</sup> G. Sandvik, *Det gamle veldet. Norske finanser 1760–79* (Oslo, 1975), pp. 77–116; Rian, *Bratsberg på 1600-tallet*.

this perspective, the Norwegian export trade was at least as important a factor in the conduct of the war as the contribution of the Norwegian military.

Irritation at such large economic resources being transferred to a far-off capital is patent in the behaviour increasingly displayed by the Norwegian elite after 1660. The first time they betrayed the state in earnest was when, in collusion with the peasants, they failed to carry through a thoroughgoing redistribution of the rent-rolls, similar to what had been done in Denmark in the years after 1660. As a result, it was not possible to screw taxation up to the same high level in Norway as in Denmark. In addition, the Norwegians also began to accustom themselves to working with the customs officers to declare lower quantities of goods than during the period of escalation of tolls up until the 1680s. These instances of sabotage were a forewarning of the increasing problems which the Oldenburg monarchy would have with taxing the Norwegians in the last two generations before 1814.<sup>45</sup>

Another factor of relevance to the centre–periphery discussion is how the division of property between the elite and the ordinary people developed. To begin with, it was most unequal in Denmark. The enormous growth in Sweden’s power contributed to the fact that the distance between top and bottom also became immense in Sweden, including Finland, but in this case, the change was to some extent financed by an exploited population in foreign lands where Sweden was waging war. All the same, the peasants in the Swedish kingdom maintained a far more independent position than in Denmark. In Denmark the growth in state power came about in such a way that the landowners were used to squeeze more and more out of the peasants, at the same time as the landowners were using their power to strengthen themselves in rhythm with the strengthening of the state. In Norway the peasants started out more or less as free as the Swedish and Finnish peasants, but both in Norway and in Sweden-Finland they became more subject to the state and the elite. The new Norwegian elite did not become so rich or quite so powerful as their Swedish-Finnish counterparts but, like them, they distanced themselves from the ordinary people in terms of prosperity and influence. Despite the participation of the Swedish-Finnish peasants in the *riksdag*, it was nevertheless the Norwegian peasants who did best out of the seventeenth century.

Perhaps it was precisely because the Norwegians were not dragged along into a binding decision-making process that they were able to maintain that

45 Ø. Rian, ‘Den frie og stolte norske bonden. Myter og realiteter’, in H. Winge (ed.), *Lokalsamfunn og øvrighet i Norden ca. 1550–1750* (Oslo, 1992), pp. 117–59.

distance from authority which was denied the common people of Sweden-Finland. The Norwegian peasants consistently showed themselves to be a genuine opposition, with their attempts to avoid the obligations which the authorities imposed on them, and by complaining and protesting. The same pressure of opinion was also found among the Swedish-Finnish peasant population, and it varied throughout Scandinavia from district to district depending on how independent the peasants were. The effect which the pressure of their opinion had was to moderate the demands placed on them by the authorities, but these demands were to be less disastrous in Norway than in the other Scandinavian countries, less oppressive than in Denmark and less life-threatening than in the Swedish military state.

What consequences with regard to population can be deduced from these political developments?

The establishment of the two Scandinavian Great Powers revolved first and foremost around a major process of militarisation. This had already reached a very high level by the 1620s in the Swedish kingdom,<sup>46</sup> while Denmark-Norway still had insignificant land forces and did not reach the Swedish level until the period 1680–1720 as regards numbers of military personnel in relation to the population. But nevertheless there was a decisive difference in that soldiers in the Swedish empire were so often involved in protracted wars, whereas Denmark-Norway only experienced more short-lived conflicts.

The difference between the structure of the army in Denmark and Norway meant that Denmark recruited foreign mercenaries, while the Norwegians had to raise their troops among their own countrymen. As far as the navy was concerned, the majority of sailors were called up or recruited from Norway, whose people were more accustomed to the sea than the Danes were. This led to an enforced flood of young men from Norway into København. A larger proportion of the male population of Norway than of Denmark was killed in military service.<sup>47</sup> This was compensated for by the uncommonly large losses sustained by the whole population of Denmark during repeated occupations in the period 1627–60.

We have stated that the two capital cities grew much more quickly than the kingdoms they ruled over, and that Stockholm's growth came about in a

46 G. Lind, 'Den dansk-norske hær i det 18. århundrede. Optimering, modernisering og professionalisering', *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 86 (1986), pp. 26–73.

47 A. Døssland, *Med lengt mot havet. Fylkeshistorie for Møre og Romsdal*, 1: 1671–1835 (Oslo, 1990), pp. 172–81; A. Døssland, *Strilesoga. Nord- og Midthordland gjennom tidene*, 3: *Frå 1650 til 1800* (Bergen, 1998), pp. 85–7.

particularly powerful spurt during the establishment of the Swedish empire, while København's growth was a particular consequence of the absolutist regime. It is difficult to compare population development in the Scandinavian states because of the territorial losses suffered by Denmark and Norway. From the beginning of the seventeenth century until c. 1720 the population in the provinces of Denmark and Norway which remained intact grew by up to 30 per cent and around 80 per cent respectively. In the original geographical area of Sweden, the population increased during the same period by c. 20 per cent. Even when compared with the entire original area of Norway (including Jämtland, Härjedalen and Bohuslän), the rest of the country had in 1720, it is estimated, 60 per cent more inhabitants than in the early part of the seventeenth century: the same rate of growth as Sweden proper achieved thanks to a population increase in the conquered provinces of over a quarter of the original population. The only area of weak population growth was the eastern part of the Swedish kingdom: the number of Finland's inhabitants in 1720 was no bigger than at the beginning of the seventeenth century.<sup>48</sup>

It is surprising that the Swedish kingdom did not profit more from its time as a Great Power. In the whole of the original kingdom (Sweden-Finland), population growth was actually lower than in catastrophe-prone Denmark: not much more than 10 per cent in a hundred years. Reckoned in the most important of all currencies, human lives, Sweden's Age of Greatness was a failure. To be sure, demographic development in Finland was far more marked by catastrophe than in Denmark. In the whole of the Swedish kingdom, the constant recruitment of soldiers reduced the availability of young men for the marriage market, something which undermined the growth potential of the population. It also put a brake on the contribution made by labour to the Swedish economy.<sup>49</sup>

The Finns were hit harder by conscription to the army than the Swedes were – for two reasons. In the central Finnish provinces rates of conscription exceeded the national average. Seven per cent of the entire male population of Finland performed military service in the wars of the second half of the seventeenth century. This represented a crushing burden for the central provinces, for there was a limit to how much the state could squeeze out of the peripheral Finnish provinces, from where so many had fled, especially to Russia. Finland at that time was, of all the Scandinavian countries, the one

48 J. Lindegren, *Maktstatens resurser* (Uppsala, 1992); Dyrvik, *Truede tvillingriker*, pp. 94–6.

49 J. Lindegren, *Utskrivning och utsgning. Produktion och reproduktion i Bygdeå 1620–1640*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Historica Upsaliensia, 117 (Uppsala, 1980).

most notable for emigration. This was a symptom of crisis: the relationship between its economic potential and burdens had become unbalanced. Hundreds of Finnish families simply migrated to Østlandet in Norway in search of a better life. Emigration to Russia, Ingermanland, Estonia and even Sweden was on a far larger scale. Their status as a borderland was an important causal factor in the Finns' problems. Their proximity to the front exposed them to strains and stresses during several wars, most of all as a deployment zone, and also, during the Great Northern War, as an occupied land.<sup>50</sup> Both Finland and Norway were affected by the Little Ice Age, but Finland most of all. The purchasing of foreign corn by Norwegian merchants did more to relieve the corn crisis of the 1690s than the provision of corn to the Finnish famine areas. In large areas of Europe, the population was tormented by famine. In Finland, it brought about a major demographic catastrophe.

In the Baltic provinces, population trends were even more negative than in Finland. It fluctuated wildly, especially in Estonia: constant wars and intervals of immigration had powerful consequences. In 1630 the population was less than half of what it had been in the mid-sixteenth century. Then it trebled or quadrupled at the end of the century, only to be more than halved again at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The trends in Livonia were similar. Both provinces had far fewer inhabitants around 1710 than they had in the mid-sixteenth century. It was war which caused these frightful catastrophes.<sup>51</sup>

The conclusion to all this is surprising. The people who exerted the least influence on the exercise of government power, the Norwegians, came best out of the hard conditions of the seventeenth century. This had to do with the fact that an economic expansion coincided with an escalation of the state's demands, something which made it easier to finance the growth in expenditure. Sweden and Finland also experienced a long period of economic expansion, but the negative effect of constant warfare depressed productivity in Sweden, stifled it in Finland, and drained the population of men and undermined natural population growth. As officers, the Baltic nobility managed to survive every catastrophe, even if the blood-letting was on a large scale. The peoples of Estonia and Livonia were granted a breathing-space in the second half of the seventeenth century, but then they were once again overtaken by the terrors of war.

50 Villstrand, 'Stormaktstiden 1617–1721', pp. 125–320.

51 Lindegren, *Maktstatens resurser*.

## Religious and social regimentation

OLE PETER GRELL

By the end of the sixteenth century the religious and political climate in Scandinavia had begun to change. Due to the effects of confessionalisation and the growing aspirations of the governments in both Denmark and Sweden to extend their political and social control, the limited tolerance which had hitherto existed within broad Lutheran churches was gradually disappearing. This happened at a time when two of the most significant Scandinavian kings of the early modern period, Christian IV and Gustav II Adolf, were succeeding to their thrones.

In Denmark Christian IV had come of age in 1596 and the regency which had been in place since the death of his father, Frederik II, eight years earlier had ended. Under the leadership of the new royal chancellor, Christian Friis of Borreby (1596–1616), the power of the state was considerably enhanced. The desire of the young king and his chancellor to create a stronger and more centralised state also incorporated the Lutheran church, where the recently appointed professor of theology at the University of København, Hans Poulsen Resen (1597), proved a most willing collaborator. By the first decade of the seventeenth century Resen was busily taking steps to create a more uniform church. Such moves were obviously inspired by similar developments in the Holy Roman Empire, but in the case of Scandinavia they were made particularly urgent by the growing impact of both Calvinism and Counter-Reformation Catholicism.

Resen began his campaign for uniformity by making sure that the traditional use of exorcism in connection with baptism was retained. Considering the opposition to the use of exorcism by 1606 not only from the king himself but also among many of his courtiers this seemed a far from auspicious start to Resen's campaign for uniformity. However, by 1607 Resen had won the argument and was in a position to accelerate his campaign. As a consequence a number of prominent, liberal Philippists or Crypto-Calvinists of the Hemming-sen sort lost their positions within university and church over the next decade.



First to go was Resen's colleague within the faculty of theology, Professor Jørgen Dybvad, who in spite of his Crypto-Calvinist leanings had sided with Resen in the recent confrontation over the use of exorcism in connection with baptism. Dybvad's lack of diplomacy and willingness publicly to criticise government actions and officials had served to antagonise Chancellor Christian Friis who, together with Resen, engineered Dybvad's fall and removal in April 1607. By now Resen had become the dominant force within the university, where the other professor of theology and bishop of Sjælland, Peder Winstrup, was too old and weak to oppose him while Dybvad's successor, Cort Aslaksen, was too timid and inexperienced to dare take him on. From then on Resen's collaboration with Christian Friis intensified and a number of court cases and dismissals of recalcitrant ministers and professors followed. The fact that Resen was chosen to preach the funeral sermon for Christian IV's queen, Anna Katharina, in 1607 demonstrates to what extent his star had risen.

By 1613 Resen, however, found his theology had come under attack by the København minister Oluf Jensen Kock who accused him of dangerous heterodoxy, pointing to Resen's metaphysical speculations about the nature of Christ. Kock seems to have been encouraged by Resen's Crypto-Calvinist colleague Cort Aslaksen. Faced with the wrath of Resen and his lay supporters within government, Kock's supporters faded away and in August 1614 a royal commission not only dismissed Kock for his Crypto-Calvinist leanings, but also banished him from the realm. One of the few ministers to stand by Kock, Niels Mikkelsen Aalborg, who had published a diffuse commentary on the Book of Revelation, was immediately prosecuted. Accused of Zwinglianism, Aalborg claimed to have been inspired solely by John Foxe. This attempt to make his theology more acceptable by pointing to the famous English martyrologist clearly had little or no effect and he was dismissed in June 1614.

The neo-Platonic and mystic, speculative elements in Resen's theology are strongly in evidence in his writings between 1607 and 1614. They had already caused international disapproval among leading German Protestant theologians such as David Pareus in Heidelberg, Eilhard Lubin in Rostock and Balthazar Mentzer in Giessen. These disapproving voices from abroad may well have encouraged Resen's opponents to take action in 1613.

When accusing Resen of holding opinions which were far from being orthodox, his critics had a point. There are, for instance, considerable overlaps between significant aspects of Resen's theology and that of the spiritualist Sebastian Franck. Resen, who owned a heavily annotated copy of Franck's *Paradoxa*, advocated similar views about Christ's eternal omnipresence in

Nature. Likewise, Resen's teaching about *unio mystica*, concerning Christ's innate presence in the reborn Christian, is likely to have been inspired from his reading of Johan Arndt's *Vier Bücher von wahrem Christenthumb*.

Resen emerged victorious from the confrontation with the Crypto-Calvinists in 1614, but victory had come at a price. He was forced to produce an apology for those parts of his theology which had come under fire. His *De sancta fide* (June 1614) offered a spirited defence of his Augustinian-inspired neo-Platonism. However, the bishops sitting in judgement over him were not convinced and Resen was forced to promise to avoid similar vague and bewildering speculations in future, and he was advised to refrain from publishing further tracts similar to his recent neo-Platonic, Christological disputations. Resen, however, does not appear to have changed his views. In fact, his subsequent writings show that he did not adhere to his promise. At most, it resulted in the mystic elements in Resen's theology becoming less conspicuous. Thus Resen never disowned neo-Platonism, even if he made a point of dismissing Rosicrucianism as dangerous religious fanaticism. However, Resen's views might well have led to his fall from power in 1614 had he not been given unflinching support by his friend, the learned nobleman Holger Rosenkrantz. Thus it appears to have been Rosenkrantz's backing which convinced Chancellor Christian Friis to continue to side with Resen.

Instead, Resen emerged strengthened from this crisis and was able to add the leading bishopric of Sjælland to his professorship the following year. Resen was also able successfully to continue his close collaboration with the next chancellor, Christen Friis of Kragerup, who succeeded Christian Friis of Borreby on the latter's death in 1616. Together with his lay collaborators Resen was able to build an orthodox and uniform Lutheran church in Denmark over which he and the government retained near total control over the next twenty years. As a churchman, however, he was in many ways closer to Archbishop William Laud in England than to the Gnesio-Lutheran church leaders of the Holy Roman Empire. Neither he nor the two royal chancellors with whom he co-operated can be described as Gnesio-Lutherans. *Formula Concordiae*, which had been anathema in Denmark since the reign of Frederik II, continued to be rejected. What Resen and the ministers of Christian IV's government sought to achieve was uniformity for primarily political and ecclesiastical, and not theological, reasons.<sup>1</sup>

1 B. Kornerup, *Biskop Hans Poulsen Resen*, 1–2 (København, 1928).

From the second decade of the seventeenth century Hans Poulsen Resen developed a close friendship with the learned nobleman, Holger Rosenkrantz, whose pre-pietist Lutheranism, inspired primarily by the Germans, John Arndt and Johan Gerhardt, influenced Resen considerably. Rosenkrantz became the leading exponent of a pre-pietist variety of Lutheranism in Denmark. He advocated a return to a purely Scripture-based theology with an emphasis on double justification through faith and acts and sought a full 'reformation of life' to complement Luther's reformation of teachings. Rosenkrantz influenced not only a number of leading theologians within the Danish church, but a whole generation of scholars in a variety of fields. The school and library he established at Rosenholm, his estate in Jylland, provided teaching on a number of subjects, such as Greek, Hebrew, mathematics and astronomy, and Rosenkrantz's advocacy was not restricted to theology.

However, it was within the church that Rosenkrantz's influence appears to have been most significant. Thus the bishop of Viborg from 1616 until 1641, Hans Wandal, had attended the school at Rosenholm in his youth as had the later bishops, Laurids Jacobsen Hindsholm and Jacob Matthiesen, while the bishop of Ribe and former professor of natural philosophy at the University of København, Jens Dinesen Jersin, and the professor of medicine and later professor of theology, Caspar Bartholin, were strongly influenced by Rosenkrantz from the second decade of the seventeenth century. The most important of Rosenkrantz's disciples, however, was the theologian Jesper Brochmand, Resen's successor as the country's leading theologian in 1638. Brochmand, educated in København, Leiden and Franeker where he had taught philosophy, became professor of theology in 1615 while later serving as tutor to the future King Christian V from 1617 until 1620. It was during this period that he befriended Rosenkrantz and became heavily influenced by the latter's theology. However, by 1630 Brochmand no longer shared Rosenkrantz's religious views, having moved instead towards a more legalistic, orthodox Lutheranism, finally playing a leading part in the accusations of heresy against his former mentor. The fact that Brochmand remained close to Rosenkrantz in exactly the period the latter served as a councillor to Christian IV, while he himself was engaged in a forceful anti-Catholic polemic, is noteworthy. It is likely that Brochmand's views to a large extent were determined by political considerations rather than dictated exclusively by his theological revisionism, which so far has provided the only explanation for his desertion of, and antagonism towards, Holger Rosenkrantz during the 1630s. By then Rosenkrantz had fallen from royal favour and may well have appeared an obvious target for Brochmand.

Jesper Brochmand, who together with Niels Hemmingsen became the most internationally celebrated Danish theologian of the early modern period, was close to Rosenkrantz during the 1620s. He had encouraged Rosenkrantz in the latter's decision to leave politics and concentrate on theology. Evidently inspired by the disastrous events following Christian IV's intervention into the Thirty Years War, Rosenkrantz had retired to his estates in Skåne – his beloved Rosenholm was occupied by imperial troops – to concentrate on developing his theology, a decision made urgent by the eschatological events associated with the disasters of the war. Bitterly, Christian IV granted him leave to withdraw from the council the following year, pointing out that since he had already removed himself, at a time when 'Religion, our Person, and his Fatherland, was in the greatest danger, then We have no further demands on him'.

The late 1620s was also the period when Brochmand began to work on his great dogmatic work, *Systema universæ theologiæ*, which was published in 1633, and became the cornerstone of his international fame. The work on the *Systema* appears increasingly to have drawn Brochmand towards Gnesio-Lutheranism and the Formula of Concord. It was, however, Holger Rosenkrantz's publication of his *Fürstenspiegel*, which brought the simmering confrontation between the two men out in the open. The book consisted of a collection of pastoral tracts written in the sixteenth century by Duke Albrecht V of Brandenburg, the manuscripts for which Rosenkrantz had discovered. They were all perfectly orthodox and solidly Lutheran, but Rosenkrantz added an introduction, describing his views on justification. With its emphasis on a double justification through faith and life, it brought Rosenkrantz into trouble with the ecclesiastical establishment. Led by Brochmand the faculty of theology in København viciously attacked Rosenkrantz and accused him of being a Socinian while the court preacher Peder Winstrup fuelled the fire by claiming that Rosenkrantz was a dangerous heretic. Christian IV intervened and tried to force Rosenkrantz to retract his book. Rosenkrantz, however, insisted on being granted leave to defend himself.

In this situation where so many of his former theological friends had not only deserted him, but were actively working against him, Rosenkrantz cannot but have been relieved to find that the now elderly Hans Poulsen Resen stood by him. Possibly Resen had not forgotten Rosenkrantz's steadfast support when he had found himself in difficulties nearly two decades earlier. Consequently, Resen proceeded to publish a couple of tracts which went against the growing Gnesio-Lutheran trend promoted by Brochmand and argued strongly for a Melancthonian concept of justification, claiming

that the faith generated by the Gospel caused the godly to lead new lives based on grace. This was a view of justification which came close to that held by Rosenkrantz. Resen's intervention provided Rosenkrantz with much needed support and may well have saved him. It undoubtedly provided him with the respite needed to produce his *Apology*. By the time it was ready in 1639 much had changed. Resen had died the previous year and the chancellor Christen Friis of Kragerup died in the autumn. Considering that he was replaced with Rosenkrantz's son-in-law, Christen Thomesen Sehested, who had been educated in Rosenholm and, who together with his wife shared his father-in-law's preference for godly living, it is hardly surprising that the case against Rosenkrantz was dropped by both the faculty of theology and the crown within a year.<sup>2</sup>

Even if Scandinavia had remained outside the main sphere of Counter-Reformation influence, fear had begun to spread among leading Lutheran theologians about the increased danger posed by the Jesuits in particular, despite the fact that Catholicism had so far only managed to attract a limited number of converts among the nobility and the intelligensia. The Jesuit College in Braunsberg, established in 1565, had by the end of the century, become a centre for students from the Baltic region. Here the dynamic Norwegian Jesuit, Laurentius Nicolai (Laurits Nielsen, also known as Klosterlasse), worked energetically to convert his fellow Scandinavians. The publication of a pamphlet in 1604 by Jonas Henriksen of Ditmarschen, which claimed to have detected a sinister Catholic plot against the Scandinavian kingdoms raised the temperature. Worries about possible Jesuit infiltration, especially within the educational sector, led the University of København to emphasise the need for religious orthodoxy among teachers and students. Laurentius Nicolai masterminded the Jesuit propaganda campaign from abroad, but Jesuit hopes for an early positive response from the Danish government were quickly dashed when a royal letter of 6 October 1604 forbade anyone who had attended a Jesuit college from holding a position in either school or church, in order that they should not cause 'a great change in Religion'.

The letter caused some schoolmasters to lose their jobs, the most notorious case involving the headmaster of the Latin school in Malmö, Jens Aagesen, who was dismissed in 1605. Considering these developments it is somewhat surprising that Laurentius Nicolai should have tried to promote the Catholic

2 J. O. Andersen, *Holger Rosenkrantz den lærde* (København, 1896).

cause in Denmark the following year. A dearth of reliable information about local conditions must be the explanation for Laurentius Nicolai's unexpected arrival in København in 1606.

Upon his arrival Nicolai immediately forwarded his apology for the Catholic faith, *Confessio Christiana*, to leading members of the government including Bishop Hans Poulsen Resen. The government reacted promptly and expelled Laurentius Nicolai, but further measures against Catholicism and individual Catholics were not introduced until ten years later and then only as part of the more general drive towards uniformity in church and state. Thus the Royal Act of 1615 repeated the prohibition of 'the papist religion'. The following year an act was issued which ordered prospective tutors who were to escort young students on their foreign travels to present themselves for examination by their diocesan bishop before their departure.

The establishment of the *Congregatio de propaganda fide* in 1622 in Rome served among other things to renew Catholic interest in Scandinavia. This time the Dominicans appear to have taken the lead and two friars were dispatched to København in that year. The arrival of five Jesuits during 1623 awakened the authorities and arrests were made in December and the Jesuits expelled because, as the government put it, of these recent attempts by the Jesuits and Dominicans to corrupt the true faith and substitute it with superstitions and heresy. 'All papistical monks, Jesuits, secular priests and like ecclesiastical personel' were forbidden to enter the king's realm in future. If found they would be put to death while natives who had sheltered them would be prosecuted.

Furthermore government concern over the growing number of students who were attracted to the excellent education freely available at the Jesuit colleges in Prussia in general and Braunsberg in particular, where they would study before briefly matriculating at the Protestant University of Königsberg in order to cover their tracks before returning home, now caused a total government ban on Danes and Norwegians studying in Prussia.<sup>3</sup>

It was undoubtedly this deep-seated government concern, reinforced by the outbreak of the Thirty Years War, which led Jesper Brochmand to dedicate most of his lectures between 1623 and 1628 to anti-Catholic polemic. In 1626 he published his two-volume *Controversiarum sacrarum pars*, followed two years later by his *De pontifice Romano libri quinque*, which was directed against the great Catholic controversialist of the age, Robert Bellarmine. If the

3 O. Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia*, 1–4 (Oslo and Leiden, 1963–92).

early seventeenth century witnessed a strong move towards greater uniformity initially under the leadership of Hans Poulsen Resen and later under Jesper Brochmand it also saw a strengthening of ecclesiastical administration and the economic foundation of the church. On his appointment as bishop of Sjælland in 1615 Resen immediately proceeded to gather the diocesan clergy, exhorting them to mend their ways by improving their catechising; avoiding drunkenness, pride, quarrels, fornication and fighting; and, last but not least, by avoiding reading books which were not in accordance with *Confessio Augustana*, especially those written by Calvinists. Such biannual diocesan meetings were instituted nationally in 1618. Here it was laid down that the local royal administrator should preside over such meetings together with the bishop and that the rural deans should return with the *monita* and *synodalia* and publish them locally.

In this climate it was hardly surprising that the government took the opportunity to reissue the Strangers' Articles of 1569 which obliged immigrants to accept the Danish Church Order and the Augsburg Confession, first in 1615 and again four years later. As in so many other areas Resen also demonstrated his considerable energy here. In 1618 he gathered all foreign residents of København in Our Lady's Church obliging them to swear to uphold the Strangers' Articles. Seven years later in connection with the creation of the Silk Company, Resen issued instructions to the parish clergy in København on how to catechise non-Lutheran foreigners: they were to be treated leniently and with patience except for Anabaptists who were to be expelled immediately.

Resen also took measures to improve the conformity of his clergy by clarifying and tightening the oath ministers had to swear when instated. Instead of simply promising to preach the Word of God and to avoid all heresies, while obeying civil, as well as ecclesiastical, authority, new ministers had to promise to teach in accordance with Luther's Catechism, *Confessio Augustana* and its *Apology*. Considering this emphasis it is noteworthy that no reference was made to the Formula of Concord. Lutheran orthodoxy, in other words, differed significantly in Denmark and Norway from the Gnesio-Lutheran variety which was so dominant in the Holy Roman Empire.

The drive for uniformity was not exclusively preoccupied with the danger presented by other Christian faiths and heresies to the purity of the Lutheran Danish church, but also with popular religion, in particular the dangers of witchcraft. Thus Christian IV took an active interest in the fifteen women from the town of Køge, south of København, who were accused of witchcraft in 1612–13. The king had one of the women, who had received the death

penalty, transferred to the royal castle in København where she was further interrogated under torture. The witchcraft legislation of 12 October 1617 is characterised by the authorities' worry about the demonological aspects of this crime, the central points being the covenant with the devil, the serious heresy and apostasy from God and true religion.<sup>4</sup>

On the same day the decree against witchcraft was published two additional orders were published: one against unnecessary luxury and another against fornication and loose living. Evidently the government was increasingly pre-occupied with public morality in the years leading up to the centenary of the Reformation and the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. A further decree was issued in November 1623, this time against swearing and breaking the Sabbath. The government justified its concern by pointing to 'the certain signs of God's anger' illustrated by the high incidence of dearth, war, rebellion and plague in neighbouring countries, i.e. Germany. In order for Denmark and Norway to avoid God's punishing hand a reform of life and mores was needed.

Christian IV's disastrous intervention in the Thirty Years War, which resulted in total defeat in the battle with the imperial forces under Tilly at Lutter am Barenberg in August 1626, made the need to avert God's anger, represented by the imperial army occupying Jylland, even more urgent. The sufferings of the war, with tax increases and accompanying serious epidemics such as smallpox and plague, generated not only a government response but also popular reactions. Many strange natural signs were observed. In the parish of Holbo on Sjælland it repeatedly rained blood while in a parish on Fyn coagulated blood was seen coming out of the ground. In this climate popular prophets appeared, such as the peasant Rasmus Nielsen, from the diocese of Ribe, who claimed that Christ had appeared before him, instructing him to admonish the clergy to punish the growing sinfulness of their flocks.

The government responded by instituting public days of prayer and fasting in September 1626. Ministers were told to start their sermons by describing 'the sad condition of the world in these last times', and in 1627 the government found it necessary to introduce further days of fasting and prayer.

A couple of months before the Peace of Lübeck on 12 May 1629 provided Christian IV with unexpectedly good terms on which to end his disastrous involvement in the Thirty Years War, the government had felt that new initiatives were needed in order to hold off further punishment from God.

4 J. C. V. Johansen, 'Faith, Superstition and Witchcraft in Reformation Scandinavia', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 179–211.



An Order for an improved church discipline was introduced. This was done to enhance the authority of the church over hardened sinners. It was to be achieved by creating parish councils of lay elders, consisting of the most pious and influential residents. This somewhat Calvinistic discipline was supplemented with rules emphasising the moral standards required by the clergy. Drunken ministers were to be defrocked, while the use of fashionable and lavish clothes among the clergy was to be discouraged. This concern with public morality continued to preoccupy the government throughout the reign of Christian IV and came to the fore once more during the so-called Torstensson War with Sweden from 1643 to 1645. Again the government instructed the bishops to admonish the clergy to pray to God in order to avert the imminent danger and prevent God from applying 'the unsheathed sword to us'.

It was, however, not only public morals which concerned the leaders of church and state during the first half of the seventeenth century. The continued reform and improvement of education continued to play a major part in government concerns. Initially it resulted in the school reform of October 1604. The Latin schools which had blossomed in the reign of Frederik II had begun to decline towards the end of the sixteenth century and differed widely in quality. Resen proved a major force in introducing the reforms envisaged. Not only did he personally produce new textbooks, but he also made sure that greater uniformity in teaching came into existence while the bishops came to play a more prominent role as supervisors of the schools. Likewise, the reforms made sure that in future no headmaster could be appointed to one of the major schools without an MA degree, while all leading teachers, plus headmasters of smaller schools, needed BAs.

Similarly, Resen and later Brochmand, continued the great educational and catechetical work begun by Peder Palladius. But as opposed to Palladius, whose efforts were characterised by considerable optimism and a genuine popular touch, both Brochmand's and Resen's outlooks were predominantly pessimistic. Brochmand's view of humanity, however, appears to have been by far the darkest. When in 1627 Resen surveyed his catechetical efforts begun in 1615 he found they had met with some success and added that 'this harvest of godly Christians was particularly important in these last days of the world'.

By 1621 plans were also drawn up for a major reform of the University of København. The leading figures behind these plans were the Chancellor, Christen Friis of Kragerup; the learned nobleman, Holger Rosenkrantz; and Jesper Brochmand and Caspar Bartholin, the latter two being personally

responsible for the draft. Considering Christian IV's considerable interest in the University – the king among other things funded new chairs, one in metaphysics in 1619, and adding a fourth chair in theology in 1630 – we can safely assume that the plans had his full support.

The draft envisaged a major reform of the way medicine and to a lesser degree theology was taught at the University. In medicine it aimed at a total reform of the medical curriculum, with a greater emphasis on applied medicine, botany and dissections, not to mention reform and control of the way surgery and pharmacy were practised in Denmark, guaranteeing that these practitioners received some basic education in the vernacular at the University.

When the so-called *Novellae Constitutiones* were issued by Christian IV in May 1621 very little of the original draft for radical changes remained. This may well have been due simply to the financial costs of implementing such wide-ranging reforms at a time when Christian IV was already seriously contemplating an intervention in the Thirty Years War. Instead, the *Constitutiones* were primarily concerned with securing doctrinal orthodoxy among future schoolmasters and ministers. Thus, students of theology who wanted to study abroad were to be restricted to universities which corresponded in doctrine with Lutheran Denmark, if, as was to be expected, they wanted to become schoolmasters or ministers. Students of medicine, however, together with sons of the nobility were expressly excluded from these restrictions because they had to visit foreign universities 'for *Exercicia* and other reasons'.<sup>5</sup>

That the government, in a period when religious and social regimentation was at the forefront of its policies, should have been particularly preoccupied with students studying abroad can hardly come as a surprise. After all, the number of students matriculating abroad had seen an explosive growth in the reign of Frederik II. Numbers had more than doubled during the last three decades of the sixteenth century and showed no sign of abating by 1620. That numbers fell dramatically in the decade after 1620, at a time when matriculations in København grew rapidly, may well be explained by the fact that by then the University of København had become a recognised academic institution in Protestant Europe with professors of European standing such as Caspar Bartholin, Ole Worm, Christen Sørensen Longomontanus and Jesper Brochmand, even if the Thirty Years War may have played a part in these changes, making travelling more difficult.

5 O. P. Grell, 'Caspar Bartholin and the Education of the Pious Physician', in O. P. Grell and A. Cunningham (eds.), *Medicine and Reformation* (London, 1993), pp. 78–100.

Furthermore, the government also wanted to discourage the often expensive educational travel by young noblemen, the so-called 'Grand Tour', which often placed the young men in serious moral and religious danger while abroad. With Holger Rosenkrantz as the driving force, a noble academy was established in Sorø in 1623. Rosenkrantz, who served as the first inspector or chancellor of Sorø made sure that the new institution started life on a solid footing recruiting several leading international scholars among the academy's first professors, such as the Leiden history professor Johannes Meursius. As opposed to the Swedish noble academy in Stockholm, *Collegium Illustre*, which was inspired by Sorø and established by Gustav Adolf's personal advisor Johan Skytte and which only survived for three years from 1626 to 1629, Sorø proved a lasting success.

Tertiary education had been very slow in developing in Sweden. The University of Uppsala reopened in 1595 as a consequence of the Uppsala Assembly's decisions in 1593, which finally had confirmed the Swedish church as Lutheran in doctrine. Despite the rapid expansion of tertiary education in Sweden-Finland which followed in the seventeenth century, with new universities established in Tartu (Dorpat) in 1632, Turku (Åbo) in 1640, Greifswald in 1648 and Lund in 1668, that century saw more Swedes studying abroad than ever before or since. Thus an increasing number of Swedish and Finnish students attended the by then famous University of Leiden in the decades after 1610, and by 1650 around fifty Swedes and Finns matriculated annually at this university. Undoubtedly, this had something to do with Sweden's recently acquired position as a major European power and growing need for more highly educated government officials, but it also reflects the shortcomings of the resurrected University of Uppsala and the new universities which leading members of the government, such as Johan Skytte and Per Brahe, had been instrumental in creating in old and new corners of a growing and imperial Sweden.

That the new Swedish universities were slow in making an impact can also be seen from the low social position which professors continued to hold in the country until the eighteenth century, as opposed to Denmark, where the professors at the University of København belonged to the upper echelons of society and held privileges close to those of the nobility by the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The centenary of the Reformation became a highly significant event in most Protestant countries, not least because of the heightened religious and political temperature of the day which only a year later helped bring about the Thirty Years War. The Danish Lutheran church led by Hans Poulsen

Resen remained faithful to its Wittenberg roots and followed the suggestions for the celebration of the centenary laid down by the theologians of Wittenberg and Leipzig in the *Epistola Invitatoria* of September 1617. As elsewhere the celebrations began on 31 October. Resen personally kicked off the event with an oration at the University of København. He made good use of Luther's prophesy that the evangelical movement would primarily prove victorious in the north, which for Resen was proof of the particularly blessed state of Denmark and Norway. It is noteworthy that as opposed to the Holy Roman Empire, where the events were dominated by the Gnesio-Lutherans and Melancthon was totally ignored, the *Praeceptor Germaniae* remained a highly cherished reformer among Danish Lutherans who praised him at their centenary celebrations.

The Lutheran church in Sweden, however, took no steps to commemorate the centenary of the Reformation in 1617. Instead, it waited until 1621, when, on the orders of Gustav Adolf it celebrated the centenary of what the royal house of Vasa considered the beginning of the Swedish Reformation. Sweden, in other words, made a deliberate choice in not joining the international celebrations of the centenary of the Reformation in 1617, preferring instead to mark a strictly national centenary of undoubtedly greater political than religious significance. 1521 was, after all, the year Gustav Adolf's grandfather, Gustav Vasa, had started the revolt against Danish hegemony in general and the rule of Christian II in particular. By the beginning of the seventeenth century this politically motivated rebellion had also, at least in official Swedish mythology, come to be portrayed as a battle against 'papal darkness' and in defence of 'evangelical light', conveniently glossing over the considerable gap between revolt and Reformation. Where Denmark joined Lutheran Germany in a predominantly religious celebration of the Reformation which in a period of growing confessionalisation served to enhance local orthodoxy, Sweden preferred to commemorate a primarily political centenary of the country's re-emergence as an independent state, deliberately identifying a purely political event with the arrival of Protestantism.<sup>6</sup>

When Gustav Adolf succeeded his father Karl IX as king of Sweden in 1611, he was only 17 years of age and technically, as well as legally, a regency government should have taken control of the country until the young prince had reached the mature age of 24. However, the then ongoing war with Denmark plus the confusion over who was to have a seat in the regency

6 O. P. Grell, 'Scandinavia', in R. Scribner et al. (eds.), *The Reformation in National Context* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 111f.

government meant that Gustav Adolf was chosen to succeed his father without delay. The driving force behind his election and the reforms of Swedish government which followed was another young man, only ten years his senior, Axel Oxenstierna, who as chancellor came to dominate Swedish government for more than three decades.

Among the many administrative reforms introduced by Oxenstierna, which served to enhance the powers of the state, were his plans for a reform of the Swedish parliament (*riksdag*) which he presented in 1617. It resulted in a *riksdag* which increasingly became divided according to estates: the nobility, the clergy and the burghers all negotiating separately. The clergy, meeting under the leadership of the archbishop, came to form a *consistorium regni* which replaced the irregular synods or national meetings of the Swedish church which had characterised the sixteenth century. Both Gustav Adolf and Axel Oxenstierna were deeply committed Protestants. Oxenstierna was something of a theological expert and both he and the king took considerable interest in the New Church Manual which was ready in 1614 and the new Swedish Bible, the so-called 'Gustavus Adolphus Bible' which was published in 1618. For personal reasons, as well as reasons of state, the young king and his chancellor were committed to an ecclesiastical reform which would not only centralise the church but also serve to enhance the influence of lay government within it.

The leaders of the Swedish church, however, which had fought a rear-guard action to secure a modicum of independence from the Vasa kings since the Reformation, did their utmost to resist these policies. The bishops had recently sharpened their teeth in their confrontation with Gustav Adolf's father, Karl IX. Despite the protection so many of the later leaders of the church had enjoyed a decade or so earlier from Karl IX, while still only a duke, during the difficult reign of his brother Johan III, they had no hesitation in outspokenly defending the church against what they perceived to be Karl's attempts to introduce some form of Crypto-Calvinism. They vigorously opposed all his attempts to impose royal supremacy on the church and deeply resented his, in their eyes, heterodox doctrinal views.

Accordingly the bishops only had to continue their well-rehearsed policy of resisting the crown's attempts to gain control over church affairs during the reign of Gustav Adolf. In this they benefited from the determined leadership of the bishop of Västerås, Johannes Rudbeckius, who was also the editor of the new Swedish Bible. Educated in Uppsala and Wittenberg, where he received his MA, Rudbeckius had become professor of mathematics at the University of Uppsala in 1604, only later to leave his chair in order to study theology in

Wittenberg. Upon his return to Sweden he was made professor of Hebrew and shortly afterwards of theology at Uppsala. Rudbeckius had returned to his home country as a convinced Gnesio-Lutheran who was fiercely opposed to Catholics, as well as Calvinists, aggressively pursuing, as he put it, all 'Posseviner, Herbester, Dionysier, Galler, Klosterlasser or Forbetier'. This was a complete catalogue of the most prominent figures who had 'undermined' the Swedish church since the Reformation. 'Posseviner' and 'Klosterlasser' referred to the two main figures who, during the reign of Johan III, had sought to re-Catholicise Sweden, namely the then former secretary-general of the Jesuit order, Antonio Possevino and his collaborator, the Norwegian Jesuit Laurentius Nicolai, known as Klosterlasse, while 'Galler' referred to Peder Galle, the Catholic canon of Uppsala who had actively opposed the evangelical movement in Sweden. 'Herbester', 'Dionysier' and 'Forbetier' represented the Calvinist danger to the Swedish church, being, on one hand, the followers of Erik XIV's and Karl IX's two Reformed tutors, Dionysius Beurreus and Jan van Herboville and, on the other, those who like Karl IX had been influenced by the Scottish Reformed minister, John Forbes, who, on Karl IX's invitation, had visited Stockholm and conducted a religious debate with the then Lutheran Archbishop Olaus Martini.

As a court preacher Johannes Rudbeckius had accompanied the Swedish army to Lithuania where his uncompromising preaching based on the Old Testament served to encourage the troops to see themselves as doing battle in a Godly cause. When promoted to the bishopric of Västerås in 1619, Rudbeckius gave further proof of his brand of severe churchmanship firmly rooted in Neo-Aristotelianism, Biblicism and Gnesio-Lutheranism by insisting on regular church attendance within his diocese and making good use of excommunications in order to enforce discipline. The theology of the leading Swedish churchmen was legalistic and uncompromising of a type promoted by the leading German Gnesio-Lutherans to which the Swedish bishops added their own Old Testament gloss, portraying Sweden as the new Israel and its enemies as those of God. It is noteworthy that this strict Lutheran orthodoxy which in many ways went much further than anything the Danish church witnessed during the drive for uniformity under Resen and Brochmand, appears to have had a rather dire effect on the learned literary output in Sweden, which remained limited and parochial in this period. Similarly no theologian of any real or international significance emerged, as opposed to Denmark where the works of Niels Hemmingsen and Jesper Brochmand became internationally renowned. Perhaps little or no energy was left for such tasks among the ecclesiastical leaders in Sweden who

appear to have concentrated on ecclesiastical organisation, trying to protect their church, as best they could, from royal encroachment.

Still, episcopal power undoubtedly grew in the reign of Gustav Adolf and a fair number of the Swedish bishops, such as Archbishop Petrus Kenicius; the royal chaplain and later bishop of Linköping, Johannes Bothvidi; and the leading orthodox polemicist, the bishop of Turku, Isak Rothovius agreed with Rudbeckius in his ecclesiastical and theological objectives; but this strengthening of the Swedish church went little beyond the diocesan level and remained mainly localised. However, Bothvidi's *Agenda ecclesiastica in Castro Svetico* (1631), for example, had influence on the ecclesiastical law in Denmark and Germany.

Despite this growing emphasis on orthodoxy and social regimentation by the ecclesiastical leadership, the mercantilist policies of Erik XIV and Karl IX were continued and developed by Gustav Adolf and his government and foreign immigration of primarily skilled Reformed craftsmen accelerated in the early seventeenth century. By then the population of Göteborg had become half-Dutch and the wealthy Reformed merchant and entrepreneur, Louis de Geer, had made Sweden his home. The fact that the crown and the Lutheran church in many respects remained detached made it much easier for Gustav Adolf to ignore the wishes of the Swedish bishops. The king's pro-immigration policy was also assisted by the absence of a detailed evangelical Church Order for the Swedish church as opposed to its Danish sister-church which had received a Church Order as early as 1537. In this connection it is noteworthy that Gustav Adolf, on his accession in 1611, managed to secure a measure of toleration for the Reformed immigrants, even if they were not allowed their own church and were excluded from government positions. In practice, however, the toleration granted the immigrants was considerably greater and the government connived at the existence of Reformed congregations and services in Göteborg and Stockholm. This policy characterised the reign of Gustav Adolf, who at a particular low point for the Protestants in the Thirty Years War in November 1627 issued a proclamation offering all persecuted German Protestants refuge in Sweden. Later this policy was continued during the regency for Gustav Adolf's daughter, Kristina, not least due to the efforts of Axel Oxenstierna. Only after Kristina's abdication and conversion to Catholicism in 1654 did this practical tolerance come under serious threat due to the Act of Religion of 1655 and the placards of the 1660s.<sup>7</sup>

7 M. Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus: A History of Sweden 1611–1632*, 1–2 (London, 1958, 1968).

On some issues, however, church and lay government saw eye to eye. A proposal for a new Church Order, again with Rudbeckius as the driving force, was presented in 1619 while the *riksdag* of Örebro only two years earlier, with the firm support of the clergy, had passed an act against non-Lutherans. This measure, which traditionally in Swedish historiography has been seen as legally introducing religious intolerance in the country, was directed against Catholics primarily who were considered a potential fifth column who might support the claim on the Swedish throne by the Catholic son of Johan III, the Polish King Sigismund. As such, like the equivalent legislation in Denmark thirteen years earlier, it sought to prevent young and impressionable Swedes from studying at Jesuit colleges abroad, while those who had already converted to Catholicism were given three months to leave the kingdom. The threat to political stability associated with Catholicism in Sweden during this period may well explain the hard-line attitude the government demonstrated against Catholic converts. Thus, in 1624 two Jesuit pupils, Göran Bähr and Zacharias Anthelius, were not only given the death penalty but also immediately executed. Several of the Finnish Jesuits preferred to stay in Poland.<sup>8</sup>

On most of the major issues, however, such as the creation of a *consistorium generale*, some form of accommodation between Gustav Adolf and his government on the one side and the ecclesiastical leadership and its spokesman Rudbeckius on the other proved impossible. Both Axel Oxenstierna and Gustav Adolf had long wanted to establish a general council which could help centralise control over the Swedish church and, of course, increase government influence over ecclesiastical affairs. Inspired by similar councils established in a number of German territorial states towards the end of the sixteenth century, such as Württemberg, the Swedish king and his chancellor, at a meeting in Strängnäs in 1623, sought to introduce a *consistorium generale* which was to have twelve members, six from the clergy and six lay members out of whom half were to be members of the council. Their plans, however, were fiercely resisted by Rudbeckius and most of his episcopal colleagues, who wanted to maintain the original Lutheran separation of church and state, even if they were not opposed to a centralisation of the church *per se* as long as it took place without government involvement. This conflict eventually resulted in a direct confrontation between Axel Oxenstierna and Johannes Rudbeckius during the *riksdag* of 1636. Rudbeckius may personally have played a

8 Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia*.



considerable part in preventing the government from introducing a general council, but his actions guaranteed that Oxenstierna used his influence to prevent him from being elected to the vacant archbishopric.

However, not all the leaders of the Swedish church supported the Gnesio-Lutheranism espoused by Rudbeckius or wanted the Formula of Concord accepted as one of the doctrinal pillars of the church. Among the few clerical supporters of the government's ambition to create a *consistorium generale* was the later bishop of Växjö, Johannes Baazius, who was strongly influenced by pre-pietist Lutheranism and deeply engaged in apocalyptic and millenarian speculations. In 1629 he published *Förklaring öffuer Johannis Uppenbarelse* (an interpretation of the Book of Revelation), where he claimed that all the signs predicted in the Book of Revelation had taken place and all prophesies had been fulfilled; accordingly, the end of the world would occur in 1670.

Another and more significant opponent of Gnesio-Lutheranism, was Laurentius Paulinus Gothus who, before becoming bishop in Strängnäs in 1609 and archbishop thirty years later, had been professor of theology at the University of Uppsala. Influenced by eirenicism, neo-Platonism and Ramism, Paulinus Gothus was strongly supported by Johan Skytte, the chancellor of the University of Uppsala, who shared his views. Despite pressure from Rudbeckius and his supporters these two men were able to maintain the University of Uppsala as a far more liberal seat of learning than would otherwise had been the case.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, despite the strong drive towards orthodoxy and social discipline within the Swedish church, the ongoing conflict between the church and the crown meant that exponents of heterodox ideas were not only protected, but also promoted. For purely political reasons the growing movement for peace and understanding between the different Protestant faiths, which had developed in conjunction with the fear of resurgent Counter-Reformation Catholicism on the eve of the outbreak of the Thirty Years War, would have appealed to Gustav Adolf and Axel Oxenstierna, especially after the Swedish intervention in the war.

One of the period's main exponents of such a theology based on the doctrinal tenets which were shared by, rather than those which separated, the different Protestant denominations, John Dury, arrived in Sweden in 1636. Dury's ideas were to a large extent inspired by David Pareus's *Irenicum*

<sup>9</sup> I. Montgomery, 'The Institutionalisation of Lutheranism in Sweden and Finland', in O. P. Grell (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation: From Evangelical Movement to Institutionalisation of Reform* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 144–78.

(1615) and he was a close friend of Samuel Hartlib and Amos Comenius who promoted similar ideas. By the time Dury arrived in Sweden he had already been following the Swedish armies in Germany for years trying to sell his ideas to Gustav Adolf and Axel Oxenstierna. Significantly he arrived on the invitation of Louis de Geer, who clearly saw the potential for full toleration and religious freedom for the Reformed immigrants who had settled in Sweden following from any agreement on Dury's ideas. However, despite initially being supported by Oxenstierna, Dury's ideas were quickly attacked as heterodox and dangerous by Rudbeckius. Dury stayed on for two years in Sweden before trying his luck with even less success in Denmark. He only managed to recruit a few disciples, the most important being the court preacher and tutor to Princess Kristina, Johannes Matthiæ.

Matthiæ, who in 1643 was promoted to the bishopric of Strängnäs, had long been hostile to the narrow doctrinal theology which dominated the Swedish church, as can be seen from his *Libellus puerilis* (1622). Accordingly, he is likely to have looked on the ideas presented by Dury with sympathy. Four years later he was contacted by Dury's friend, Amos Comenius, who had arrived in Sweden thanks to another invitation issued by Louis de Geer, who clearly remained strongly committed to a broad and tolerant Protestant unification scheme. The influence of Dury and Comenius on Matthiæ is evidenced in his commissioned proposal for a new church order, *Idea boni ordinis* (1644), which included many elements from the Bohemian Brethren, whose leader happened to be Comenius. However, it was not until 1656 – when Matthiæ finally, together with his ally, the theology professor at the University of Turku, Johannes Terserus, actively began to promote an eirenic programme for unification of the churches – that things came to a head. Clearly, the two men had misjudged the situation both ecclesiastically and politically and later they were both dismissed. Terserus wrote a catechism (1664) which was decreed heretical by the orthodox Lutheran professors at his home university founded at the proposal of Per Brahe by Queen Kristina four years earlier. Besides professors there were students from Sweden in Turku. Perhaps the most well-known of the alumni was Johannes Palmberg who later published his *Serta florea svecana* (1684), which until Carl von Linné was the standard textbook in botany.

The interest in mysticism and millenarism appears to have been somewhat stronger in Sweden than in the rest of Scandinavia during the early seventeenth century. In this context the influence of Johann Arndt proved particularly significant, and one of his major works, *Theologia deutsch*, was translated into Swedish as early as 1617. It proved popular not only with some of the

clergy, but also with several influential members of the nobility, such as Jacob de la Gardie and Carl Carlsson Gyllenhielm.

Apart from the already mentioned interest of bishop Baazius, apocalyptic works were published by the German apothecary in Uppsala Simon Wollimhaus and the army lieutenant Anders Kempe. In a hefty volume entitled *Zwölff Lutherischen Kirchen* (1655) Wollimhaus engaged in chronological speculations, dividing the history of the world into twelve 'heart-hours' or churches, which were again split into 'heart-minutes'. According to the author only a quarter of an hour remained before the 'world-clock' would finally come to a halt on the Day of Judgement which would occur in either 1656 or 1666. Anders Kempe, who translated the Bohemian mystic Paulus Felgenhauer into Swedish, eventually fell foul of the authorities because of his advocacy of pacifism and tolerance. His works were outlawed and burnt in public while he himself sought refuge in Norway where he practised as a Paracelsian healer.

As elsewhere in Europe a close link between mysticism, Paracelsianism and apocalyptic speculation existed in Sweden in this period and the works of leading exponents of such ideas, such as Heinrich Khunrath, Jacob Böhme and Comenius were widely circulated. Of even greater significance in this context, however, is the fact that most of these Paracelsian ideas were often promoted in a radical and Rosicrucian form, as opposed to Denmark where a sanitised and religiously and socially acceptable variety had dominated since the days of Peter Severinus, and where during the 1620s leading intellectual figures such as Holger Rosenkrantz and Ole Worm were busy disassociating themselves from the implicit radicalism of Rosicrucianism.

This was not the case in Sweden where, for instance, the Finnish astronomer Sigfridus Aronus Forsius promoted a Paracelsianism with a strong Rosicrucian gloss, as can be seen from his *Physica* published in 1611. Forsius was the first Finnish-Swedish hymn-writer. Later he became professor of astronomy in Uppsala during the first decade of the seventeenth century. He defended Johannes Messenius, the famous alumnus of the Jesuit college in Braunsberg, in the consistory during the latter's confrontation with Rudbeckius (1610–13). Subsequently Forsius was made Royal Astronomer, but he lost his positions and from 1615 he made his living from publishing horoscopes and almanacs. By 1619 his deviant views had come to the attention of the ecclesiastical leadership and he was accused by the chapter of the cathedral in Uppsala of promoting astrological and apocalyptic errors. Undoubtedly Forsius was a radical chiliast who believed that the end was near and that a spiritual millennial kingdom was about to be established on earth. In his

*Prognosticon* published in 1609 Forsius described how humanity towards the end of the world, which was imminent, would be affected by a horrible plague, which according to Paracelsus and Forsius would be followed by the resurrection of Elias who would reveal the secrets of alchemy and inaugurate the kingdom of God.<sup>10</sup>

Of far greater importance than Forsius, however, was Johannes Bureus, a government official, architect and mechanical engineer whose mentor, as for so many of the other Swedish radicals, was the influential nobleman, Johan Skytte. As a typical Renaissance scholar, Bureus, was also deeply interested in natural philosophy, alchemy and history. Presumably on Johan Skytte's recommendation Bureus served as tutor to Gustav Adolf and his sister, and he remained close to the king throughout his reign. On the insistence of Gustav Adolf, Bureus also acted as Royal Antiquary during the 1620s, while the king on occasion witnessed the alchemical experiments undertaken by his former tutor. Even after Bureus had experienced a revelation in December 1613 which turned him into an apocalyptic prophet, and later when he publicly announced his conversion to Rosicrucianism, Johan Skytte and Gustav Adolf continued to support him. Bureus's three Rosicrucian pamphlets published in 1616 – in one of which he describes himself as the least deserving of the Rosicrucian brethren while another, entitled *Buccina iubelei ultimi* ('The Trumpet of the Last Jubilee'), dated the beginning of God's kingdom on earth to 1666 while the Day of Judgement was predicted to fall in 1673 – were all characterised by their author's attraction to mysticism and Cabbala. Simultaneously Bureus's interest in runes served to combine his antiquarian concerns with his mysticism. Despite being portrayed as a dangerous heretic by most of the leaders of the Swedish church by the 1620s, especially the court preacher Johannes Bothvidi, Bureus, not least due to his powerful patrons, was able to continue his work and publish more or less without restrictions.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, it is somewhat of a paradox that heterodox figures such as Forsius and Bureus prospered in Sweden at a time when a narrow religious and social regimentation, rooted in an intolerant Germanic Gnesio-Lutheranism, was promoted by the leaders of the Swedish church. This is especially so,

<sup>10</sup> See T. Kiiskinen, *Sigfried Aronus Forsius: Astronomer and Philosopher of Nature* (Frankfurt am Main, 2007); M. Kjellgren, *Taming the Prophets: Astrology, Orthodoxy and the Word of God in Early Modern Sweden* (Lund, 2011). For Paracelsus (Theophrastus von Hohenheim) see H. Werner, *Paracelsus. Okkulte Schriften* (Leipzig, 2009), pp. 5–67.

<sup>11</sup> H. Sandblad, *De Eskatologiska Föreställningarna i Sverige under Reformationen och Modreformationen* (Uppsala, 1942).

when it is borne in mind that the more limited uniformity advocated by Resen and Brochmand in Denmark proved so successful that those who did not share their 'orthodox' views were careful to avoid expressing it in a form which might see them accused of heterodoxy. However, as was the case with Reformed immigration into the country, the fact that in Sweden the post-Reformation church and state were unable to agree on a church policy served to enhance a climate of toleration where lay authority actively protected and promoted forms of heterodoxy for either economic or political reasons.



PART IV

\*

SOCIETY IN THE  
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY





## Demography and family, c. 1650–1815

S Ø L V I S O G N E R

### The position in 1650

Around the middle of the seventeenth century some 2 million people lived in Scandinavia. This is an estimate based mainly on counts of farms and homesteads. Half of this population lived in Sweden – Finland included – and half of them lived in Denmark, Norway and Iceland.<sup>1</sup> About 1630 Sweden-Finland may have had a population of 850,000–900,000. Denmark in 1645 – still in possession of Skåne with about 217,000 people – was approximately of the same size: 825,000. Denmark's loss of Skåne to Sweden in 1658 would have tipped the population balance dramatically in favour of the latter, were it not for Norway's 440,000 inhabitants, an estimate of the 1660s.

Iceland's population was very small throughout the period and never exceeded 51,000. An actual census, the first in Scandinavia, was taken as early as 1703 and gives a total of 50,358 Icelanders. According to the 1801 census, the population had then decreased to 48,753 persons, after a series of disasters – a smallpox epidemic in 1707–9, famine in the 1750s, a volcanic eruption in 1783 and an earthquake in 1786.

In contrast to the stagnating Icelandic population, there was a clear population rise in the rest of Scandinavia, above all in Finland (for estimated growth rates, see Chapter 33, Table 33.2). By 1750 the population in the whole

1 E. Hofsten and H. Lundström, *Swedish Population History* (Stockholm, 1976); E. Ladewig Petersen, *Fra standssamfund til rangssamfund 1500–1700*, *Dansk Socialhistorie*, 2 (København, 1981); S. Dyrvik et al., *Norsk økonomisk historie, 1: 1500–1850* (Oslo, 1992), pp. 16–33, 122–32; G. A. Gunnlaugsson, *Family and Household in Iceland 1801–1930: Studies in the Relationship between Demographic and Socio-economic Development, Social Legislation and Family and Household Structures*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia historica Upsaliensia, 154 (Uppsala, 1988), p. 17; H. Gustafsson, *Mellan kung och allmoge. Ämbetsmän, beslutsprocess och inflytande på 1700-talets Island*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Studies in history, 33 (Stockholm, 1985), pp. 25f.

region had risen from the estimated 2 million to 3.6 million, and by 1800 to some 5 million (see Chapter 33, Table 33.1). Sporadic setbacks in the population development were experienced in all of the Nordic countries during demographic crises, caused by wars, plague, famines and epidemics.<sup>2</sup> But the eighteenth century population balance was clearly positive. The 'vital revolution' took place above all after 1720 and the end of the Great Northern War. This also marked the beginning of lasting peace within Scandinavia. Waging war upon each other was no longer on the agenda. Conditions for sustained population growth ameliorated. Moreover, governments started taking an active interest in population matters.

### Public interest in population matters

In Scandinavia Lutheran orthodoxy and the military state were the two main forces behind early attempts at keeping track of the population. In Denmark some few parish records, giving information on baptisms, burials and marriages, are extant from the late sixteenth century. In Norway the oldest register still existing dates from 1624. In 1645–6 the keeping of parish registers was made obligatory by public decree for Denmark. For Norway the same happened in 1685 and 1687.<sup>3</sup>

In Denmark, Norway and Iceland, however, it was not until the 1730s that the authorities took an active interest in the statistical potential of these parish-level data. Annual reports on births, deaths and marriages were from now on collected annually. This initiative was an important stimulant to complete and control a countrywide coverage of parish registers. Soon the need was felt to supplement the current vital statistics with census data. In 1769 the first numerical census was taken in the three countries. The next census was nominative, and taken in 1787 for Denmark only. The 1801

2 H. Gille, 'The Demographic History of the Northern European Countries in the Eighteenth Century', *Population Studies*, 3 (1949); A. E. Imhof, *Aspekte der Bevölkerungsentwicklung in den nordischen Ländern: 1720–1750* (Bern, 1976); S. Dyrvik et al., *The Demographic Crises in Norway in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Some Data and Interpretations* (Bergen, 1976); S. Sogner, 'A Demographic Crisis Averted?', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 24 (1975), pp. 114–28.

3 For the methodological aspects see L.-G. Tedebrand, 'Ett gammalt svenskt ämne', *Tvärsnitt* (1983), pp. 24–32; A. S. Källemark, 'The Country that Kept Track of its Population: Methodological Aspects of Swedish Population Records', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 2 (1977), pp. 221–38; H. C. Johansen, *Befolkningsudvikling og familiestruktur i det 18. århundrede* (Odense, 1975), pp. 12–23; S. Dyrvik, *Historisk Demografi. Ei innføring i metodane* (Bergen, 1983).

census, however, again covered the whole realm and was so comprehensive in information that it serves as a historical landmark.

In Sweden and Finland, church records of baptisms, burials and marriages were kept at least in some dioceses in the first half of the seventeenth century. From 1686 it was made obligatory to do so for the whole country. What is special about Sweden is the fact that from that very same year, 1686, it also became obligatory to list every person in the parish in a general population register (*husförhörslängd*), in order to collect information on people's knowledge of the catechism and their literacy. In Sweden as well, the 1730s represent the period of an awakening statistical interest in population as such. From the middle of the eighteenth century onwards these parish-level data came to be used for statistical purposes, supplemented with census data every three years. In 1749 the *Tabellverket* was erected for the systematic annual collection of population data, headed by the *Tabellkommission*, a central bureau of statistics in embryo, and a very advanced institution for its day. In the words of Pehr Wargentin, its founding father: 'Something so orderly as our Swedish Table Work does not yet exist in any country, at least not so complete, regarding those who die every year and those who are still living, their number, sex and age. Therefore, foreigners expect good information from us in these matters.'

Due to this early data-collection on a national level, the Scandinavian countries did provide important information on population development in historical times.<sup>4</sup> Again and again researchers have tapped the sources, looking for answers to new questions, applying new methods and new approaches. We shall look closer at some of the aspects of the population development in Scandinavia in 'the long eighteenth century, c. 1650–1815'. The picture drawn will rely partly on solid evidence, partly on spotty indicators.

### Focus on the family

For a long time population researchers focused on mortality. The national annual vital statistics from 1736 onwards bore witness to dramatic years of mortality crisis, often several years in a row. The economic historian Eli F. Heckscher offered Malthusian explanations, quoting Kipling on India

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 33, Figure 33.1 and footnote 2.

about how Nature revised her accounts with a red pencil when there was not enough sustenance for a surplus population.<sup>5</sup> In the 1960s an international debate on historical mortality was started. In the case of Scandinavia, Gustaf Utterström introduced explanatory factors such as climate and disease, independent of food supply.<sup>6</sup> The case of Finland seemed to fit the Malthusian bill somewhat better, according to Eino Jutikkala.<sup>7</sup> The Norwegian case as well was explained in semi-Malthusian terms by Michael Drake.<sup>8</sup> The fact that cereal-growing Denmark had somewhat less pronounced mortality crises than her Scandinavian neighbours seemed to underline the argument.

This question will be discussed more fully below in connection with the mortality decline. Here we shall look at the other side of the coin. Why was it, in spite of high mortality and recurring devastating mortality crises, that there was definite population growth in Scandinavia in the years 1650–1815, and more than a doubling of the population? The Scandinavian economy expanded during the period, providing livelihoods for new families and new households. Children born into these new families outweigh with a vengeance the deficit caused by erratic mortality. The vital balance is positive.

Economic developments will be discussed elsewhere. Here we shall look closer at family formation. The family is important demographically because it is through the family that the generations reproduce themselves. It is important socially because in the family children are socialised and the sick and the old are taken care of. The family is also important economically because it is the nucleus of a household, the smallest unit of production and consumption. It was thus very appropriate that when the Danish demographer Hans Chr. Johansen entered the Scandinavian population debate in 1975, he called his book *Population Development and Family Structure in the Eighteenth Century*, and that his methodology was inspired by Louis Henry's family reconstitution.<sup>9</sup>

5 E. F. Heckscher, 'Sveriges befolkning från det stora nordiska krigets slut till Tabellverkets början (1720–1750)', in E. F. Heckscher, *Ekonomisk-historiska studier* (Stockholm, 1936).

6 G. Utterström, 'Two Essays on Population in Eighteenth-century Scandinavia: A Survey of Some Recent Work and Current Problems', in D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in History* (London, 1965), pp. 523–48.

7 E. Jutikkala, 'Finland's Population Movement in the Eighteenth Century', in D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in History* (London, 1965), pp. 549–69.

8 M. Drake, *Population and Society in Norway 1735–1865* (Cambridge, 1969).

9 Johansen, *Befolkningsudveklning og familiestruktur i det 18. århundrede*.

## Family and household

French historical demography as developed and advocated by Louis Henry was widely introduced in English-reading Scandinavia via England.<sup>10</sup> Research on family and household has been greatly influenced by the theoretical approaches of John Hajnal and Peter Laslett.<sup>11</sup> Laslett's typology for family households proved, and still proves, very useful. Hajnal's 'European marriage pattern' – characterised by high age at marriage, widespread celibacy, neolocality (where new couples set up a household of their own), and exchange between households of young servants – fitted well with the Scandinavian experience. Finland and Iceland, however, have slightly different chronologies of development, from each other as well as from Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

Households are formed by married couples creating a separate household based on a livelihood of their own.<sup>12</sup> Heads of the household being a married couple is the rule. If the marriage is broken by death – divorce is strictly regulated and extremely rare – the surviving spouse will remarry or retire. Remarriage was very common in the eighteenth century. Significantly, the census of 1801 in Denmark, Norway and Iceland delivered information for each of the spouses if he or she was in their first, second or third marriage – or even higher.

Wide but scattered research confirms this picture of Scandinavia as mainly situated within the framework of the European marriage pattern and household system, though of course with local variations. Scandinavia straddles the East–West barrier in Finland. In parts of Finland family formation was characterised by low age at marriage and multiple family households: a father and his sons and their families may form a joint household, or brothers and their wives keep house together (*fièrèches*). This has been seen in connection with the burn-and-beat form of agriculture which is typical of these areas, but it has also been found in other areas.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> E. A. Wrigley *et al.*, *An Introduction to English Historical Demography* (London, 1966).

<sup>11</sup> J. Hajnal, 'European Marriage Patterns in Perspective', in D. V. Glass (ed.), *Population in History* (London, 1965); P. Laslett (ed.), *Household and Family in Past Times: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America* (London, 1972).

<sup>12</sup> An overview of Nordic family history is D. Gaunt, *Familjeliv i Norden* (Stockholm, 1983).

<sup>13</sup> B. Moring, *Skårgårdsbor. Hushåll, familj och demografi i finländsk kustbygd på 1600-, 1700- och 1800-talen* (Helsinki, 1994), pp. 10–14.

The stem-family – that is when families of two generations keep house together – is another variant of the multiple family household and is found all over Scandinavia. As a rule this set-up is found on farms and involved the parent family and the heir-to-be, usually the eldest son, and his family. It is a type of household that was vanishing during the eighteenth century, giving way to the simple nuclear one-family household. There may be several reasons for this development. The retiring farmer as well as the son as the following owner seem to have preferred separate lodgings.<sup>14</sup> This can explicitly be read out of retirement contracts, where the retiring parents after the 1720s less frequently 'join at the table' but took out in goods and services what was due to them.<sup>15</sup> Improved economic conditions in the course of the eighteenth century may have made it easier for the young couple to set up their house in separate lodgings. It would certainly have been in keeping with the trends of the period: the nuclear family households were rapidly increasing in numbers, outbalancing all other family household forms. It is therefore correct to state that the typical family household in eighteenth-century Scandinavia was the nuclear family household. In charge was the married couple, two adults sharing the work and the responsibility of running the household unit.<sup>16</sup>

### Marriage and celibacy

Marriage constitutes the crucial factor in the creation of families and households. Age at marriage was high for women and for men – typically in the age group 25–29. Half of all women in central Scandinavia were married in this age group. In Iceland this was not the case until the age group 30–34, whereas for Finland it is indicated that half of all women may have been married before the age of 25. The spouses were more or less of the same age. Cottar bridegrooms and their brides tended to have a somewhat higher marriage age than did farmers and their brides. Substantial proportions of women never married – some 10–15 per cent of women were still single around the age of 50 in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. (See Table 21.1.) In Iceland, on the other hand, as many as 25 per cent of the women in 1801 were

14 S. Sogner, *Folkevekst og flytting. En historisk-demografisk studie i 1700 årenes Øst-Norge* (Oslo, 1979), pp. 278–302.

15 E. Hovdhaugen, 'Frå det gamle bondesamfunnet. Den gamle føderådsskipnaden', *Norge* (1962) pp. 1–78.

16 S. Sogner and H. Sandvik, 'Minors in Law, Partners in Work, Equals in Worth', *La donna nell'economia secc. XIII–XVIII*, 2:21 (1989), pp. 633–53.

Table 21.1 *Proportion of women single in different age groups and at different ages*

	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–44	45–49	50–54
Sweden 1750	73	43	26	16	12	10	
Sweden 1800	78	48	30	20	15	12	
Norway 1801	81	54	34	27	19	18	13
	age 20	age 25	age 30	age 35	age 40	age 45	age 50
Denmark 1801	98	78	36	17	17	6	9
	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–44	45–49	
Iceland 1703	95	79	51	48	41	43	
	21–30	31–40	41–50	51–60			
Iceland 1801	69	34	26	23			
	15–24	25–34	45–54				
Northern Karelia, Finland 1751	47	11	4				
Northern Karelia, Finland 1800	71	20	2				
Northern Karelia, Finland 1880	86	32	14				

Source: Gunnarsson, *Fertility and Nuptiality*; Gunnlaugsson, *Family and Household*, p. 62; Hofsten and Lundström, *Swedish Population History*, p. 35; Johansen, *Befolkningsudvikling og familiestruktur*, p. 90; NOS B 134, *Folketeljinga 1801*, p. 96; Lutz and Pitkänen, *Tracing Back the Eighteenth Century 'Nuptiality Transition'*.

still single around the age of 50. Even so this was a remarkable development since the census of 1703, when 40 per cent of the women were still celibate at this age.<sup>17</sup>

The Finnish situation represents the opposite development. There are no national statistics before 1880, but provincial figures from eastern Finland indicate that marriage was earlier and almost universal in the eighteenth century – in this area more than half of all women were married in the age group 20–24, and only 2–4 per cent were still single at the age of 50. It has

17 G. Gunnarsson, *Fertility and Nuptiality in Iceland's Demographic History, Meddelande från Ekonomisk-Historiska Institutionen, Lunds Universitet*, 12 (Lund, 1980); G. A. Gunnlaugsson, *Family and Household in Iceland 1801–1930: Studies in the Relationship between Demographic and Socio-economic Development, Social Legislation and Family and Household Structures*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia historica Upsaliensia, 154 (Uppsala, 1988), p. 62.

Table 21.2 *Illegitimacy ratios*

Year	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland
1751–60	2.4	–	–	1.4	–
1761–70	2.6	–	–	–	–
1771–80	2.9	4.2	3.6	–	–
1781–90	3.9	4.8*	–	2.8	9.6
1791–1800	5.0	–	–	–	–
1801–10	6.1	6.3	7.4	–	–
1811–20	6.8	7.4			

\*1781–3

Source: Hofsten and Lundström, *Swedish Population History*, p. 31; NOS XII 245. *Historisk statistikk* 1968, pp. 44–5; Gille, 'The Demographic History of the Northern European Countries', p. 32; Johansen, *Befolkningsudvikling og familiestruktur*, p. 103; Gunnarsson, *Fertility and Nuptiality*, p. 23.

been argued that the European marriage pattern did not have a breakthrough in this area until at least the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>18</sup>

### Fertility – illegitimate, legitimate and premarital

The difference in nuptiality patterns is very interesting considering the different population growth across the Scandinavian countries in the eighteenth century. Denmark, Sweden and Norway had medium growth rates – 0.3, 0.5 and 0.7 per cent per annum respectively. In Iceland, on the other hand, population growth stagnated, while Finland's population grew very fast – 1.1 per cent per annum (see Chapter 33, Table 33.2). Nuptiality will of necessity reflect upon the number of births, as the great majority of children were born within wedlock (see Table 21.2): 95–7 per cent in Sweden, Denmark and Norway. In Iceland, on the other hand, only 90 per cent of the children seem to have been born in wedlock at this time, as against 96–8 per cent in Finland. Illegitimacy was very high (10 per cent) in Iceland in the period 1771–1800 (where fewer married and, of those who did, many did so later in life), and very low (under 3 per cent) in Finland, where it is indicated that marriage at this time was as yet very early and almost universal. In central Scandinavia some 2.5 per cent of all births around the middle of the

<sup>18</sup> W. Lutz and K. Pitkänen, *Tracing Back the Eighteenth Century 'Nuptiality Transition' in Finland* (Laxenburg, 1986).



Table 21.3 Age specific fertility rates for married women aged 20–44 years (Nordic country parishes in the eighteenth century; births per annum per 1,000 women in five-year age groups)

Parish	period	20–24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–44
Möklinta, Sweden	1650–80	408	363	312	260	164
Dala, Sweden	1776–1830	438	358	322	251	137
Glostrup, Denmark	1677–1790	558	426	380	314	191
Danish parishes	1760–1801	495	415	358	326	181
Etne, Norway	1715–94	462	401	352	277	190
Rendalen, Norway	1733–80	508	415	361	306	197
Houtskär, Finland	18th century	398	366	291	221	84

Source: Winberg, *Folkökning och proletarisering*, p. 229; Åkerman, 'En befolkning', pp. 273–302; Thestrup, 'Methodological Problems', pp. 1–26; Johansen, *Befolkningsudvikling og familiestruktur*, p. 112; Dyrvik, 'Historical Demography in Norway', p. 39; Sogner, *Folkevekst og flytning*, p. 345; Moring, *Skärgårdsbor*, p. 99.

eighteenth century took place outside of marriage, the proportion rising to some 5–7 per cent around 1800.

Fertility within marriage was very similar to what has been found for other European farmer societies (Table 21.3). Children were born every two or three years throughout the time spent in marriage, and mothers were in their early 40s when they gave birth for the last time. Prolonged breastfeeding will be the cause of the generous spacing between births.<sup>19</sup> With the high mortality of the time, it is not to be expected that birth-control early in the marriage was resorted to in the population at large, a question that has been debated.<sup>20</sup>

Theoretical fertility rates such as those presented in Table 21.3 will give sibling groups numbering 7–9 children. In practice, actual fertility was lower. Not all couples lived in unbroken marriage for 25 years. They might have married later, or one or both of the spouses may have died prematurely. As a rule, sibling groups are not so large.

Brides tended to be pregnant at the wedding. Bridal pregnancy was a widespread phenomenon in the Scandinavian countries. It was the rule, rather than the exception.<sup>21</sup> Marriage was in medieval times a private contract,

19 U.-B. Lithell, *Kvinnoarbete och barn tillsyn i 1700- och 1800-talets Österbottn* (Uppsala, 1988).

20 J. Rogers, 'Nordic Family History', *Journal of Family History*, 18 (1993), pp. 291–314.

21 S. Sogner, 'Illegitimacy in the Old Rural Society: Some Reflections on the Problems Arising from Two Norwegian Family Reconstitution Studies', in S. Åkerman *et al.* (eds.), *Chance and Change: Social and Economic Studies in Historical Demography in the*

an agreement between the parent families of the young couple, with clear economic bindings. The new household was founded on contributions from either side, and land that women brought into marriage would return to her kin in the event that she bore no children in the marriage. After the Reformation, the state church made marriage a public contract. Children born to parents who were publicly betrothed were accepted as legitimate, as if their parents were already married. At the same time very strict legal action was introduced regarding fornication. Public norms and social norms were brought into conflict. Traditionally an unmarried pregnant woman could either expect marriage – the sexual act constituting a promise of marriage – or, if the man remonstrated, she could sue for breach of promise, with the probable outcome of having her honour restored as well as remuneration, both of which would enhance her future marriage prospects. Now this line of action was no longer possible. The woman was punished and fined, and the man – if he was a soldier, as was often the case in the militarised state – would go almost scot-free.<sup>22</sup>

### Household structure

In the household of the married couple were found their biological children, resident relatives, lodgers and servants. The distribution of household members in the various households indicates that we have two main types, very suitably named the centripetal and the centrifugal types.<sup>23</sup> The production activity of the former requires labour and it tends to attract persons from outside and to have many members. The latter is smaller in size, has less household production activity and hence less need for extra hands from outside the family, and the tendency for a household of this type is quite the opposite. It flings out supernumerary members to work for their living somewhere else.

The situation in Rendalen, a Norwegian rural parish, in 1801 illustrates this finding.<sup>24</sup> Married couples headed 95 per cent of the households. These can be sorted according to social groups, farmers on the one hand and cottars on

*Baltic Area* (Odense, 1978), pp. 61–8; S. Sogner, 'Illegitimitet i et kjønnshistorisk perspektiv på maktstaten i tidlig nytid', in A. M. Møller (ed.), *Folk og erhverv* (Odense, 1995), pp. 33–45.

22 K. Telste, *Mellom liv og lov. Kontroll av seksualitet i Ringerike og Hallingdal 1652–1710* (Oslo, 1993).

23 A. J. Avdem, . . . gjort kva gjerast skulle. *Om arbeid og levekår for kvinner på Lesja ca. 1910–1930* (Oslo, 1984), p. 104.

24 S. Sogner, 'Familie, husstand og befolkningsutvikling', *Heimen*, 17 (1978), pp. 699–710.

Table 21.4 Household structure in the country parishes of Dala, Sweden (1780), Krønge, Denmark (1787) and Rendalen, Norway (1801)

	Farmers			Cottars		
	Dala	Krønge	Rendalen	Dala	Krønge	Rendalen
<b>Nuclear family</b>	4.5	3.9	4.8	2.9	3.1	3.3
<b>Kin</b>	0.2	0.4	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.2
<b>Foster children</b>	–	–	0.1	–	–	0.03
<b>Servants</b>	0.8	0.9	1.4	0.1	0.1	0.03
<b>Lodgers</b>	–	–	0.4	–	–	0.2
<b>Total</b>	5.4	5.2	7.6	3.0	3.6	3.7

Source: Winberg, *Folkökning och proletarisering*, p. 300; Sogner, *Folkevekst og flytting*, p. 291; Johansen, *Befolkningsudvikling og familiestruktur*, p. 139.

the other. Each group shows a definite structural pattern, which is blurred over if the mean is considered. (See Table 21.4.) Farmers' households are more than twice the size of the cottars' households – 7.6 persons versus 3.7. Each component of the household was smaller in the cottar household – fewer resident children, fewer resident kin, fewer lodgers, and above all hardly any servants. The same difference between farmer and cottar households is found elsewhere. Examples are given from the parish of Dala in Sweden in 1780 – 5.4 versus 3.0 – and the parish of Krønge in Denmark in 1787 – 5.2 versus 3.6. Also the distribution of persons in categories is very similar.<sup>25</sup>

The eighteenth century saw a development characterised by a marked increase in the number of 'centrifugal' households. This was due to new industries offering opportunities for young people to marry and set up a new household. For instance, in Rendalen in the 1660s practically all households – 97 per cent – had been farmer households. By 1801 the number of households had tripled. But now only 50 per cent of all households were farmer households. The other 50 per cent were cottar and lodger households. A social cleavage had taken place, in this particular case in the wake of commercial exploitation of the forests. The new development opened up opportunities for the simpler type of household, making it possible for more

<sup>25</sup> H. N. Larsen, 'Familie- og husstandsstrukturen på landet i det 18. århundrede', in H. C. Johansen (ed.), *Studier i dansk befolkningshistorie* (Odense, 1976), pp. 121–88.

young couples to set up a house and start a family and thus contribute to the population growth. The same – *mutatis mutandis* – can be seen everywhere. The economy may differ, so may the pace of development, but judging by the very revealing structure of the households, the trend is transparent: the young servants married into households of their own – simpler households than those they served in, but still giving shelter to families of their own.

### Children and servants

The prevalence of children in nine out of ten households is a striking characteristic of the eighteenth century. One-third of the population was under the age of 15. Marriage was synonymous with being fertile. As a Swedish historian has put it, ‘a couple married not because they were expecting a child, but rather the child was conceived because they decided to marry’.<sup>26</sup> Nine out of ten children were the children of the heads of household, born in or before the marriage or in a previous marriage.

But other children as well are found in the household. Lodgers and resident kin frequently had children. Unwed mothers and their children would serve or lodge in the households of others, or stay in the households of relatives. Foster children should probably most realistically be classed as servants. The servant group comprised a substantial proportion of children – ‘seven years old, old enough to earn her keep’, to quote a seventeenth-century judge passing sentence in a case involving a little girl. According to one study of the situation in 1801, 90 per cent of children aged 9 were still in their parental home, but then started to leave in a steady stream, and by the age of 19 only 45 per cent of them were still at home; 55 per cent were now servants in other people’s homes.<sup>27</sup>

This important exchange of children, young and old, between households in the capacity of servants was underpinned by legal obligations.<sup>28</sup> In the eighteenth century all Scandinavian countries except Iceland passed decrees to the effect that young people from the lower orders were obliged to serve, and for low wages. The most restrictive period was between 1733 and 1754,

26 A. S. Kälveborn, ‘Att vänta barn när man gifter sig. Föräktenskapliga förbindelser och giftermålsmönster i 1800-talets Sverige’, *Historisk Tidskrift* (1977), pp. 181–99.

27 J. Oldervoll, ‘Det store oppbruddet’, in S. Langholm and F. Sejersted (eds.), *Vandring. Festskrift til Ingrid Semmingsen* (Oslo, 1980), pp. 91–107.

28 A. E. Imhof, ‘Der Arbeitszwang für das landwirtschaftliche Dienstvolk’, in A. E. Imhof, *Aspekte der Bevölkerungsentwicklung in den nordischen Ländern: 1720–1750* (Bern, 1976), pp. 59–74.

and the enforcement lasted until between 1788 and 1805. The efficiency of the enforcement, however, must have varied quite a lot, along with the push and pull of market forces.

## Conclusion

From a family-household point of view, the question was about who was to draw the rewards from the new economic life: the old heads of centripetal households through their unmarried servants, young and old, male and female, or the newcomers who aspired to set up centrifugal households of their own. The latter won, but the battle was long drawn out and is difficult to distinguish clearly.

First there was an exodus of male servants from the households.<sup>29</sup> Already at the beginning of the eighteenth century the sex ratio among servants in Norway was 45, that is to say there were 45 male servants for every 100 female servants. In 1801 the situation is the same. There was a demand for male labour, in agriculture and elsewhere. The cottar group, which came into its own in agriculture during the eighteenth century, represented a married servant with a family household of his own. Outside agriculture male wages in the new trades – shipping, mining, forestry etc. – readily attracted young men away from service and into new, possibly more independent, positions. The military employed soldiers and sailors in the army and the navy that were being developed. The earnings were limited, but opened up the possibility of establishing modest family households, whose survival would depend upon the consolidated labour of man, wife and children.

<sup>29</sup> S. Dyrvik, 'Hushaldsutviklinga i Norge 1800–1920', in *Familien i förändring i 18- og 1900-tallet og Mødeberetning. Rapporter til den XIX nordiske historikerkongress Odense 1984*, 3 (Odense, 1986), pp. 33–8.

## Economy and social conditions

DAN H. ANDERSEN AND JENS CHR. V. JOHANSEN

### Scandinavia, 1700–1800

The Scandinavian countries in the eighteenth century show significant similarities in their economic and social development and in their public policies. There were of course differences in the timing, prioritising and implementation of their economic policies, but in general the similarities are striking. One explanation is that war and the power struggle between Denmark and Sweden might have given their economic development a certain synchronicity. Another explanation is that the Scandinavian countries were subject to the same international economic trade conditions. The most important elements here were the upturn in trade in the 1700s, international price-movements and, last but not least, the European wars which steadily grew longer in duration and more intensive, and which offered opportunities for neutral states.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Economic policy*

Both Sweden-Finland and Denmark-Norway lived in a war economy during the century's first two decades, and even afterwards their communities were significantly militarised. Sweden-Finland was constantly at war between 1700 and 1720/21, and although Denmark-Norway's participation in the Great Northern War only stretched from 1709 to 1720, the intervening period was

<sup>1</sup> The authors take joint responsibility for the text, but each of them has written his own sections. Dan H. Andersen has written about agriculture in Denmark and Norway, forestry in Denmark and Norway, mining and metalworking in Norway, fisheries in Norway, overseas colonies and shipping, living standards and the consumer society. Jens Chr. V. Johansen has written about agriculture in Sweden and Finland, forestry in Sweden and Finland, mining and metalworking in Sweden, fisheries in Sweden, villagers and village industries. The introduction about economic policy was a joint effort.

characterised by the government's political, military and economic preparations for a final showdown with Sweden.

Denmark's participation in the Great Northern War cost the state treasury around 35 million *rigsdalers* over and above normal state spending. Yet the national debt had only risen to a little over 4 million *rigsdalers* by the end of the war.<sup>2</sup> The remedies were overwhelmingly the traditional ones: extraordinary taxes, domestic loans given more or less voluntarily, large delays in reimbursement for deliveries and payment of salaries, and income from conquered territories. The currency was debased, and from 1713, as a novelty, there was an issue of banknotes, which were regarded with great mistrust by the population, but which helped to solve the state's regular liquidity problems. In all, around 1 million *rigsdaler* were issued in the form of banknotes, and although the Danish state traditionally treated its creditors harshly, these notes were called in after the war and exchanged for their full value.

Sweden's participation in the war lasted longer and stretched the country's resources to a greater degree, although for years at a time the Swedish army was quartered on foreign soil and lived off contributions extorted from the local population. Sweden's method of financing the war was, to a greater degree than Denmark's, based on supplies of produce, not least because the military were primarily indigenous and their expenses were more demographic than financial. The financial outlay on the military was initially covered for many years by the same traditional means as in Denmark. From 1715 onwards Swedish society was adapted to a greater degree for total war, in which price regulation and control of foreign trade played a particularly prominent part. At the same time there was an issue of interest-bearing bonds, which served as banknotes for payment of larger amounts, and from May 1716 large amounts of emergency coins were minted of much higher denominations than the value of their metal content. In contrast to Denmark, these Swedish coins were not redeemed at their full value, and rough justice was meted out towards the government's creditors after the war.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of the Great Northern War in 1720–1, both states had suffered demographic losses and incurred large national debts and an industrial sector scarred by many years of war. Sweden had abolished the autocracy and was reduced to the status of a minor power on the periphery of Europe, on the

2 J. Boisen Schmidt, *Studier over statshusholdningen i kong Frederik IV's regeringstid 1699–1730* (København, 1967), pp. 262f.

3 G. Lindegren, *Svensk ekonomisk politik under den görtzka perioden* (Lund, 1941).

level of Denmark. Economically, the loss of Sweden's Baltic provinces had reduced the state's income by more than half. However, opportunities for political initiatives in trade and industry were greatly enhanced by the peace settlement and the greater independence of both states from political ties.

Several years after the peace agreement both states introduced a mercantilist policy with the emphasis on trade and the founding of towns, which besides marked increases in tolls and direct prohibitions on imports included bringing in foreign experts, establishing indigenous manufactories with state subsidies and import prohibitions etc. Sweden introduced these policies earlier, and they can be seen as an attempt to introduce Navigation Acts after the British model. The Swedish Products Edict of 1724 and the Danish Customs Tariff of 1742 were, however, as one in their aims and their methods, in ordering imports of goods at first hand and forbidding foreign ships to engage in domestic voyages. Shipping was moreover subsidised by the establishment of privileged companies, the concluding of trade agreements and the expansion of the network of consuls, not least in Southern Europe. Added to this was a policy of neutrality during this period of Great Power strife, which was not only a passive declaration of non-involvement but also an attempt to maximise the economic benefits of neutrality in the long and short terms.

In both Denmark and Sweden the state took an active part in the import of knowledge and technology from Europe's more advanced economies. These 'imports' were very person-centred and consisted primarily of importing experts with know-how and sending out spies. Those sent out included naval officers on their traditional year-long foreign voyages. Membership of societies with international ties seems to have played a significant role in both the legal and illegal collection of knowledge. In some cases the importation of whole workforces with their machines was organised. Many of these projects came to grief, but espionage appears to have been of some importance for the building up and development of, for example, the glass industry in Norway and the iron industry in Sweden.<sup>4</sup>

Differences in policy and development can be put down to a mixture of structure, tradition and coincidence. Sweden-Finland's earlier introduction of a more expansive and mercantilist economic policy was at least in part based on international trends in prices which were favourable to Swedish exports of

4 K. Bruland, 'Skills, Learning and the International Diffusion of Technology: A Perspective on Scandinavian Industrialization', in M. Berg and K. Bruland (eds.), *Technological Revolutions in Europe: Historical Perspective* (Cheltenham, 1998), pp. 176–8.



metals, while an agricultural country like Denmark was hard hit by the drop in prices of agricultural products. It is debatable, however, whether or not the Danish autocracy laid greater emphasis on state finances and 'sound' money than the new democratic oligarchy in Sweden did. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century Sweden had operated with a network of selected staple towns which had a monopoly on the import and export of goods, and this continued into the Age of Liberty from 1718 onwards.

In Denmark-Norway on the contrary there was a pragmatic concentration of initiatives situated in the capital of København, in recognition of the modest size of towns in the provinces. In Sweden so-called *kontorer* (offices) were set up to control rates of exchange for currency, iron exports and prices and the import of salt. There was nothing of the kind in Denmark, where the typical methods of control apart from tolls and import restrictions were privileged trading companies and factories with different degrees of subsidy and monopoly. It was typical of Danish policy that privileges and monopolies after a period of maturation were extended to a wider circle and then abolished. Sweden had no colonies in the eighteenth century apart from the insignificant Caribbean island of St Bartholomew, which was conquered in 1785, while Denmark possessed minor areas in four continents with the consequences that implied for trade and shipping policies.

In Sweden there was an overt political struggle between two proto-parties, the Hats and the Caps; the former supporting mercantilist policies while the latter was for free trade. The struggle between the parties resulted in a more open debate than in the Danish autocracy, where it was only by royal request that an economic debate began in the 1750s. But in general it is remarkable how the Scandinavian countries, despite their different forms of government, reacted relatively speaking as one and took advantage of international and political developments at the same time as they were implementing internal structural reforms which also demonstrated similarities to each other.

## Agriculture, 1700–1800

### *Denmark and Norway*

Both countries experienced significant demographic growth in the course of the century without any change in the respective percentages of the population living in urban and rural areas. Both at the beginning and the end of the eighteenth century, about 80 per cent of the population lived on the land. In this period of demographic transformation, it seems that a rapidly increasing rural population was able to fend for itself without moving to the towns or

Table 22.1 *Division of land between crown estates and other manors, c. 1700*

Division of <i>hartkorn</i> <sup>5</sup>	%
Noble proprietors	46
Middle classes	17
Crown	25
Church and dioceses	10
Freeholders	1–2

Source: K.-E. Frandsen and L. Dombernowsky, *Det danske landbrugs historie, 2: 1536–1810* (Odense, 1988), p. 214.

emigrating overseas in any significant numbers. In what follows, we shall first analyse developments in Denmark, then in Norway.

In the year 1700 the Danish agricultural sector comprised over 700 manors, around 60,000 peasant farms and 15,000–20,000 smallholdings. The overwhelming majority of peasant-run farms had become tenant farms, since wars and other forms of hardship had reduced the numbers of peasant proprietors to around 1,700.<sup>6</sup> In geographical terms the manors were unevenly distributed. The Little Belt represents a dividing area both as regards the numbers of manors and their size. Estates west of the Little Belt were in general smaller, and there were fewer manors in mid and west Jylland and the areas around Kolding and Randers. On the other hand they were clustered close together on Fyn and Sjælland, with the exception of South Sjælland and Falster, where private estates in certain districts were replaced by large crown farms for the upkeep of the army's cavalry regiments. (See Table 22.1.) The decisive factors have been historically determined conditions, soil and proximity to a buyers' market. The size of farms swung between property empires with several manors and hundreds of peasant farms spread over many provincial towns in Sjælland and Fyn to large peasant farms with several tenant farms under them.

In the period after 1720 there was a change in both the division and distribution of landed estates. The most important rural reform in the 1780s was the crown's diminished share, since lack of money after the Great Northern War from 1709–20/21 and the short conflict with Russia in 1762 led

<sup>5</sup> S. A. Hansen, *Økonomisk vækst i Danmark, 1* (København, 1972), p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> *Hartkorn* was a growth target based on the fertility of the land, and formed the basis on which land taxes were calculated.

to extensive sales of crown estates in the 1720s and 1760s. It is characteristic that while few tenant farmers bought the freehold of their land during the sell-off of crown estates in the 1720s, the proportion was significantly larger in the second round of sell-offs. One example is the Dronningborg district in Jylland, where around 30 per cent of the sold-off land was bought by peasants at the sale in 1765.<sup>7</sup> The purchases of freehold were made possible here by improved trading conditions and the goodwill of the state, but they were also undoubtedly grounded in a defensive desire to avoid becoming subject to one of the new middle-class estate owners, who seem to have been both hard taskmasters and pioneers in the agricultural sector.

The estate-owning class was mixed. Apart from the old nobility it consisted of rich burghers from the capital and the trading towns, military personnel and foreign immigrants. The proportion with a burgher background grew from under a quarter in 1720 to almost a third in 1770. Many of the successful merchant tycoons from the period of flourishing trade in the last decades of the century bought an estate, but it is unclear to what extent fortunes earned in trade and shipping were invested in agriculture, and to what extent the new estate owners constituted a particularly progressive element in estate management.

### The rural community

At the top of the social and economic pyramid of local society stood the estate owner. His authority derived not only from his position as the biggest landowner, but also from the state's delegation to him of a significant amount of its administrative, economic and in some cases juridical authority. The state took recompense for the privileges enjoyed by the manor and the estate owner: apart from expenses incurred in what amounted to public administration, the estate owner also stood as a guarantee for the tenant farmers' tax payments and for abandoned farms.

### The manor

Most manors and some vicarages had gradually freed themselves from the community of cultivators and their lands were now for the most part tilled by the servants of the *hovbønder* (tenant farmers) who owed labour service on the manorial fields – supplemented by smallholders as day-labourers. With tax-exemption on manorial lands, the right to use the labour force and horses of

<sup>7</sup> K.-E. Frandsen and L. Dombernowsky, *Det danske landbrugs historie*, 2: 1536–1810, ed. C. Bjørn *et al.* (Odense, 1988), p. 93.

their tenants, leased lands and ample opportunity to organise the work of cultivation without reference to the needs of others, the manors had the highest productivity and constituted a modernising element in the rural community. One unsolved question is to what degree, and how speedily, did tenant farmers learn from the more advanced cultivation techniques of the manor and apply what they had learned to their own land after enclosure and the move to outfield farms. Manorial lands were often farmed-out for shorter or longer periods of years, which undoubtedly had the additional benefit of conferring a significant degree of agricultural expertise in a situation where the proprietor himself could not or would not cultivate his own land. Some contracts contained clauses to the effect that the lessee would implement significant changes to the lands and the methods of cultivation, in return for what one might expect were lower rentals.<sup>8</sup> The manor might also be involved in forestry, fisheries and tile-production, which was primarily carried out by day-labourers.

### The tenant farms

Around nine-tenths of the land on an estate was tilled by tenant farmers, who leased their farms and land. The conditions were hallowed by tradition. The most important elements were *indfæstning* (a sum paid at the commencement or renewal of a lease), *landgilde* (manorial dues) and labour service on the manorial lands. Payment of the manorial dues in the form of agricultural produce was fixed by tradition, while the *indfæstning* depended on the status of the farm and the negotiating situation between the two parties. Labour service on the manorial lands was another area in the relationship between proprietor and tenant farmers where the former had an opportunity to force up the burden of servitude. If things did not develop in the direction of a model with large estates being worked by casual labourers, this can be seen as an expression of the general perception that the tenant farm represented the rural community as the centre of production and provision of goods. This also applied to the state's fiscal interests in that, apart from a few periods of vacillation, the state was largely successful in opposing the shutting down of peasant farms and the confiscation of their lands by the manors. Between 1682 and 1770 only 1.6 per cent of the country's *hartkorn* ceased to be cultivated as peasant land.<sup>9</sup>

8 The Danish Prices and Wages Archive, Institute of History, Copenhagen University. The Holsteinborg Estate Archive, older tenancy agreements nos.184 and 185. Zealand County Archive.

9 Frandsen and Dombernowsky, in *Det danske landbrugs historie*, 2, p. 93.

To lose a farm was a social disaster, but not to the extent of being forced to seek poor relief. An analysis of source evidence for wages from several estates shows peasants, who had lost their farm, working as day-labourers on the estate. We can assume that a mix of paternalism and self-interest in wishing to avoid sizeable payouts for poor relief would also have assured this group a certain economic security – modest, no doubt, and involving them in debt up to their ears – but perhaps appreciated by the individual as being preferable to slaving away without any prospects on a dilapidated tenant farm.<sup>10</sup> The same mix of paternalism and economic calculation may have come into play in relation to the ageing tenant or his widow. The proprietor of the estate had an interest in providing for their old age with an agreement about their giving up the farm, but the farm would be handed over to a new tenant before it became too run-down, and without burdening the new tenant too much with payments to the departing tenant. Tenancy agreements could also contain conditions regarding the care of orphaned children or other family members.

### The smallholding

The tenant farmer's economic and legal inferiority to the proprietor of the estate had to some extent a counterpart in the smallholder's inferior status with regard to the tenant farmer. In return for his rent and labour services the latter could rent a house with a small piece of ground attached on the tenanted land. If the tenant had to maintain an unnecessarily large number of horses in order to fulfil his labour service on the manorial lands, he was allowed in recompense to levy a high charge for ploughing the smallholder's little strip of land. But the smallholder in his turn could look down on the landless farm labourer, who was wholly reliant on being able to work for others. So, as the century wore on, the pressure affecting the population was gradually directed down towards the lowest level of society.

### Regional differences

In general, conditions for the peasants seem to have been hardest on Sjælland, and best on the fertile lands of Funen, while Jylland showed significant variations, with a gradual transition between farmers and smallholders. This can also be seen in the numbers of smallholders, in that around 1700 there were a few more farmers than smallholders and farm labourers on Sjælland,

<sup>10</sup> D. H. Andersen, M. Ehlers and E. Helmer Pedersen, *A History of Prices and Wages in Denmark, 1660–1800*, 2: *The Manor* (Copenhagen, 2004).

while a hundred years later there were twice as many smallholders and farm labourers as farmers. The number of smallholders was greater on Sjælland, and the increase also seems to have occurred most rapidly there. Around 1800 there were equal numbers of farmers and smallholders/farm labourers on the face of the countryside.<sup>11</sup>

### Systems of cultivation

It has been calculated that in 1750 the total area of land in Denmark used for agriculture was c. 2.2 million hectares, divided up into 1.2 million hectares of cultivated land and 1 million hectares of meadow and pasture-land. The cultivation has been characterised as extensive, with small areas of corn and extensive areas of grass and meadow.<sup>12</sup> The water table was higher then than it is now, and as a consequence of poor drainage, large areas were swampy, and malaria was a serious health problem in certain districts. Throughout the century the estates experimented with different methods of cultivation, from a primitive three-field system around 1700 to crop-rotation or Holstein cultivation in the second half of the century. This involved dividing the field into an uneven number of strips (7, 9, 11), which in rotation were left fallow or planted with corn or grass. The introduction of crop-rotation demanded a very considerable input of labour to clear and divide up the fields. It is characteristic that the systems of cultivation were inflexible, to the extent that the manors could not react quickly to alterations in prices, both between crops and in the form of changes in trading relationships with their customers. At any rate, wildly alternating prices have made it difficult to identify a long-term trend.<sup>13</sup>

In rural villages all over Denmark, with the exception of Bornholm and parts of north and west Sjælland, farms and houses were tightly packed together, which set the parameters for social interaction. These parameters were decided by the community and were regulated by village law, with written rules in the form of ordinances called *vider* (by-laws). According to these by-laws, the smallholders had no formal rights. The lands of each tenant farm consisted of a large number of scattered narrow fields, which gave a significant degree of security at the cost of a significant amount of wasted time.

11 Frandsen and Dombernowsky, in *Det danske landbrugs historie*, 2, p. 360.

12 S. P. Jensen, 'Kobbelbrug, kløver og kulturjord', *Bol og By*, 1 (1998), pp. 37, 40.

13 M. T. H. Bork, 'Priser og bytteforhold i den sjællandske hovedgårdsøkonomi i det 18. århundrede', in D. H. Andersen et al. (eds.), *Landbrug, lokalhistorie og langt fra Danmark* (Odense, 2002).

Table 22.2 *Annual tax on average farm*

	Annual tax on average farm	Tax adjusted according to type		
	<i>Rigsdaler</i>	Rye	Barley	Oats
1700–9	15.1	100	100	100
1710–19	21.5	138	131	120
1720–9	18.0	120	118	103
1730–9	14.7	119	87	102
1740–9	16.1	95	94	80
1750–9	15.5	100	93	78
1760–9	18.5	93	94	79
1770–9	20.4	93	100	82
1780–9	22.5	83	81	66
1790–9	23.6	88	91	71

Source: C. Rafner, 'Fæstegårdsmændenes skattebyrder 1660–1802', *Fortid og Nutid*, 33 (1986), p. 93. The indexed figures are based on Claus Rafner's figures.

### Agricultural crises and government measures

This form of agriculture centred round the estate and the tenant farm was affected by two crises in the eighteenth century. The first was a price and marketing crisis, which led to tightening of the structure; the second was an economic revival, which led to a groundbreaking transformation.

During the Great Northern War there was no warfare on Danish soil, and by far the majority of losses in the war were among professional soldiers, who to a great extent were recruited abroad. The rural militia, which was set up in 1701, was made up of 15,000 men, but although several regiments took part in the bloody battles of the war, the Danish rural community was not exposed to anything like the same bloodletting of young men as its Swedish counterpart. Instead, the price of war was paid primarily by higher taxation (see Table 22.2), enforced levies and compulsory labour.

From the mid 1720s the prices of agricultural products fell and trading relationships relative to the towns worsened. After the price crisis had subsided in the second half of the 1730s, Denmark was affected by a devastating cattle disease which between 1745 and 1752 killed off a significant proportion of the stock. Possibilities of sales were affected by a general European sales crisis combined with measures taken by the Dutch against the import of bullocks. This resulted in, among other things, sharply falling prices for land. The government's reaction was a mixture of measures to relieve the situation on the estates combined with legislation aimed at

securing their workforce and markets. Taxes on the agricultural sector were lowered by 11 per cent in 1731, but the most controversial measure was the *stavnsbånd* (ascription law) in Denmark and the corn monopoly in Norway. The *stavnsbånd* was introduced in 1733 and laid down that male peasants between 14 and 36 years of age were not allowed to leave their estate, something that was tightened up as time went on. In 1735 imports of foreign corn to Denmark itself and southern Norway were forbidden. This guaranteed Danish agriculture an assured market, but Norwegian tradition records it as an attack on Norway. Not only did the monopoly bring about higher corn prices in Norway, but a poor harvest and the Danes' insufficient capacity to supply Norway meant that the time that elapsed before imports were allowed again could result in shortages and even famine in Norway. Both the *stavnsbånd* and the corn monopoly were abolished in 1788 as part of the agricultural reforms of that year.

The economic situation changed in mid century, and, apart from interruptions like the repercussions from a series of poor harvests in the 1770s, the agricultural sector benefited from rising prices and good sales for the remainder of the century. From the 1750s, with the blessing and even encouragement of the government, there was a meaningful debate about economic conditions, and not least about reforms within agriculture. The 1780s saw the culmination of the countryside reforms, with the abolition of the *stavnsbånd* in 1788 as the symbolic culmination in the eyes of posterity; but already in the 1750s there had been initiatives at both the local and national levels in the direction of changes in cultivation techniques, starting with the abolition of the open-field system, and subsequent exchange of strip holdings for one compact holding (*udskiftning*) and settlement on outlying farms (*udflytning*).

### *Udskiftning* and *udflytning*

These are blanket terms for three phenomena which were often, but not always, consecutive: an enclosure of the common land, in which each individual shareholder, most often an estate owner, had his share of the land allotted, gathered together and fenced in; a further division in which each individual tenant farmer had his part of the common land gathered together, ideally in one place, more often in several; and, finally, that each tenant farm had its land gathered together. (See Figure 22.1.) This gathering together of tenanted land often took place in the form of a star, with the collected strips radiating out from the village. This had the advantage that the security and mutual help offered by the village was combined with a more rational



Number of  
villages

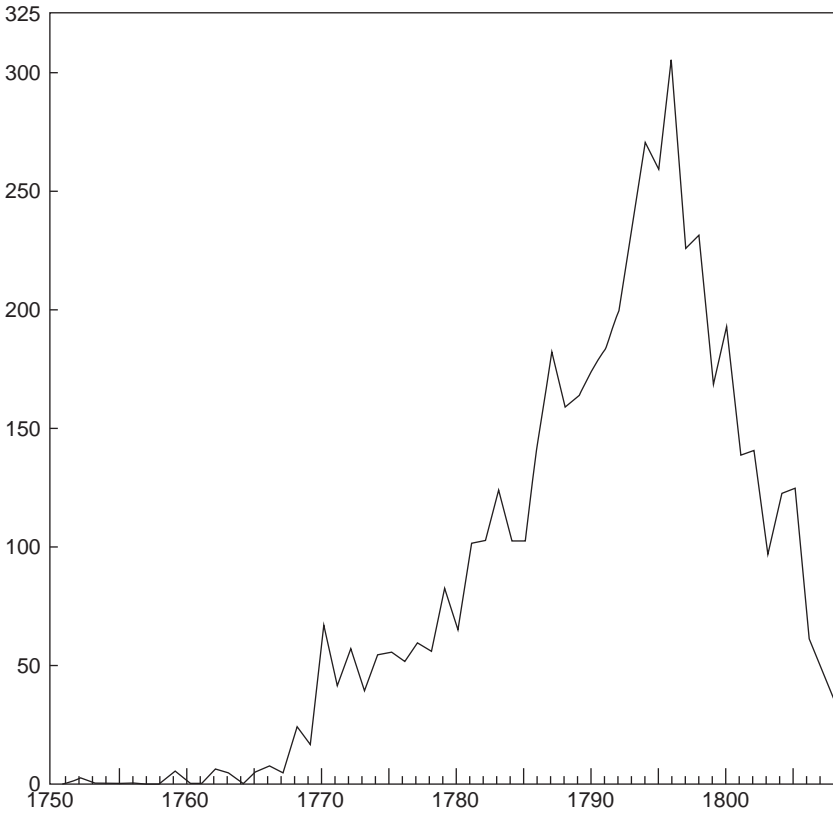


Figure 22.1 Compact holdings of villages in the kingdom and southern Jylland (Duchy of Schleswig), 1750–1808\*

\* For the years 1802–8 an estimation of single counties in Jylland is included. Fourteen villages of South Jylland are registered as compact holdings before 1750. About 150 villages in the kingdom are registered as compact holdings after 1808.

Source: O. Feldbæk, *Danmarks økonomiske historie* (Herning, 1993), p. 119.

utilisation of the workforce and animals. However, it created very long and narrow fields, and a star-shaped gathering was often followed at a later date by a scattering of farms, so that each farm lay isolated in the landscape surrounded by its strips of land, eventually with one or two smallholdings placed on the periphery to help with the cultivation and serve as a practical reserve of labour.

An important measure was the enclosure ordinance of 23 April 1781, which declared that any owner of a strip of land could demand the enclosure of the open fields. But even here one can see how the smallholders' access to grazing after the abolition of the open-field system was not enshrined in law but left to the goodwill of the local residents.

#### Labour service on the manor (*hoveri*)

Labour service or villeinage was, along with *indfæstningen*, the estate owner's primary means of increasing the contribution made by the tenant farmer. There is evidence of a significant increase in the amount of labour service demanded in the course of the century, and legislation in this area varied. The general tendency was towards setting clear parameters for the degree of labour service demanded and requiring proprietors and peasant farmers to come to an agreement with each other. Later in the nineteenth century labour service was increasingly commuted to a monetary payment. For posterity, labour service together with the *stavnsbånd* has come to symbolise the oppressive nature of tenancies, but we must not forget that payment in kind as a form of labour service had advantages for both parties, as it was secure against both inflation and deflation.

#### The transition to freehold

It is not clear why the Danish government, to such a widespread degree, encouraged tenant farmers to make the transition to freeholders from the 1760s onwards. This may have been a conscious political initiative from above, with significant consequences, or it may have been simply the state's recognition that it needed to adapt to an inevitable development. In the terms of an ordinance of 13 May 1769, owners of privileged manor farms were allowed to retain their privileges after selling off land as freehold, and the new peasant proprietors were granted extensive powers of decision over the cultivation and division of the land. Both movements to outlying farms and the transition from tenancy to ownership or less oppressive forms of tenancy were to a large degree financed locally. Denmark's considerable income from trade and shipping in the last decades of the century created a wealth of capital and sharply rising prices on land, both of which tempted tenant farmers to buy, estate owners to sell and wealthy burghers in the market towns to lend money. In some cases whole manor farms were broken up and all their land parcelled out. However, many peasant proprietors who had taken over their farms during the last phase of the speculative bubble had to pay the price by

Table 22.3 *Grain harvest of Denmark proper and exports (mainly rye) to Norway and abroad, 1730–1804*

	Harvest (barrels)	Export (barrels)	Value of export (1,000 rigsdaler)
<b>1730–40</b>		295,509	45
<b>c. 1750</b>	5–6 million		
<b>1752–4</b>		524,272	860
<b>1766–8</b>		384,047	1,660
<b>1775–84</b>		522,243	1,720
<b>1798</b>		566,744	2,570
<b>c. 1800</b>	8–9 million		
<b>1802–4</b>		801,850	6,880

Sources: Amounts: S. Bitsch Christensen, 'Monopol, marked og magasiner. Dansk kornhandel og kornpolitik 1730–1850 – med hovedvægt på reformårene', PhD thesis, Århus University (2001), pp. 142–64 and supplement 3. The measure translated as barrel is the Danish *tønde* containing 139lb. Values: Most of the grain was rye, so amounts are multiplied with average annual sales prices for rye from Danish manors published in D. H. Andersen, M. Ehlers and E. Helmer Pedersen, *A History of Prices and Wages in Denmark, 1660–1800*, 2: *The Manors* (Copenhagen, 2004). For 1802–4 prices have been established from corresponding increases in the assizes for rye. To get CIF prices, 25 per cent has been added to the Danish sales prices to cover commissions and freight. See Bitsch Christensen, 'Monopol', pp. 428–9. Values are rounded up or down to the nearest 10,000.

being forced to abandon house and home during the period of falling prices and the deflationary policies that followed the Napoleonic Wars, while tenant farmers who owed payment in kind remained secure in their farms.

### Production

Both before and after the reforms, Danish agriculture was capable of feeding a rising population with plenty left over for export. Grain production seems to have risen from between 5.3 and 6 million barrels (*tønder*) in 1750 to around 9 million in 1800. Denmark normally had a surplus of grain, but grain exports on a larger scale are assigned by historians to the period from the 1830s onward, when the British corn laws were modified and finally repealed. New figures suggest, however, that a significant export trade in grain had already begun before the Napoleonic Wars. (See Table 22.3.)

The increase in yields was at best modest. A tentative estimate shows the following increases in agricultural output from the estates. (See Table 22.4.)

Table 22.4 *Estimate of increases in agricultural output from estates*

	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Peas
Before 1750	6	4	5	3	?
After 1750	5	6	5	4	

Source: E. Helmer Pedersen, 'Dansk landbrugsudvikling i det 18. århundrede. En oversigt', in E. Helmer Pedersen and M. Hertz (eds.), *Landbruget i det 18. århundrede, Bol og By*, 2:5 (1983), p. 60.

The increase in production was probably due less to improvements in production but more to a growing input of labour and land. Everything points to an extension of working time in the course of the eighteenth century, even if the extent of this has not been established.<sup>14</sup>

#### The new structure

By about 1810, two-thirds of Denmark's peasant farms had gone over to freehold, and the estate owners had sold half of their tenanted land as freehold. The remaining tenants had had their conditions radically improved. Afterwards, war and poor trading conditions put a stop to this development, and not until the middle of the next century did a new wave of freehold purchases begin in earnest. Around two-thirds of the land in Sjælland and Fyn was enclosed, and around half of that in Jylland. Both freeholders and tenants were obliged accordingly to till their land according to radically different methods of planning and cultivation. The system of estates, as the economic, administrative and judicial nexus of the local community, was abolished, and the new middle class attained great political and economic influence with the administrative reforms of the nineteenth century. Smallholders and landless labourers together comprised a growing group which was left high and dry by the countryside reforms, after what seems to have been a conscious choice or avoidance of choice on the part of the state. If, nevertheless, things did not get even worse and poverty was not succeeded by actual famine, this

<sup>14</sup> D. C. Christensen, 'Estimating Arable Production and Productivity in Danish Agriculture during the Age of Reform, 1750–1850', in B. J. P. van Bavel and E. Thoen (eds.), *Land Productivity and Agro-systems in the North Sea Area (Middle Ages–20th Century): Elements for Comparison* (Turnhout, 1999).

may be ascribed to various factors. Denmark is by its very nature a fertile agricultural land; there was a certain trickle-down effect from the greater affluence of the rural population; two-thirds of the smallholders were, in spite of everything, allotted some land during the enclosures; and ancillary occupations comprising country crafts to inn-keeping, cottage industries to the weaving of coarse clothes for the common people of Denmark, even for the slave population on the Danish islands in the West Indies, could help make ends meet in an austere economic situation.

### *Norway*

In Denmark the eighteenth century saw a radical restructuring of the rural community. Whether the state took the initiative in implementing the reforms or simply reacted to a development that had already begun at the local level, the legislation had been proactive and the initiatives many. In Norway the development was more gradual and involved less activity on the part of the government in København. This was due to the agrarian structure of Norway, a lack of knowledge in København about Norwegian conditions and the generally cautious policies of the Danish autocracy towards Norway, designed to retain the loyalty of the population. This showed itself in, among other things, a comparatively less oppressive taxation of the Norwegian peasants, even during the Great Northern War of 1709–20/21, although we must also take into consideration that Norway, in contrast to Denmark, was exposed to Swedish invasions in 1716 and 1718, which led to a significant degree of devastation. Also in contrast to Denmark, there were in the course of the eighteenth century three waves of peasant disturbances or uprisings: in 1712 and 1714, 1763–5 and 1786–7. On each occasion these represented a reaction to extra taxation, which in general persuaded the Danish autocracy to treat Norway and its peasants with caution. There seems to have been, to some extent, a ritual element in these uprisings. After trying every legal – and not quite legal – trick, like passive resistance, complaints to local officials, complaints further up the system in Norway and then complaints or the dispatch of delegations to København, feelings could erupt into an open uprising or tumult. When legal proceedings ensued, it was underlined that everyone had acted in concert, and that the uprising was not directed against the state or the Danish king, but only against local mistreatment. The ways in which the state reacted also fall into a common pattern. The ringleaders were arrested and given draconian punishments, which were subsequently

Table 22.5 *Development of freeholders in Norway, 1661–1855*

Region	Percentage of debt among freeholders according to land registers			Percentage of farmers/freeholders		
	1661	1721	1751	1801	1825	1855
Austlandet I*	19	42	–	68	80	91
Austlandet II*	27	40	–	59	77	84
Agder	55	56	67	70	90	93
Vestlandet	12	22	28	49	56	76
Trøndelag	5	11	24	48	64	85
Nord-Norge	4	5	6	12	20	49
Kingdom of Norway	20	33	–	57	66	81

\**Austlandet I* includes Østfold, Akershus, Hedmark and Oppland. *Austlandet II* is Buskerud, Vestfold and Telemark.

Source: Dyrvik et al.(eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie 1500–1970*, 1: 1500–1850 (Oslo, 1992), p. 186.

reduced. The increases in taxation and other regulations or administrative practices which had stimulated the uprising were reduced or corrected.<sup>15</sup>

In Norway, methods of working were simpler than in Denmark, because there were only a few estates in Norway. Accordingly, the Danish autocracy lacked an administrative system in the form of estates which could take responsibility for the collection of taxes and be guarantors for unpaid contributions. This is perhaps also one of the reasons why the country people in Norway were taxed at a significantly lower level than those of Denmark. It also meant that social relations were not to the same degree as in Denmark decided by one's relationship to a powerful estate owner, but to a far greater degree by the relationship between farmers and smallholders, between farmers themselves and between the generations.

Despite all this, a shift towards freehold took place in Norway much as it did in Denmark. In 1721 about 33 per cent of the land was held in freehold, but with significant regional variations. Around Oslo the percentage of freehold was about 25 per cent, while in northern and western Norway it lay between 5 and 20 per cent. Eighty years later the percentage of freehold was 57 per cent.<sup>16</sup> (See Table 22.5.)

<sup>15</sup> G. Sætra, 'Norske bondeoprør på 1700-tallet, en trussel mot den dansk-norske helstaten?', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 77 (1998).

<sup>16</sup> S. Dyrvik et al., *Norsk økonomisk historie*, 1: 1500–1850 (Bergen, 1979), pp. 187f., 193–6.

In the first round, the land belonging to the parish churches was sold off, then it was the turn of the crown estates. Typical of many other places was Snåsa in Trøndelag, where the crown estate was sold at auction in 1728 and bought by wealthy men in Trondheim who then resold the land in smaller parcels to the peasants, often making a profit of over 75 per cent. After 1750 the old monastery lands were sold, but in this case the existing users of the land were given first refusal, for a very modest sum. This stimulated the peasants to buy land, which to be sure did not result in large capital yields, but which did give the peasants the right to exploit woodland commercially, whereas before they were only allowed to cut down trees for their own use.

Villages were as good as non-existent in Norway. The cornerstone of the agrarian community was the farm, which could consist of several separate units, so-called *oppsittere*. There was a tendency for these units to be of uniform size across all the regions of Norway, so that the oldest and biggest farms had been divided into the most units.<sup>17</sup> The division into smaller units could take many forms: from the commonest, in the form of out-and-out enclosure with each individual unit's lands collected together, to division into many small parcels of land (*teiger*), to the cultivation of all the land in common. There was a tendency to join together the lands of each unit in farms with few units, while on farms with many units they were divided up into *teiger*.<sup>18</sup> Each farm had a nucleus where the houses were situated and where there was cultivation of grain and, for example, hay for winter fodder. Beyond this was the outfield, a much bigger and more vaguely defined area which certainly belonged to the farm, but where there might be traditional agreements with neighbouring small farms about common rights concerning grazing and tree-felling. Between the outfield and the wilderness there was a common area which whole parishes might work in concert. With so much land being relatively infertile, pastoral farming was of great importance and, in contrast to Denmark, Norwegian peasants had considerable opportunities to supplement their arable farming with fishing, tree-felling and production of charcoal. Generally speaking, the growth in ancillary occupations in the course of the eighteenth century meant that there was a need for a workforce which in most cases had agriculture as their main occupation. In northern and western Norway the fisheries provided employment in the winter for workers on the land, while the winter occupation in the east and south was timber production.

17 S. Dyrvik, *Den lange fredstiden 1720–1784. Norges historie*, 8 (Oslo, 1978), pp. 50f., 157–60.

18 S. Dyrvik et al., *Norsk økonomisk historie*, 1, pp. 187f., 193–6.

Table 22.6 *Numbers of farmers, smallholders and servants in 1723 and 1801*

	Farmers	Smallholders with land	Smallholders with and without land, day-labourers, farmworkers	Servants
<b>1723</b>	67,213	11,814 (0.18)		
<b>1801</b>	77,810	39,972 (0.51)	78,341 (1.01)	95,367 (1.28)

The figures in brackets are numbers per farmer.

Source: Dyrvik *et al.* (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie 1500–1970*, 1: 1500–1850, pp. 186, 195.

The fall in mortality in the course of the eighteenth century brought about an imbalance between the numbers of small farms and of young people available to take them over. The rural population grew from around 444,000 in 1720 to around 710,000 in 1801. Despite Norway's small population density compared, for example, to Denmark, there were limited opportunities for internal colonisation by clearance of new land, as the land outside the nucleus of the farms was already being used for cutting timber or keeping domestic animals, and the spare land further out was usually of poor quality. Given the limited capacity of the towns to absorb the rising population, a further division of the existing small farms was a possibility, which in practice depended on the fertility of the land and the opportunities within the area for ancillary trades. A significant division of farms did take place, but was not sufficient to absorb the rising population in the countryside. So we see, as in Denmark, the appearance of a class of smallholders. Their smallholdings were most often situated on the boundary between the nucleus of the farm and the outfield, so that there was minimal loss of the land which was at the disposition of the farmers. Some smallholders had their own land, others only a house built on the farmer's land. (See Table 22.6.) The smallholders paid their rent in the form of labour service, money, goods or a mixture of these, and the duration of their tenure could be for life, a set number of years or until their resignation. The Smallholders Ordinance of 1750 laid down that all agreements should be in writing and should be valid for the smallholder's lifetime or that of his widow; but this was modified in 1752, so that only in return for cultivating the outfield should smallholders receive a written contract and life-long security of tenure. With smallholdings in the infield, oral agreements and contracts for a set number of years were allowed. An ordinance of 1792 once again proposed written contracts and lifetime tenure, but in the event these ordinances seem to a large degree to have been



Table 22.7 *Yields and production and number of domestic animals*

	Yields and production			
	Yields		Production	
	Grain	Potatoes	Grain (1,000 barrels)	Potatoes (1,000 barrels)
1723	2.7	–	731	–
<1809	4.3	6.6	1, 686	353

	Numbers of domestic animals			
	Horses	Cattle	Sheep and goats	Pigs
1723	76,315	510,912	657,154	48,000
<b>A normal year before 1809</b>	102,000	660,000	1,098,000	78,000

Source: Dyrvik et al. (eds.), *Norsk økonomisk historie 1500–1970*, 1: 1500–1850, pp. 142–5.

ignored. Generally speaking, the number of smallholders relative to farmers seems to have been greatest in Austlandet and Trøndelag.

It is an unanswered question in Norwegian historical research whether or not the shift to freehold in itself promoted the spread of smallholdings. Freeholders naturally had more right to dispose of their land as they saw fit, but tenants too seem, to a greater degree, to have exploited the opportunity to set up smallholdings.<sup>19</sup>

## Production

Agricultural production increased, and the corn-growing area is calculated to have grown by almost 50 per cent between 1723 and 1800. The degree of self-sufficiency in food had risen to about 80 per cent in the second half of the seventeenth century, falling to about 75 per cent in the 1790s.<sup>20</sup> (See Table 22.7.)

The way things developed in Norway demonstrates, at first sight, an ecological, geographical and demographic determinism, but as always in historical developments there were alternatives – for example, in the form of multiple divisions of farms and greater security and more rights for the new class of smallholders. However, the state seems, either actively or by

19 K. Dørum, 'Fikk overgangen til selveie betydning for fremveksten af husmannsvesenet ca. 1660–1850', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 74 (1995).

20 K. Lunden, *Norges landbruks historie*, 2: 1350–1814 (Oslo, 2002), p. 267.

default, to have helped push the development in the direction of establishing a significant class of smallholders who functioned as a labour reserve for the middle-sized farms. As in Denmark, the individual smallholder was able to try and better his situation with the help of ancillary occupations and by putting more work into the little bit of land he had at his disposal. A productive but extremely labour-intensive crop like potatoes was thus introduced earlier into the smallholding than into the larger farm.

### *Sweden and Finland*

#### Sweden

In Sweden, as in Denmark, around 80 per cent of the population lived in the countryside. Property and land relationships can be divided into three regions. In northern Sweden there was very little grain production, and it was very much an area of new colonisation. There were hardly any aristocratic estates, and the peasant farms were spread out over the countryside. Hunting and fishing were significant ancillary occupations. In the forests and plains of central and southern Sweden, grain-production dominated. In Skåne and in Västergötland there were relatively large country towns, and it was also in these areas that the aristocratic estates existed in considerable numbers. In towns in forested parts of the same areas, where settlement consisted of individual farms, cattle-rearing played a large part and, as an ancillary occupation, the exploitation of the forests for tar-burning and charcoal was important.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the area of cultivated land in Sweden comprised only 2 per cent of the country, and moreover the percentage was far higher south of Dalälven than further north. To put this into context, it should be remembered that the length of time during the year when grain could be grown was extremely limited. So the land was to a large extent given over to the rearing of animals. The land was divided between 'crown, tax and free land', with around a third devoted to each category. (See Figure 22.2.) In other words, a third of the land belonged to the crown and was tilled by tenant farmers, who paid duties to the crown. Another third was cultivated by freeholders, who paid tax, while the remaining third was owned by the nobility and cultivated by tenants who paid duty on the land to the nobles. One hundred years later, 70 per cent of 'crown land' had moved into the category 'tax land', and had thus become private property.

Land not liable for crown taxation (*frälsejorden*) was very unevenly distributed throughout the kingdom of Sweden. In the counties of Stockholm and

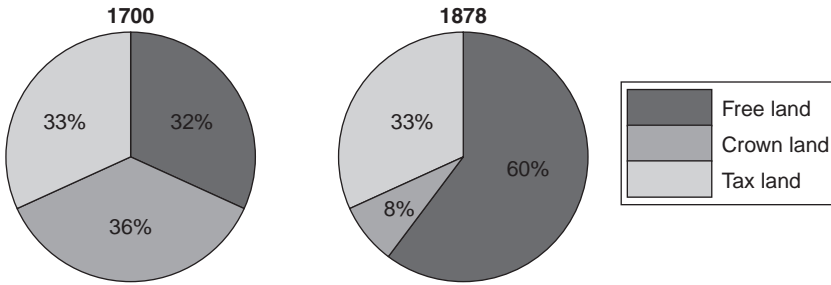


Figure 22.2 The distribution of land based on different kinds of tax classes  
 Source: C.-J. Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870. Det svenska jordbrukets historia*, 3 (Borås, 2000), p. 199.

Södermanland, Skåne, Jönköping and Skaraborg the nobility accounted for a larger proportion of the population than in other parts of Sweden. By contrast, their proportion of the population in Norrland, Dalarna and Värmland was relatively insignificant. (See Figure 22.3.) Twenty per cent of the ‘free land’ was made up of manorial land, while all the rest consisted of the farms of ‘free peasants’. Twenty-five per cent of manorial land lay in Stockholm and Södermanland counties. The greater part of the income of the manors came from production on manorial lands. It was cultivated by peasants performing labour service, but the total amount of duty owed to the overlord could not be met by labour service alone, and in fact the greater part was paid in the form of grain. This means, in other words, that the course of agricultural development in Sweden for a long time to come was governed by the aristocratic estates.

The percentage of freehold land rose between 1680 and 1825 from 32 to 54 per cent, while the percentage of crown land fell from 36 to 13 per cent. The sale of crown estates took place in particular in the eastern and south-eastern parts of Götaland, where there was most crown land to buy. The taxable lands paid, in principle, the same sum in tax to the crown as the crown lands paid in duties, but the right of ownership was hereditary, and the peasants could deal in the land according to the current laws and statutes.<sup>21</sup> The crown lands were very often leased out and cultivated by crown peasants in a form of working which resembled the labour service found in Denmark and Skåne. The difference was that the crown peasants, in return for cultivating

<sup>21</sup> J. Kyle, *Striden om hemmanen. Studier kring 1700-talets skatteköp i västra Sverige* (Göteborg, 1987), p. 1.

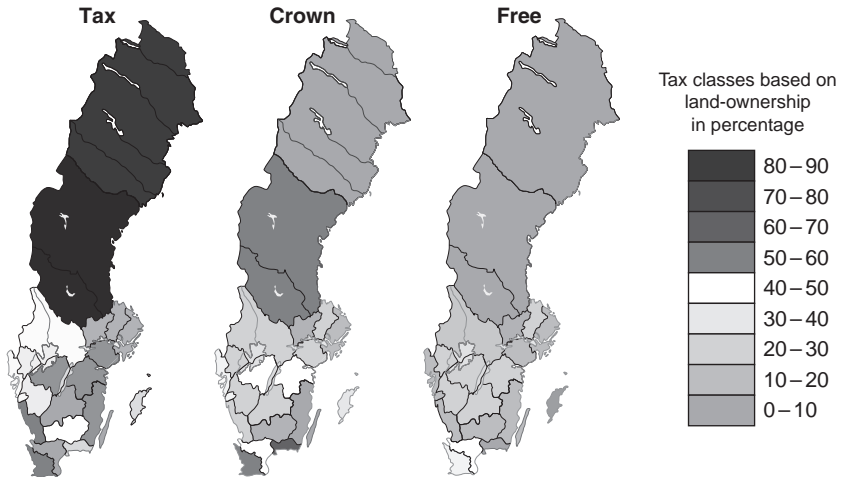


Figure 22.3 The distribution of tax classes in Sweden, 1700  
 The tax land is dominant in Dalarna and in Norrland. The crown land was relatively extensive in south-eastern Sweden, and free land in Skåne, Halland and the eastern part of Svealand.

Source: Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870*, 3, p. 43.

the land, were granted a reduction in the duty (usually one-sixth) which they owed to the crown.

To begin with, the sale of crown land and its conversion to taxable land was part of Karl XII's policy for raising funds to finance war, but later it became a question of guaranteeing various freedoms and rights. The year 1719 saw the introduction of laws making it easier for peasants to purchase taxable lands, and in the eighteenth century 14,000 *mantal* – which is a term for a unit of cultivated land – were converted from crown (untaxed) land to taxable land. But well into the nineteenth century it was specifically stated in the so-called *skatteköpsbrev* (certificates of purchase of taxable land) that the peasants still had to perform labour service on the leased farm.<sup>22</sup> The most important motivating factor behind the government's willingness to countenance purchase of taxable land was no doubt the fact that they received a one-off payment from the peasants over and above the ordinary taxation. It should also not be overlooked that the burden of taxation on the peasants remained the same throughout the century, which is a tribute to the effective

22 E. Ingers, *Bonden i svensk historia*, 2 (Stockholm, 1948), p. 199.

way in which their interests were looked after by their representatives in the *riksdag*. If all the duties for which they were liable were added to their taxes, the actual tax burden fell during the century. In 1720 taxation accounted for 20 per cent of production, and in the 1770s this had fallen to around 14 per cent.<sup>23</sup>

Purchases of taxable lands occurred particularly in areas where auxiliary trades flourished at the expense of grain production. This continued until 1789 when Gustav III, as part of his attempt to secure the support of the peasant estate, reserved the right of the crown to demand the return of land if it passed out of the purchaser's family. At this time crown peasants more or less obtained the sole right to purchase taxable land. In the course of the century, moreover, the peasants' right to dispose of land was strengthened by smallholder legislation, decrees governing the division of estates and regulations about the distribution of units of cultivation. This meant that it became common in the course of the eighteenth century for one or more farms to make up one freehold farm or *hemman*. One *hemman*, also called a *mantal*, was big enough to provide for the needs of those who farmed it at the same time as they were able to pay tax. The number of farms to one *hemman* was laid down during the eighteenth century. A farm (*gård*) in the plains had less area than a farm in a *mantal* in the northern forests, or to put it another way, the bigger the *mantal* the more tax the occupants of the farms had to pay.

The interest in buying land lay in an expansion of agriculture which could result in a profit for the owner. Correspondingly, one finds an added interest in increasing possibilities for the expansion of forestry. It is also therefore obvious that when crown land was first offered for sale, it was bought by persons of rank in particular, in the first few decades. (See Figure 22.4.)

Livestock production seems to have declined during this period.<sup>24</sup> These figures are however an expression of a greater fluctuation. The 1720s to the 1760s was a period of growth, while the 1770s to the 1790s witnessed a decline. Throughout the eighteenth century Sweden imported grain, especially from the Baltic. From around 1720 until 1780 grain imports increased from about 700,000 to 800,000 barrels (*tønder*) up to around 1 million, comprising a little over 30 per cent of the value of imported goods. By far the biggest amount consisted of imported rye, which amounted to ten times

23 C.-J. Gadd, *Den agrare revolutionen 1700–1870. Det svenska jordbrukets historia*, 3 (Borås, 2000), pp. 36, 196.

24 L. Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, 2nd edn (Stockholm, 1999), p. 184.

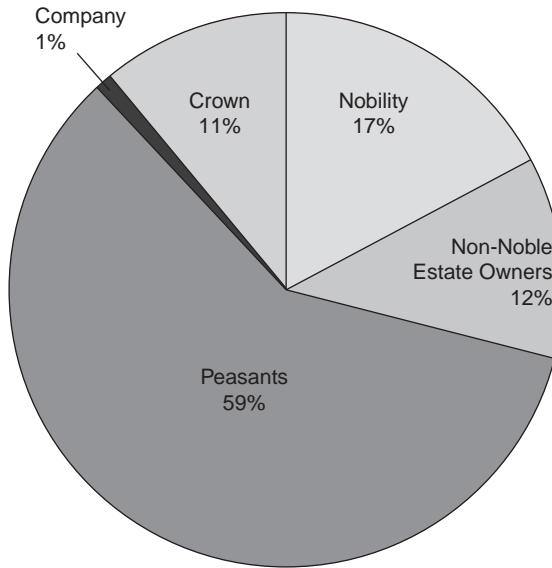


Figure 22.4 Percentage of different owner groups based on *mantal* fixed tax land in Sweden, 1845

Source: Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870*, 3, p. 204.

as much as imports of barley.<sup>25</sup> Calculations make clear that it was not the Swedish boroughs alone that imported grain; there were also areas outside the towns with a grain deficit, which had to import from overseas in order to feed their populations. However, production figures are not available from eighteenth-century Sweden. Grain imports must have taken place, even if there were areas of Sweden, like Skåne, Uppland, Södermanland, Västmanland and Närke, where a marked surplus was produced. The areas where there were pronounced deficits were located around Stockholm and Göteborg, in Blekinge, Småland, Dalarna and Norrland. In this connection, it should be underlined that agricultural productivity was low. The small surplus produced was usually consumed in the form of duties and taxes. There are signs from the 1720s of a small increase in productivity per capita of 0.4–0.6 per cent per annum. The degree of output seems to have been just over 4.5 per cent. After 1815 grain imports were no longer necessary. This should be seen first and foremost as a result of intensive cultivation of new

25 S. Högberg, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet. Stapelvaror i svensk export och import 1738–1808* (Lund, 1969), pp. 184–97.

land, and only to a lesser degree as a result of changes in agricultural techniques.<sup>26</sup> But it is clear that this very breaking-in of new land was a contributory factor to the growing division of society. In order to increase the population, a comprehensive programme of new cultivation was set in motion, through the labour, in the main, of crofters (*torpare*). The workforce were harshly exploited, as most of the innovations required an increased input of labour, and productivity per labourer also seems to have climbed sharply. But this contribution bore fruit, and between 1700 and 1870 the amount of cultivated land increased by 250 per cent. The new cultivation occurred, in particular, in forest areas and on the plains, and it brought about a considerable social differentiation among the different groups in the countryside. This cultivation was to a large extent carried on by smallholders, crofters, who were often forced to incur debt and were therefore not in a position to keep the land they possessed, having to sell it, often to peasants in the district who carried on grain production with the help of cottars or *backstugusittare*, the term used for the lowest class of rural workers in society.

As mentioned earlier, the numbers of peasants who themselves owned land rose in the course of the second half of the eighteenth century. To their number can be added the crown peasants, who to a great extent were buying their farms during this period. This demographic development led to the fiscal unit of a *jordboksgård* (a farm entered in a register of landholdings in an administrative area) often being divided into one or more farms. This was known as a division of a homestead (*hemmansklyvning*). Aside from the local hereditary customs, this *klyvning* or 'division' seems to have been decided by the opportunities for new cultivation of land and by existing auxiliary trades. The division was seldom carried out on barren land which offered few opportunities, as this had the potential to impoverish the people.<sup>27</sup> An ordinance of 1684 limited the right of division so that a fourth of a *mantal* became the minimum size of a farm (*gård*), but new ordinances in 1747 and 1751 allowed divisions into smaller units. This should also be seen in connection with the fact that an increased population meant that it became more difficult when dividing up an inheritance to keep farming units together. During the eighteenth century one can also discern a significant change in the state's view of this phenomenon. It became an actual goal of agrarian policy to promote population growth, which would not only be to the benefit of

<sup>26</sup> Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen*, pp. 232, 348.

<sup>27</sup> M. Perlestam, *Den rotfäste bonden – myt eller verklighet? Brukaransvar i Ramkvilla socken 1620–1820* (Malmö, 1998), pp. 82, 176ff.

agriculture but would also promote the development of handicrafts and manufacture in the towns. At the same time, the government recognised a precondition for the country's military preparedness. It should be pointed out that 83 per cent of population growth after 1720 took place in the agricultural sector. It was possible for this growth to come about because *klyvning* had been allowed in more than eight parts of the 'crown- and tax-homeland'.

To take only one example, we can see how there was an expansion in the number of small farms in Ramkvilla parish in Småland throughout the eighteenth century. In this parish, 'division' took the form of a small farm (*brug*) being divided into two equal parts. There seems to have been an obvious connection between the economic potential of the farm and the number of 'divisions'. The peasants were in no doubt that the result would limit the economy of the farms. It is fair to say that the divisions were later often followed by amalgamations.

Agricultural legislation was concentrated into two ordinances concerning farm servants. The obligation of service was tightened up, partly to prevent idleness and partly to ensure a supply of servants for those farms run by enlisted soldiers. At the same time, the workforce was rationed: an undivided farm might only employ two adults and a boy. If the farmer himself had sons of the same age they were to be counted towards the numbers of servants permitted. In 1739 it was decreed that if a farmer had more sons at home than the permissible number of servants, those who were surplus should serve elsewhere. However, this regulation was abolished in 1747.

In 1725 the government set up an Economic Commission which was supposed to come up with suggestions for improving agriculture. In 1731, after several years of work, the commission reached the conclusion, among other things, that the placing of village commons under cultivation should be encouraged. This suggestion, however, was not well received by the peasants, who feared that new cultivation would simply bring about increased taxation. This resulted in an ordinance of 1741 promising freedom from taxation for marshes and mosses brought under cultivation.

Any description of the social structure should emphasise those peasants who rented land from freeholders. Under the peasants socially were the crofters (*torpare*), who as a rule rented a little piece of land with a house for their lifetimes, and who either worked for the farmers on their land as day-labourers and farmworkers, or simply tilled their own land. The numbers of crofters rose sharply throughout the eighteenth century. And



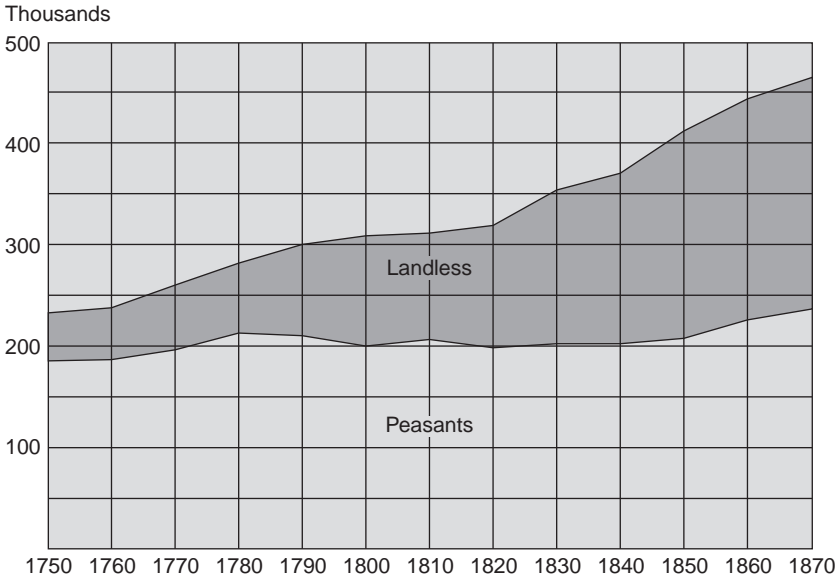


Figure 22.5 The composition of the farmers' population in Sweden, 1750–1870

Source: Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870*, 3, p. 195.

the setting up of crofts may be attributed to the growth in population. (See Figure 22.5.)

This development was however uneven through the eighteenth century, and while the numbers in areas such as Norr- and Västerbotten together with Blekinge rose massively, the development around Stockholm, Uppsala, in Västmanland and Östergötland was much more modest. This should of course be seen in connection with the fact that these latter areas had already experienced a growth in the numbers of crofts by the first half of the eighteenth century. By the middle of the century the farmers had the biggest share overall among the rural population, but the number of crofters was rising. A corresponding category were the cottars (*backstugusittare*), often old or sick people who lived in huts out in the fields or on the fringes of the villages, where they could grow a few potatoes or keep a few sheep or goats. On many occasions the croft system meant that a farmer could economise on a labourer if the crofter, as part of his rent, would work on the farmer's land. In Ramkvilla parish the *hemmansklyvningen* led to a growth of no less than 26 per cent in the number of crofters. (See Figure 22.6.) Crofters became, to a

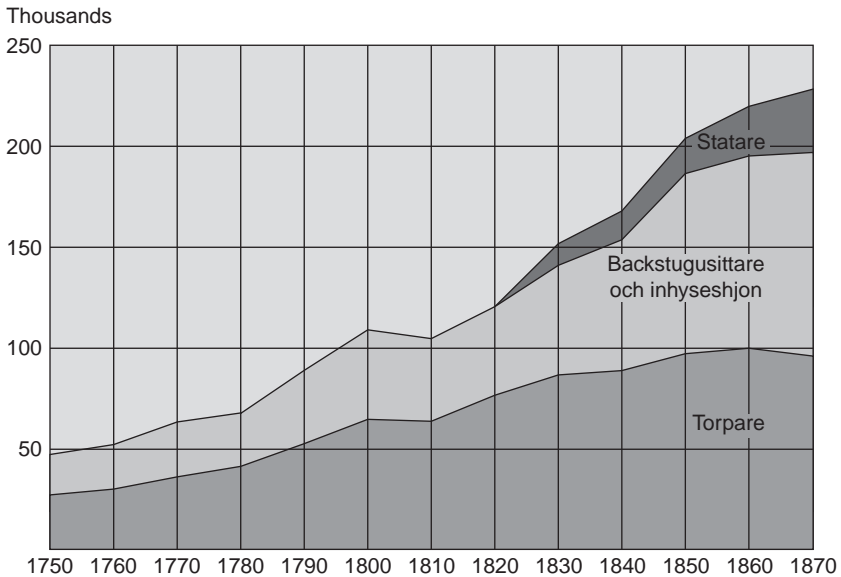


Figure 22.6 The increase of different groups of landless people in Sweden, 1750–1870  
 Source: Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870*, 3, p. 223.

certain extent, interchangeable with cottars, who in this parish were regarded as farm labourers. This growth in the labour force took place first and foremost on land owned by freeholders.<sup>28</sup> This group are very reminiscent of that new social group, the *statare*, who emerged in the course of the century and who worked steadily on the estates and the farms and who were paid in kind and given accommodation and possibly a small amount of money.

Some peasant farms on lands owned by the nobility were closed down, when the estate owners found it more advantageous to amalgamate these lands with their own manorial lands. On the other hand, new crofts were set up on the common land. It is clear that one of the social conflicts that arose in the Swedish peasant community was between the crofters and the peasants. Fear of sinking down into the ranks of the landless was a constant factor. This was exacerbated by the constant *hemmansklyvning* or division of homesteads,

<sup>28</sup> C. Winberg, 'Another Route to Modern Society: The Advancement of the Swedish Peasantry', in M. Laundahl and T. Svensson (eds.), *Agrarian Society in History: Essays in Honour of Magnus Mörner* (London, 1990), p. 57.

combined with the fact that, even if there was plenty of uncultivated land in Sweden, it was not of a very high quality by Danish standards, and therefore gave a much poorer yield. The large-scale emigration from Sweden in the nineteenth century can be seen against this background.

Enclosure and the movement to outfield farms were happening in most places as late as the mid-nineteenth century, just as in Denmark. The first faltering steps were however taken in the mid-eighteenth century when, in many different locations, there occurred a great distribution of landholdings (*storskifte*) on the English model, which meant that each farm was to have only four strips of land in each field; in other words, the individual small farm (*brug*) would have fewer, but larger strips. Under the three-course system there would be at most twelve strips. The inspiration for the *storskifte* in peasant farms should probably be sought in the manorial holdings.

### Finland

The pattern of ownership in Finnish agriculture, as in Norway, was characterised by the comparative lack of land owned by the nobility, although there was more in Finland than in Norway. There were around 500 manor farms. At the end of the seventeenth century the area under cultivation was increased by the breaking-in of land which had lain unused since the beginning of the century. The authorities had been expecting a greater amount of growth than actually occurred, and therefore did a good deal to promote this. It was not government policy that the numbers of freeholders in Finland should rise in the eighteenth century through the so-called *skatteköp* of properties, as was happening in Sweden, and according to the law of 1734, tax-peasants were not allowed to sell their land outside their family, without first offering it to members of the family. It was further enacted in 1739 that no farm was to be divided, and concerns about a shortage of workers for the manor farms and in manufacturing brought about a demand that the second-eldest son on a farm which made up only a third of a *mantal* should look for work elsewhere. Only the eldest son or daughter was thus allowed to remain on the farm, while the numbers of servants was regulated by the *skattemantalet*.<sup>29</sup> Possibly economic conditions would in any case have forced the eldest son to remain on the farm, but in 1739 there was in fact a law passed in this regard. In 1747, however, a shortage of labour led to the nobility agreeing to relax the legislation of 1739, which naturally made

<sup>29</sup> K. Jern, 'Frihetstiden och gustavianska tiden 1721–1809', in R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), p. 360.

it more difficult to find servants for the manor farms. At the same time, *hemmansklyvning* down to one-sixth and one-eighth was allowed in order to encourage more people to start a family on the new farms. Permission was also given for as many children as were needed on a farm to remain on their father's farm.<sup>30</sup> Servants from Finland and the northern part of Swedish Norrland were forbidden to move outside the province in order to take up work, though this quasi-*stavnband* was repealed in 1766.

In seventeenth-century Finland the rule was that houses could only be erected on 'free' land, but afterwards 'taxable' land was also granted this right. This was a contributory factor in the sizeable growth in the area of cultivated land. Another factor was possibly that land newly placed under cultivation was granted exemption from taxes for a certain period. In the fifty years from 1749 until 1805, the numbers of smallholders also grew by 16 per cent. Throughout the century peasants were buying up land, especially in western Finland, so that it became taxable land, although this development was less pronounced in Häme, Savo, Uusimaa and in Karjala.

In 1742, just as in Sweden, it was decided that regulations should be drawn up for all the rural villages, so that each village received a planned structure for every aspect of village life. Perhaps it was characteristic of the central authority that three different editions of the village regulations were drawn up. In southern Pohjanmaa, where the villages had been built close together in the eighteenth century because of a thoroughgoing *hemmansklyvning*, the village regulations were made good use of. By contrast, they were more seldom implemented in Satakunta and in western Häme, where there were already large groupings of villages.

In 1757 the *riksdag* decided to ask the peasants to enclose their fields, but by and large there was no inclination to comply with the request. In 1762 the *riksdag* went a step further and recommended the enclosures, even if they stopped short of demanding them, and in 1775 an enclosure regulation was drawn up for Finland. In each *hemman* the arable fields were to be divided into four strips, while the woods were to be divided into two. The authorities had thus abandoned their demand that each individual peasant was to have all the land on his farm in one piece. Movement to outlying farms was a rare phenomenon in eighteenth century Finland.

There was, to be sure, more of a battle between agricultural proprietors and owners of woodland in Finland than in the other Scandinavian countries.

<sup>30</sup> E. Jutikkala, *Bonden i Finland genom tiderna* (Helsingfors, 1963), p. 259.

Yet for many Finnish peasants tar-burning was a very lucrative sideline. Those, however, who hoped for the advancement of forestry at the expense of agriculture became fewer in the course of the eighteenth century.

### Forestry in Denmark and Norway

In the eighteenth century the area of woodland in Denmark was reduced to around 10 per cent of the total area of the country, which was probably the lowest percentage ever. By comparison, the figure for contemporary Denmark is twice as high. Not only that, but the trees were also younger, with damaging consequences for the production of main masts and certain types of timber. The Danish forests could always supply a significant proportion of the rural population's requirements as regards wood for building and fuel, but a domestic energy source like turf became more important. Most important of all, though, were imports: directly, in the form of timber and a substitute fuel like coal; indirectly, by imports of products which were very energy-intensive in their production.<sup>31</sup>

Norway possessed extensive forests and many rivers which carried the timber out to the ports of shipment and powered the sawmills which processed it. In a Europe which was becoming ever more short of wood, Norwegian timber was an important source of income for the Danish king and large sections of Norwegian society. Tree-felling and export of logs was primarily concentrated in Østlandet, and from Kristiansand eastwards the dominant export was timber, with Drammen and Kristiania as the most important ports for outward shipment.

The most important item of export was boards, usually of 10–12 feet, for the building industry, but longer beams of 20–40 feet were also important export articles. Around 1700, 73 per cent of total exports of timber went to England, timber being the most important Norwegian export of all, and the proportion probably increased during the century. The Great Northern War of 1700–1720/21 resulted in a minor decrease during the early years of the war, but afterwards the price of shipments increased dramatically, almost doubling between 1715 and 1719. In the 1720s there was a fall in both quantities and prices, such that in Kristiania, for example, the income from outgoing tolls was more than halved between 1725 and the low

31 B. Fritzbøger, *Kulturskoven. Dansk skovbrug fra oldtid til nutid* (København, 1994), pp. 55–65.

point of 1744.<sup>32</sup> A new period of growth for both quantities and prices set in from the middle of the century.

The peasants were usually in charge of felling the timber, but the burghers in the towns had been granted a royal monopoly for the operation of sawmills, whose numbers and level of exports in southern Norway had been limited by law between 1688 and 1795. In the ports themselves, both the sawmills and their exports were controlled by a small patriciate who in addition were often shipowners. To a large extent the system functioned on a cycle of credit, in that the timber merchants often gave the peasants an advance in the form of cash and goods. In the same way, there was a large amount of credit given to exports to England. The two most important ways in which trade was organised were by contract and by agent. In the former instance, English trading houses ordered the timber from Norwegian suppliers, who sent it to the shipping ports. From this point on, the buyer was responsible for the rest. In the course of the century a system of agents became more popular. In this system, an agent intervened as middleman between the Norwegian supplier and the buyer in England. The agent gave credit to the supplier and the seller, arranged the practical details of the transportation, insurance, etc. and found a buyer. Around nine-tenths of exports from Denmark-Norway to England consisted of Norwegian timber.<sup>33</sup>

### Forestry in Sweden and Finland

The precise area of Sweden that was covered in forest cannot be calculated with certainty, but there can be no doubt that it was a good bit more than 50 per cent. Forestry in Sweden-Finland and exports of forestry products from there took second place to Norway. This was due not least to Norway's geographical position, but also to the fact that Norway was superior to Sweden-Finland in terms of technology and organisation. In Norway the sawmills were driven by water-power and the forests were exploited by individuals with greater capital resources than were available in Sweden. Between 1685 and 1740, however, there was a quintupling of exports (from Sweden-Finland). In the first half of the century production was to a large

32 Dyrvik *et al.*, *Norsk økonomisk historie*, 1, pp. 90–2, Fig. 6, p. 92.

33 H. S. K. Kent, *War and Trade in Northern Seas: Anglo-Scandinavian Economic Relations in the Mid-eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 39–58 and Appendix 4; F.-E. Eliassen, 'Port Towns, Privileges, and Changing Fortunes: Mandal and its Hinterland c. 1760–1850', in F.-E. Eliassen, J. Mikkelsen and B. Poulsen (eds.), *Regional Integration in Early Modern Scandinavia* (Odense, 2001); Lunden, *Norsk landbrukshistorie*, p. 316.

extent in the hands of the peasants themselves, but as larger sawmills emerged with a different technology than earlier, their management was taken over by another group, in that burghers and people of rank came into the picture. Between 1772 and 1789, exports of pine planks to England from Sweden, including the western part of Finland, made up around 10 per cent of total imports into England. In the next twenty years, these imports had risen to 16 per cent and it was Norway which lost out most from the increase in imports from Sweden.<sup>34</sup> Compared to the sawmills, Finland and even more Sweden had a very large export of tar and pitch. Yet the simpler tar production was bigger in Finland than the production of pitch.<sup>35</sup> It was a form of production administered by the peasants themselves and any form of industrialisation was unknown. The peasants sold the tar direct to the merchants as a way of paying off accumulated debts, and the merchants sold it on.

## Mining and metal production

### Norway

Around 1700 the total value of the annual production from Norwegian mines and metalworks was about half a million *rigsdaler*, and the direct labour force was about 2,500 men.<sup>36</sup> The state-owned Kongsberg Silver Mine was the country's largest industrial enterprise, with 700 employees around 1700 and 4,200 at its height in the 1760s. Furthermore, production here reached a maximum of 8.2 tons annually, a welcome boost in helping to maintain the value of the Danish currency. From 1770, both production and the value of the product declined, and after a series of years which saw large deficits, the silver mine was shut down in 1805. The causes for this have been the subject of much discussion, but technical problems together with the dwindling silver content of the ore seem to have been important factors.<sup>37</sup>

34 S. E. Åström, *From Tar to Timber: Studies in Northeast European Forest Exploitation and Foreign Trade, 1660–1860*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 85 (Helsinki, 1988); S.-E. Åström, 'Britain's Timber Imports from the Baltic, 1775–1830: Some New Figures and Viewpoints', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 37 (1989), p. 58; M. Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa. Suomi, metsät ja kansainvälinen järjestelmä, 1600–1920* (Helsinki, 1993); M. Kuisma, *Saha* (Helsinki, 2011).

35 E. F. Heckscher, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia från Gustav Vasa*, 2:1 (Stockholm, 1949), pp. 328ff.

36 Dyrvik *et al.*, *Norsk økonomisk historie*, 1, pp. 50–2.

37 B. I. Berg, 'Årsaker til Kongsberg Sølvverks nedgang 1769–1805', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 66 (1987).

The same pattern can be seen in the copper mines, the largest of which, with a half to two-thirds of all production, was the mine in Røros, which moreover was the second largest workplace in Norway. Up until the middle of the century, copper production was about 400 tons annually. Later, it grew to a maximum of 750 tons in the 1770s, but by 1800 it had fallen back to 400 tons. Production from these mines was almost exclusively designed for export to Amsterdam and Hamburg, the main purchasers of copper.

The iron mines demonstrated a constant growth in the eighteenth century, and in 1800, 9,000 tons of iron was produced. An ordinance of 1730 gave Norwegian iron the monopoly for iron sales in Denmark. At the end of the eighteenth century, the number of full-time employees in the mines was only a few thousands, but there were significant consequences as a result. Exports contributed to a positive balance of trade, and the provision of supplies to the mines and their employees resulted in economic activity in the local area and the transport sector. A not altogether welcome sideline activity devolved on the so-called 'peripheral peasants', i.e. peasants living at a specified distance from the mines, who were obliged to supply charcoal and timber at a set low price.<sup>38</sup>

### *Sweden*

Of the three forms of mining: silver, copper and iron, the latter two dominated, while silver mining was in decline as early as the mid-seventeenth century. Only Stora Kopparberget was of any interest quantitatively, as production there was never less than 90 per cent of the total copper production; but as early as the last decades of the seventeenth century, production was less than what it had been earlier in the century. Just as in the case of silver production, it was the crown which owned the mines, and which leased them out to interested parties. The crown was constantly looking out for prosperous individuals willing to invest in the exploitation of the mines.<sup>39</sup> Copper, in most instances, went for export, although every year large amounts remained in Sweden for minting. From 3,000 tons in 1650, production fell to under 1,000 tons at the end of the Great Northern War. In 1772 copper production made up around 10 per cent of the total value of the products of Swedish mines.

Iron-mining and production saw the biggest expansion of any industry in Sweden at the end of the seventeenth century. There were major

<sup>38</sup> Dyrvik, *Den lange fredstiden*, pp. 124–6.

<sup>39</sup> Heckscher, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, 2:2, pp. 446, 473; 2:1, pp. 398, 507.



technological changes in mining during that century, all of which were carried out by immigrants, and this resulted in Sweden becoming the leading European country in this field until well into the 1800s. The authorities did their utmost to retain this lead and took care to hold prices at a level which discouraged other European countries from iron production from mines which had been closed down because of lack of fuel. From the 1630s up to about 1720 there was a tripling of total exports to around 33,000 tons of iron, and this grew throughout the remainder of the century to around 56,000 tons by the beginning of the 1790s. England was the main customer for Swedish iron, but this particular import never amounted to more than around 4 per cent of the total imports into England.

There were also a number of iron mines in Finland. One-third of the workers were of German and Walloon origin.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the mines were operated privately, under the control of the state, in contrast to earlier times when it was the crown which had ultimate control of the mines. Royal concern expressed itself in the mines' coming to be regarded as a *regalia*. The privileges attaching to mining were constantly renewed for the mine owners, which often resulted in family enterprises. These families had close links to the merchants who sold the iron, and who in some instances ended up by taking over the running of the mines. The biggest problem seems to have been the fear of not having sufficient forests for the production of charcoal, and in similar fashion to Norway, crown peasants living in the vicinity would pay their dues in the form of charcoal delivered to the mines.<sup>40</sup>

## Fisheries

### *Norway*

Whereas timber production and export was concentrated in Østlandet and at the harbours from Kristiansand eastwards, fishing and fish exports were concentrated at harbours from Stavanger northwards, with Bergen as the most important harbour. The main types of fish caught were herring and cod. The level of catches is not known, but the quantities exported give us a hint.

From a low point of 25,000 barrels in 1720, the catches of herring climbed consistently to a high point of almost 260,000 barrels in 1756. From

<sup>40</sup> M. Isacson, *Ekonomisk tillväxt och social differentiering 1680–1850. Bondeklassen i By socken, Kopparbergs län* (Uppsala, 1979), p. 47.

1760 onwards there was a constant decline to scarcely 50,000 barrels in 1780, which was maintained for the rest of the century.

Exports of cod rose from about 1,500,000 kilos in 1730 to 3,600,000 in the 1750s, after which there was a decline towards the end of the 1770s. But the rise after this brought exports up to 5,400,000 kilos in 1800. Exports rose during the major wars, which can be explained by the interruption of the French and English cod-fishing off Newfoundland.

Around 20 per cent of the herring and 10 per cent of the dried fish was sold in Denmark. The Baltic was an important market for herring, and the Netherlands was the biggest market for dried fish until well into the century. However, the big export success for Norwegian fish exports was Southern Europe, which became a more and more important market for dried fish, including cod, after the opening of the Mediterranean to ships under the Danish flag from the mid-eighteenth century. For example, a single shipload of Norwegian fish arrived in Barcelona annually in the 1750s and 1760s, between five and ten in the 1770s and 1780s, and finally, over thirty a year during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. In all, the Netherlands accounted for about a quarter of Norwegian dried-fish exports in 1800, while Southern Europe took about a half.<sup>41</sup>

Much as in the case of the timber trade, the city merchants operated within a system of extended credit: first, to the fishermen, who received advances in the form of goods or money and were usually permanently in debt to the merchants; next, to the places of sale, where they sometimes gave credit themselves, and at other times were in debt to banking firms in København or overseas. The relationship between merchants and fishermen might well be called one of mutual dependence, but it was also one in which the balance of power was very one-sided. The export quota for the Norwegian fisheries was very high, much as in forestry, and the fishermen were by European standards tightly bound to the international market. But it is also clear that this connection happened because of a powerful patriciate in the Norwegian trading towns who were also granted privileges by the state. Only a minority of the fishermen worked at that trade full-time, and for most of them their main occupation remained agriculture, with the level of their commitment to fishing depending on a number of factors, such as the size and quality of their land, and both the need and the opportunity for extra income.

<sup>41</sup> D. H. Andersen, 'The Danish Flag in the Mediterranean: Shipping and Trade, 1747–1807', unpubl. PhD thesis (Copenhagen, 2001), pp. 43, 249; Dyrvik, *Den lange Fredstiden*, pp. 113–20; Dyrvik *et al.*, *Norsk økonomisk historie*, 1, pp. 154–61.

*Sweden*

Between 1724 and 1790 the Swedish government issued no fewer than forty-six laws and ordinances with the intention of helping the fisheries. Their policy was to set the fishing companies financed by the merchants on their feet, while the fishing carried on by the common people was largely neglected. These enterprises met with a marked lack of success, and this can be attributed to the 'herring adventure' in Bohuslän, which from 1756 onwards attracted capital away from the deep-sea fisheries.<sup>42</sup>

The herring fishery had its origins in the period just before 1750, and Swedish imports of herring ceased in the mid 1750s. Herring from Bohuslän superseded herring from Bergen in the Danzig market and reached its maximum in 1794–5 when around 2 million barrels were landed. This fishery was concentrated on the west coast with its centre in Bohuslän, where consumption was also greatest, whereas there are no indications that consumption increased in eastern Sweden. Catches were so big that the huge quantities of fish failed to find a buyer, and accordingly the fisherfolk began to boil the oil from the herring, which was also exported.

In the first decade of the nineteenth century the herring disappeared, and the many incomers who had participated in the fishing industry were severely affected, while the local population survived and developed other forms of fishing. Cod-fishing from boats with a crew of ten to twelve men, who set out for four to six weeks at a time, continued during the great 'herring adventure', but declined simultaneously with the decline in herring catches. In Finland the fishing was mainly aimed at domestic use.<sup>43</sup>

## Townspeople and their industries

The number of towns in Denmark did not change during the eighteenth century, and by the same token the towns maintained their share of the population, 10 per cent of whom lived in the capital of København and 10 per cent in the sixty-seven trading towns. In general the towns were small, and their size reflected the size and productive capacity of their hinterland. The largest towns – Odense, Aalborg and Helsingør – had about 5,000 inhabitants, and several of the small towns with a population of under 1,000 were smaller than large villages. But developments were not identical

42 P. Holm, *Kystfolk. Kontakter og sammenhænge over Kattegat og Skagerrak ca. 1550–1914* (Esbjerg, 1991), p. 106.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 110.

over the country as a whole. While some towns stagnated, others went backwards (e.g. Ribe) and individual towns progressed in leaps and bounds (e.g. Randers and Odense). The towns enjoyed the privilege of conducting trade and crafts. By far the majority of towns in Denmark, as in the other Scandinavian countries, were rather small, and this had implications for social relations among the burghers. The widespread tendency to live off natural resources meant that the need to buy goods only applied to limited types of goods. Only in those instances where a town housed a military garrison or was one of the few military centres, might increased purchasing power make itself felt, and this could keep many merchants and craftsmen in business.

There were very few textile mills and factories, and those that existed were in and around København. Production in the towns was therefore organised by and large around the guild-based trades, of which there were between 300 and 400. As a sufficient number of master craftsmen was necessary to keep a guild going, the result was that work, in several towns, was in the hands of unorganised journeymen, craftsmen and others who, without actual training in their craft, took on commissions in that craft.<sup>44</sup>

Differences in social relations are most easily discerned in terms of who occupied public positions of responsibility, and who did not. In one little town on Fyn, the leading merchant in the town was also postmaster and dealer in stamped paper. But the town was so small, with around 650 inhabitants, that even minor craftsmen might be assigned public positions. A hat maker and a weaver were public trustees, while a blacksmith was fire inspector. This also meant that although class differences can hardly have been all that great, we must take into account significant differences in income. Social differences are perhaps easiest to make out in the number of journeymen and apprentices. A corresponding difference can be seen in the larger towns. Typically, the number of journeymen craftsmen and apprentices who were not the sons of master craftsmen was very limited. This circumstance should also be seen in the context of the ascription law in the countryside, which meant that the supply of apprentices remained at a low level.<sup>45</sup> In København and some of the larger towns there was a trend throughout the century towards shop-based crafts. This created an

44 O. Feldbæk, 'Tiden 1730–1814', in A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Danmarks historie*, 4 (København, 1982), p. 54.

45 A. Olsen, 'Stavnsbaandets Virkninger paa Byerne', *Scandia*, 6 (1933), p. 72.

occupational differentiation between a few prosperous master craftsmen and many who operated on a smaller scale.<sup>46</sup>

Danish drapery production, which was usually connected to the fleet and the military, concentrated on woollen and cotton textiles, although tobacco mills also played a certain part. Not until near the end of the eighteenth century did the movement out to the provincial trading towns begin, and this should be seen, among other things, in the context of a lower level of wages and costs. The relatively small number of drapery manufactories in Denmark should also be seen in the context of a realistic assessment that, in the short term, it was not possible to get up a profitable export trade in Danish drapery products.

The biggest town in the country after the capital København was Odense, with a total of between 5,000 and 5,500 inhabitants. In contrast to a small town, the indwellers would certainly have known only those who lived in the nearby streets, those they had business dealings with, and their work colleagues. The richest households in the town were concentrated around a few of the town's main streets, while elsewhere there were decidedly poorer quarters. These places were also home to an extensive population of lodgers, e.g. unmarried seamstresses and recipients of alms.

The size of towns can also be calculated from the number of guilds active there. In a town such as Odense there were about twenty different guilds, while in small towns there were relatively few. Social relations among the craftsmen were to a large extent catered for by the guilds through their acceptance of new members and their annual festivities. But not all journeymen could make a living from their trade alone, and in København at least, many required an ancillary occupation, while their wives contributed to the family's upkeep by working as washerwomen. It was quite common for journeymen to make a living as alehouse-keepers and dealers in provisions.

The apprentice carpenters' strike in København in 1794 pointed the way to the society which would develop in the following century. A group of journeyman carpenters became involved in a confrontation with their masters, as a social class which was 'conscious of being a distinct class (not just master craftsmen in the making)'.<sup>47</sup>

46 Feldbæk, 'Tiden 1730–1814', p. 198.

47 E. Rasmussen, *Mester og svend. Studier over københavnske tømrer- og murervendenes lønproblemer og sociale forhold 1756–1800* (Århus, 1985), p. 168.

In terms of ethnicity and religion, Danish society was extremely homogeneous. The only sizeable minority was of German origin, but as one-sixth of the kingdom's inhabitants were German-speaking, and this group was of the Lutheran persuasion, it was scarcely perceived as an alien element. There was a definite desire to reject the influence of groups who did not subscribe to the Augsburg Confession. For reasons of free trade, a small degree of immigration was permitted, but only if the immigrants settled in preselected towns; and for a long time the authorities were reluctant to allow any rights to Roman Catholics.

One of the criteria for deciding social status is the possibility of estimating the extent of social mobility, and this seems to have been very restricted. It was extremely rare for the son of a smallholder to become a clergyman. In the course of a generation, however, this was a possibility for a parish clerk's son.<sup>48</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century, by contrast, the farmers' estate seems to have taken a step backwards socially, in that there were not enough farms for every son to have one of his own, and many of them had to be grateful for the status of a smallholder and the house that went with it. Women's social mobility seems to have been greater than men's as regards both upward and downward mobility.

According to Danish guild law, women as a rule did not have the opportunity to become active practitioners of a guild-organised trade, apart from the special rules applied to widows, or if it was a question of concrete privileges. On the other hand, the drapery trade of the eighteenth century gave employment to women on a large scale, and training of female apprentices was set in motion. It was among the spinners in particular that female workers came to belong to a guild. When there was a census of houses and inhabitants in København after the fire of 1728, those found to be in work included 117 seamstresses and 178 spinners, who were working for themselves without assistance of any kind.<sup>49</sup>

Licences to women to run businesses in Denmark were to a large extent dominated by considerations of welfare policy; for example, in 1760 a woman in København was granted permission to continue running her father's vinegar brewery, as she had been brought up to the trade since childhood. In 1740, another woman had been allowed to carry on her husband's business

48 H. C. Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud 1700–1870*, *Dansk socialhistorie*, 4 (København, 1979), p. 156.

49 I. Dübeck, *Købekoner og konkurrence. Studier over myndigheds- og erhvervsrettens udvikling med staadigt henblik på kvinders historiske retsstilling* (København, 1978), p. 339.

after he had died. But usually such requests for permission had to be forwarded to the very top of the administrative system, and only rarely were they granted.

### Norway

The population in Norwegian towns rose at the same rate as the general population, i.e. by around 80 per cent. The eight towns which had been granted trading privileges before the introduction of the autocracy had a monopoly on trade in their hinterlands. Only fourteen other towns were granted these privileges up to 1800. Only around one-quarter of the indwellers of the towns were burghers. While the haute bourgeoisie of the towns were largely recruited from a long distance away, the ordinary people hailed from the towns' rural hinterland. At the end of the eighteenth century these social groups differed from each other not only politically and economically but also culturally. In the second quarter of the eighteenth century the haute bourgeoisie benefited from a period of economic depression, which led to their parting company with the other merchants and attaining almost total control over production and trade. The business they transacted was so profitable that the generation of capital proceeded more swiftly by and large than the breakdown with each distribution of an estate.

Of the twenty-two trading towns only nine had craft guilds, and the majority of those towns which received trading privileges in the eighteenth century had no guilds. After 1750 the founding of guilds came to an end in all towns. The insignificant influence of the guilds in Norway can also be seen in the fact that the craftsmen were never in a position to prevent a woman from carrying on her late husband's business. A journeyman could pursue the business on the woman's behalf, and that without any restriction that the takeover was restricted to one year after the man's death.<sup>50</sup>

In an attempt to draw up a social categorisation of the town-dwellers, Ståle Dyrvik has tried to divide the population up into five categories: merchants, officials, shipmasters, tradesmen and workmen.<sup>51</sup> If one looks at the composition and size of households in the five groups, there are large differences when numbers of children and servants are taken into account. The merchant's household was twice the size of the workman's, which amounted to

50 H. Sandvik, 'In Her Own Right: Women's Argument in Court', in H. Sandvik *et al.* (eds.), *Pathways of the Past: Essays in Honour of Sølvi Sogner on her 70th Anniversary, 15 March 2002* (Oslo, 2002), p. 215.

51 Dyrvik, *Den lange fredstiden*, p. 207.

4.3 persons. The large difference is accounted for by the number of servants, which underlines the household as an economic entity.

If one takes Kristiansand in southern Norway as an example, it can be noted that the settlement patterns of the five groups show that each group saw itself as a social group with an inner unity and sense of belonging. The merchants in Kristiansand lived close together in the south-western corner of the town, just as the officials did. A merchant had on average 8.8 persons in his household. The tradesmen lived in the town centre by the square and in the northern and eastern parts of the town. Their households contained on average 2.5 persons.

### *Sweden and Finland*

In Sweden, the population of the towns made up around 10 per cent of the total population of the country. The towns grew in size throughout the eighteenth century, but their growth was very uneven (between 10 and 20 per cent), and some towns experienced stagnation. The towns of Sweden, which all had small numbers of inhabitants, can be divided into at least three or four types. A town like Enköping in southern Uppland had 922 inhabitants in 1747, which expanded to 1,139 in 1800.<sup>52</sup> Because of its agrarian character, this town can be hard to distinguish from a rural village. While most of the burghers had a relatively low economic status, a little economic elite emerged, comprising mainly retail traders.<sup>53</sup> A growing population of labourers can however be discerned at the end of the eighteenth century.

A guild ordinance of 1720 defined the parameters of the crafts. Guilds were to be set up in all towns with at least three masters in a particular trade. Craft workshops were as a rule small, and there were only a few masters who had more than five journeymen and apprentices. In 1753, master tailor Hoffmann's workshop was the biggest in Malmö, with seven employees. On average, the ratio of journeymen to apprentices was 1 to 1.3. In the second half of the eighteenth century it is possible to detect a certain continuity among the master craftsmen, but it is a large leap from this to talking of craft dynasties. The number of craftsmen in Sweden increased in the period 1750 to 1780, and this is also true of the number of journeymen and apprentices. When a new period of expansion occurred thirty years later, it

52 A.-M. Fällström and I. Mäntylä, 'Stadsadministrationen i Sverige-Finland under frihetstiden', in B. Ericsson *et al.* (eds.), *Stadsadministrationen i Norden på 1700-tallet* (Oslo, 1982), pp. 177ff.

53 K. Stadin, *Småstäder, småborgare och store samhällsförändringar. Borgarnas sociala struktur i Arboga, Enköping och Västervik under perioden efter 1680* (Uppsala, 1979), pp. 144ff., 149.



was the number of apprentices in particular that rose. But the growth was uneven geographically. In the larger towns, a degree of decline is discernible. In Stockholm, where the same phenomenon occurred, the growth of an industrial sector is probably to blame.

The guild system could lead to conflicts with the nobility, for some of the nobles felt that they had the right to employ their own craftsmen on their own estates. In the long run, however, the guilds were in a strong position, and an attempt in 1724 to introduce non-guild masters had to be abandoned seven years later. Only one Swedish town was kept outside the guild system. This was Eskilstuna, which specialised in the making of weapons, knives, locks etc. In 1771 Eskilstuna was declared a 'free city', and that led to the establishment of a group of dedicated factory owners with many employees. This had the result that journeymen and apprentices became wage-earners, and there ensued an unambiguous process of proletarianisation.<sup>54</sup>

The merchants in Stockholm made up 30 per cent of the town's inhabitants. There were however clearly differentiated patterns regarding export and import. Around 150 merchants were involved in the export trade, 80 per cent of which consisted of iron and copper, while about 450 merchants lived off the import trade, which was made up of lots of different goods. The group of merchants which handled foreign trade seems to have comprised around a third of the town's merchant community. In other words, pedlars and fishmongers made up by far the greater proportion of this occupational group. This division also resulted in the two merchant groups (import and export merchants) having very different social and economic influence in the town, where it was 'the iron lords' who ruled the roost.<sup>55</sup>

The families of merchants and craftsmen in Stockholm show clearly differentiated patterns with regard to social mobility. Almost all the great merchant families had their roots in the British Isles, while it was remarkably rare for merchants of Swedish origin to play a role. It is also evident that these families usually married into other families with whom they were already in contact. It should also be noted that although these families were often ennobled, they seldom married into the old nobility. If marriages with other nobles took place, they were with other members of the new nobility. Future generations of merchant families had less close ties with their ancestors' occupations, while becoming more involved in the world of officials and

<sup>54</sup> Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, p. 230.

<sup>55</sup> L. Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm, c. 1640–1800: A Comparative Study of Early-Modern Entrepreneurial Behaviour* (Uppsala, 1998), pp. 50ff., 247.

civil servants. As for craftsmen, there is evidence of a degree of downward mobility in relation to the workmen. This signifies the beginning of the proletarianisation of the craftsmen,<sup>56</sup> and we can see a weakening of the value attributed to their symbolic capital.

While women in the agricultural sector were organically involved in production, the way in which urban businesses were organised presented a series of obstacles to women in their prosecution of trade and crafts. Commercial legislation and trade guilds reduced their work opportunities. In 1720, however, widows were granted permission to carry on their late husband's trade if they had not remarried. In individual instances the authorities winked at requests for burgher status in order to be permitted to practise an occupation. This applied in particular to the brewing, slaughtering and bakery trades. In Arboga and Södertälje it was women in particular (and not only widows) who were in charge of baking sugar buns. The produce of these towns was sold all over Sweden, and sugar buns from Arboga were sold in Stockholm in particular, where the court also bought some of their produce.<sup>57</sup> The emerging textile manufactories became important for the female workforce, as up to 90 per cent of the employees were women, when the majority of women were still working in their own homes. Most of the linen produced was bought by merchants from provincial towns, and only in the odd location were peasant buyers in charge of the trade. The military came to play a significant role for the drapery trade as buyers of textile products. In the first instance, deliveries came from Stockholm and Norrköping, but large quantities of wadmål came from the area around Borås.<sup>58</sup> An interesting sideline activity for the peasants in Halland was knitting woollen stockings and jerseys, large numbers of which were sold to the military. It is not, however, known how many households were involved in this production.

Until the mid-eighteenth century, Sweden's foreign trade was based in staple towns. This meant that only a few coastal towns were entitled to trade overseas; e.g. it was forbidden for towns north of Stockholm to have trading links with foreign towns, and all trade had to go via Stockholm or a staple town. The origin of this system went back to the first half of the seventeenth century, and proceeded from a perception that a division of labour between

56 M. Wottle, *Det lilla ägandet. Korporativ formering och sociala relationer inom Stockholms minuthandel 1720–1810* (Stockholm, 2000), p. 256.

57 K. Stadin, 'Den gömda och glömda arbetskraften. Stadskvinnor i produktionen under 1600- och 1700-talen', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 3 (1980), p. 305.

58 P. G. Johansson, *Gods, kvinnor och stickning. Tidig industriell verksamhet i Höks härad i södra Halland ca 1750–1870* (Malmö, 2001), p. 167.

the towns would be advantageous for Sweden's whole economic development. Two reasons underlay the formation of this trading policy: first, it was designed to have a positive effect on the amount of Swedish trade and, secondly, it would make it easier to keep control of income from tolls. Göteborg and the Finnish coastal towns gained in importance throughout the century, at the capital's cost. It was also detrimental to Stockholm that trade in the Baltic area became less significant than trade on the Atlantic.<sup>59</sup>

The eighteenth century was dominated by a protectionist trade policy, and the reason can be sought in the unfavourable balance of trade, where imports predominated. In the course of Gustav III's reign, however, a more liberal trade policy was introduced. This change should be seen in the context of the change-over to fiscal and physiocratic perceptions, in which agriculture and industry – and not a protectionist policy based on tolls – became seen as the bringers of prosperity.

In the course of the century a change occurred in the composition of exports: fishing and forestry products increased relative to exports of iron goods. Around 1700, about 32,000,000 kilos of iron were exported annually, and this figure may be seen in relation to the fact that the German mines were unable to cope with demand in Europe. After a minor setback during the Great Northern War, exports continued to grow, to the extent that by the end of the 1730s, they had grown to 48,000,000 kilos annually. Throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century iron exports remained relatively steady, although the nature of the product changed in that exports of partly finished iron goods rose relative to other goods.

By 1790 exports of iron had climbed to 39,220,000 kilos per year. Stockholm's dominant position can be seen against the background of iron exports alone. The export trade was in the hands of capitalist businessmen of foreign origins, while the majority of the mines were owned by Swedes. To a large degree the iron and copper mines were situated in Bergslagen (in central Sweden), for which Stockholm became the natural export centre.<sup>60</sup>

Exports of finished wood products in the eighteenth century were modest. They came from three districts which can be described as the leading ones for the burgeoning industry. The districts in question were an area around Västergötland, a region on the border between northern Skåne, and southern Småland and Dalarna. Swedish wood exports did not grow to the same

59 J. Söderberg *et al.*, *A Stagnating Metropolis: The Economy and Demography of Stockholm, 1750–1850* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 5.

60 Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm*, p. 49.

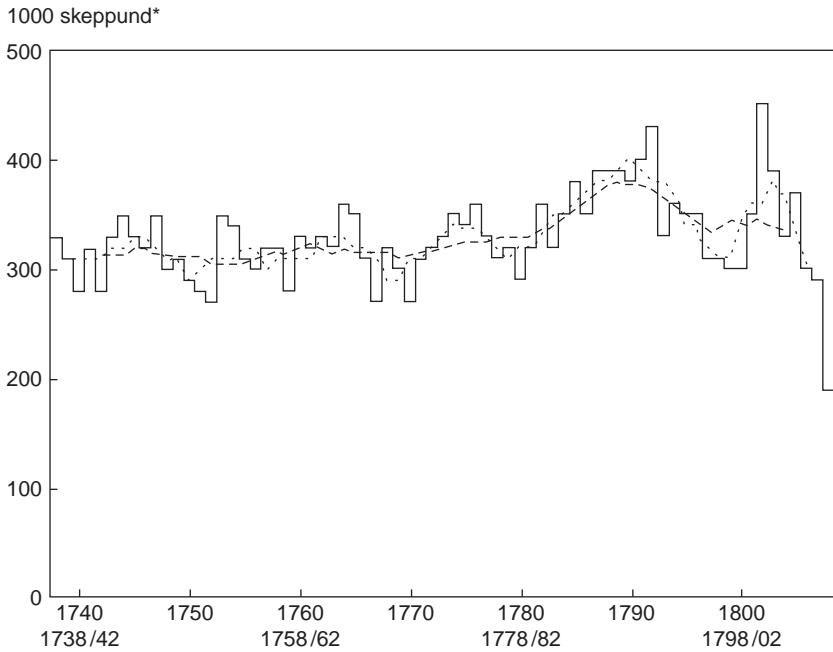


Figure 22.7 Export of Swedish iron, 1738–1808

\* 1 skeppund = 170 kg

Source: Adapted from S. Högberg, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet. Stapelvaror i svensk export och import 1738–1808* (Lund, 1969), p. 85.

extent as English imports of these products, as the Norwegian sawmills could by and large satisfy demand from England. Swedish exports were rather inhibited by the importance that the Swedish government attached to securing their own iron production with sufficient supplies of wood.<sup>61</sup>

Exports of pitch and tar had been a very significant source of income in the seventeenth century, when Sweden and Finland had almost ruled the European market. These exports went through Stockholm, since the city's position as the staple port for the Gulf of Bothnia gave it the monopoly of exporting these goods. (See Table 22.8.)

This position was weakened somewhat in the following century, although exports were always substantial.

61 Högberg, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet*, p. 102.

Table 22.8 Sweden's foreign trade according to the main shipping ports, 1590–1767 (per cent)

Year	Stockholm		Göteborg		Other ports	
	Export	Import	Export	Import	Export	Import
1590	61.3	64.1	12.6	10.5	26.1	25.4
1615	80.1	53.6	–	–	19.9	46.4
1637–40	63.5	67.4	11.7	20.0	24.8	12.6
1649	68.2	78.5	9.5	10.0	22.3	11.5
1661–2	69.3	76.2	10.8	12.3	19.9	11.5
1685	70.6	77.5	10.0	6.0	19.4	16.5
1756–9	57.5	61.6	23.9	12.4	18.6	26.0
1766–7	59.7	62.0	22.7	16.6	17.6	21.4

Source: L. Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm, c. 1640–1800: A Comparative Study of Early-Modern Entrepreneurial Behaviour* (Uppsala, 1998), p. 51.

### Finland

The Finnish towns were small and had an unmistakably agricultural character, and only 4 per cent of the population lived in towns. Only Turku (Åbo), Oulu (Uleåborg), Vaasa (Vasa) and Viipuri (Viborg) had over 1,000 inhabitants in the mid-eighteenth century and, of these, Turku was by far the biggest. Towards 1800, however, the Finnish towns grew substantially, usually with a growth rate of over 50 per cent. Merchants made up 14 per cent of the town population and craftsmen about 20 per cent, but there were large regional differences. The small size of the towns meant that it was impossible to turn any craft into a business operating solely in towns, and in 1680 tailors and craftsmen were allowed to practise their trades in rural parishes. But there were not many of them, as most goods were produced in individual households.<sup>62</sup>

In Finland, people distinguished between the prosperous burghers and those who were less well-off. In Helsinki, Turku, Viipuri and Pori (Björneborg) the prosperous ones were described as the Swedish burghers. This was due to the fact that some of the merchants were of Swedish origin, but also that a number of merchants and the learned people from the Finnish milieu had taken Swedish names and used

62 N. E. Villstrand, 'Stormaktstiden 1517–1721', in R. Fagerlund, K. Jern and N. E. Villstrand (eds.), *Finlands historia*, 2 (Esbo, 1993), pp. 236ff.

Swedish as their spoken language.<sup>63</sup> The numbers of prosperous merchants were modest in comparison to their poorer counterparts.

It was a source of conflict between Stockholm and the Finns on the west coast that the Finnish peasants and small-scale dealers had to sail to Stockholm to sell their agricultural produce, fuel and tar. Admittedly, the Finnish peasants were entitled to sell their own produce in Sweden, but it went much further than that, and they brought back with them large quantities of goods which were cheaper in Stockholm than in the Finnish towns.<sup>64</sup>

In comparison to Sweden, craftsmen could not only participate in the running of the towns but could also be elected to the *riksdag*. Yet this higher social rank compared to Sweden could not make up for the lack of craftsmen, and several attempts were made to attract Swedish craftsmen. The shortage was so pronounced that, until well into the century, foreigners could become craftsmen in the towns without being members of a guild.

### Overseas colonies and shipping

Sweden had no colonies, apart from the little island of St Barthélemy in the Caribbean, which was acquired from France in 1785. Denmark on the other hand had small colonies or bases around the world. There were Greenland, Iceland and the Føroyar in the North Atlantic, although these were of limited economic importance, and the state's policy regarding them concentrated on securing necessary supplies through regular voyages there.

By contrast, the government in København was keen to exploit its possessions in the Caribbean, not least after adding to the lesser islands of St Thomas and St John the island of St Croix, bought from France in 1733, which was much more suited to the cultivation of sugar. They were joined with a possession on the west coast of Africa in a typically mercantilist system, by which the Danish king was also able to add Tranquebar on the east coast of India. This difference between Denmark and Sweden became significant not least for their industrial policies and their populations'

63 O. Nikula, 'Stadsväsendet i Finland 1721–1875', in P. Tømmila (ed.), *Stadsväsendets historia i Finland* (Helsingfors, 1987), p. 123. Already in the next century some 200,000 Finns changed their Swedish names into Finnish ones, see E. I. Kouri, 'Das Nationale und die Stellung der Sprache im Großfürstentum Finnland', in K. Maier (ed.), *Nation und Sprache in Nordosteuropa im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 2012), pp. 275–93, here pp. 287–8.

64 Söderberg *et al.*, *A Stagnating Metropolis*, p. 207.

differing patterns of consumption, as tropical products were consumed to a greater degree in Denmark.

### *Shipping*

In 1786 a French calculation concluded that the Danish-Norwegian merchant fleet stood at 3,601 ships of 386,000 tons in total, while the Swedish-Finnish fleet consisted of 1,224 ships of 169,000 tons. Other calculations set the Danish-Norwegian total at a little over 300,000 tons, with half belonging to Norway and the remainder divided equally between Denmark itself and the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein – and the Swedish total at 140,000 tons together with 30,000 tons from Swedish-Pomerania. However, there is no doubt that the Scandinavian countries had built up merchant fleets which were respectively the fourth and fifth biggest in Europe, which far exceeded their degree of economic development and size of population. This should be compared with the situation around 1720 when, as a result of many years of war, significant numbers of ships and a great deal of market share had been lost.<sup>65</sup>

The increase in shipping started in the 1740s in Denmark-Norway's case, and rather later for Sweden-Finland. For both states, the most important area of expansion in Europe was the Iberian peninsula and the Mediterranean, which were made safe for unarmed Scandinavian ships by peace treaties with the North African Barbary states and the Ottoman Empire in 1729–41 (Sweden) and 1746–56 (Denmark), treaties which were followed by a significant expansion of the networks of consuls. As regards legislation, Navigation Acts on the British model were introduced, namely the Swedish Products Edict (*Produktplakat*) of 1724 and the Danish Customs Tariff of 1742. On the political front, a policy of neutrality was introduced, which was not simply a declaration of non-involvement, but which also actively sought to win a market share for goods and ships during the great wars of the century, which to some extent were kept up after the peace settlement. However, the market share enjoyed by Scandinavian ships also rose in peacetime, and much of the expansion was based on normal competitive advantages such as low wages and good productivity. Yet the pattern of sailings differed. Swedish and Norwegian shipping relied to a great degree on transporting their own country's products, at least on the outward voyage. In Sweden's case this meant selling iron, timber, pitch and tar to Great Britain and

65 H. C. Johansen, 'Scandinavian Shipping in the Late Eighteenth Century in a European Perspective', *Economic History Review*, 45 (1992).

Western Europe, and herring to the Baltic area, while Norway specialised in timber to Great Britain and Western Europe, supplemented by sales of fish to Southern Europe. On the return voyage both Swedish and Norwegian ships might operate in the tramp trade in the Mediterranean.

Denmark itself had no export trade with Southern Europe, and Danish ships opted instead for the lucrative traffic between the Baltic and Southern Europe in timber, flax, hemp and grain. After this they sought cargoes in the Mediterranean wherever they could be obtained. In addition, the transport of sugar and tropical goods from the Caribbean became more important in the last decades of the century. It holds good for all the Scandinavian countries that the return voyages were a mixture of luxury goods (wine, fruit) and staple wares such as salt and, in Sweden's case, grain. The success of the Scandinavian countries in building up such large merchant fleets seems thus to have been dependent on the introduction of protectionist Navigation Acts, transport of their own raw materials in large volume, favourable geographical location on the route from the Baltic to Southern Europe, 'normal' skilful competitiveness in the form of low wages and high productivity and, finally, an active policy of neutrality during the major wars of the eighteenth century.<sup>66</sup>

### *The East Indies*

The second East India Company went bankrupt in 1728, but regular voyaging was kept up by an interim company until a third company was founded in 1732, which was not dissolved until 1844. Meanwhile, an expedition was for the first time sent to India, and the economic profit resulting from this demonstrated that the China journey was the most profitable part of the East Indies trade. With the renewal of the Company's charter in 1772, the India trade was handed over for free to private expeditions, while the Company retained its monopoly of the China trade.

Sweden came late to India and China. A Swedish East India Company was first established in 1731 with a charter for twenty-five years, renewed in 1766. Sweden had no colonial possessions in Asia, and after unprofitable attempts at trading in India, the Company concentrated on the China trade. (See Table 22.9.)

66 O. Ventegodt, *Redere, rejser og regnskaber* (Flensburg, 1989); D. H. Andersen, 'The Danish Flag in the Mediterranean: Shipping and Trade, 1747–1807', unpubl. PhD thesis (Copenhagen, 2001); Johansen, 'Scandinavian Shipping in the Late Eighteenth Century in a European Perspective'.



Table 22.9 *Danish and Swedish East India Company expeditions to India and China, 1732–1813*

	Denmark		Sweden
	Asiatic Company 1732–1807	Private 1772–1807	1732–1813
India	122	139	8
China	123	-	124
Total	245	139	132

Source: O. Feldbæk, *Storhandelens tid. Dansk søfartshistorie*, 3: 1720–1814 (København, 1997), p. 112; E. Gøbel, 'Danish Companies' Shipping to Asia, 1616–1807', in J. R. Bruijn and F. S. Gaastra (eds.), *Ships, Sailors and Spices* (Amsterdam, 1993); L. Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, 2nd edn (Stockholm, 1999).

The Danish and Swedish China ships were slightly bigger than the Dutch ones and considerably bigger than the British and French ships.

There are significant similarities between the Danish and Swedish East India trades. For most of the time it was driven by chartered companies with significant state involvement and support.

Basically, both the Danish and Swedish companies were dependent on certain special overseas economic conditions in order to operate profitably. The predominant product from China was tea, the Scandinavian home market for which was limited. But tea was sold at auction in København and Göteborg respectively, and large amounts were smuggled into Britain, a profitable enterprise given that the British customs duty stood at 114 per cent. This was lowered in 1784 to 12 per cent, as a result of which a large part of the economic basis for both companies was destroyed. Neither Denmark nor Sweden had marketable commodities for the Asian market, and in the first part of this period the cargoes bought were paid for in silver. From the 1770s onwards the India and to some extent China trade could be financed by cheap loans from British officials in India, who were able to send their corruptly earned fortunes back to Britain.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> O. Feldbæk, *Indian Trade under the Danish Flag 1772–1808: European Enterprise and Anglo-Indian Remittance and Trade* (Odense, 1969); K. Lauring, 'Kinahandelen – et spørgsmål om finansiering', in H. Jeppesen et al. (eds.), *Søfart, politik, identitet. Tildænet Ole Feldbæk* (København, 1996).

Table 22.10 *Danish slave exports, 1660–1806*

	Total	Annual average
1660–1733	17,200	236
1734–65	15,500	500
1766–92	31,250	1,202
1793–1806	33,500	2,577

Source: P. O. Hernæs, *Slaves, Danes, and African Coast Society: The Danish Slave Trade from West Africa and Afro-Danish Relations on the Eighteenth-century Gold Coast* (Trondheim, 1995), p. 232.

### *The Danish slave trade and sugar production*

Up until the 1730s, slave expeditions were an important part of Danish Caribbean trade, in that a large number of ships sailed the triangular trade route, København–Africa–Caribbean–København, but with the increasing production of raw sugar after 1733 the proportion of ships participating in the triangular trade became less and less. Out of a total of around 3,000 voyages between Denmark and Africa/the Caribbean, fewer than 200 were on the triangular route.<sup>68</sup>

The significance of the acquisition of St Croix in 1733 is obvious, as is the feverish activity after 1792, the Danish slave trade having been forbidden with effect from 1 January 1803. There is no question of super-profits in the Danish slave trade, and if public expenditure on, among other things, the African forts is taken into account, it is doubtful if the slave trade in itself was profitable. (See Table 22.10.) On the other hand, there were very significant profits both in the Caribbean and in København from the production and manufacture of raw sugar. Since most members of the planter class in the Danish Caribbean islands were of foreign origin, very little of their fortunes was invested in Denmark, and this had little or no significance for Denmark's economic development. The raw sugar from the Caribbean was intended for shipment to Denmark, and although raw sugar among other things was exported to the American continent to pay for supplies to the islands, Denmark was in a position, in the last quarter of the century, to ensure that the greater part of the raw sugar production was sent to Denmark. Much as has been observed with Britain, an 'Americanisation' of imports and exports

68 E. Gøbel, 'Danish Trade to the West Indies and Guinea', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 31 (1983).

occurred in Denmark itself, where sugar and coffee played an ever greater role, and a modern sugar industry was built up, particularly in København. The relevant activities can be divided into two.

First, there was the normal import of raw sugar and its conversion into the refined product, of which there was a certain amount left over for export, especially to the Baltic. The value of the production itself was 1–2 million *rigsdaler* annually in the last decades of the century.

Secondly, there was København's function, during the great European wars, as a depot for sugar and other tropical products from the French and Dutch possessions in the Caribbean. For several years during the American War of Independence and the wars after 1793, the value of re-exports was 2–4 million *rigsdaler*, even if the actual growth in value in København itself was much less. During these decades sugar and tropical products constituted by far the most important export from København, and in Denmark itself they were surpassed only by grain exports. Apart from the establishment of a modern sugar industry, the trade in goods from the tropics does not seem to have caused structural changes in the Danish economy, e.g. in the financing of industrialisation. This is no doubt due to the fact that it was a wartime boom, building on the temporary interruption to the trade and shipping of the warring states, and that Denmark's entry into the war after 1807 and the consequent economic depression wiped out any profits.<sup>69</sup>

### Living standards and the consumer society

Inequality in Scandinavian society was probably rising between the 1730s and the 1790s, and perhaps for longer than that. As far as earnings were concerned, the middle and upper classes benefited from rising ground rents and income from trade and shipping during the favourable economic conditions from the mid-eighteenth century and, as regards expenditure, typical luxury products like coffee, tea, sugar and not least the cost of labour rose less in price than basic food items. In the countryside, we see a middle class of farmers emerging with personal wealth which increased more speedily than that of the smallholders and the landless. A microstudy from Etne in western Norway shows a rise in prosperity of farmers of a little over 50 per cent, after

<sup>69</sup> P. P. Sveistrup and R. Willerslev, *Den danske sukkerhandels og sukkerproduktions historie* (København, 1945); D. H. Andersen, 'Denmark-Norway, Africa and the Caribbean 1660–1917: Modernisation Financed by Sugar and Slaves', in P. C. Emmer *et al.* (eds.), *A Deus Ex Machine Revisited: Atlantic Colonial Trade and European Economic Development* (Leyden, 2006).

adjustment. This was a conspicuous growth in a society which previously had had only weak economic development. The smallholders could not demonstrate a corresponding degree of economic success.<sup>70</sup>

Gini coefficients for income in København in 1789 were 0.66 (where 0 represents total equality and 1 total inequality). By comparison, the Gini coefficients for Denmark and Brazil respectively in the 1990s were 0.25 and 0.60.<sup>71</sup>

Between 1750 and 1800 the value of bricklayers' wages in København and the wages of casual workers on a Sjælland estate fell by between a quarter and a third. Admittedly, 1750 was a year of low prices, but on the other hand the 1790s was actually a period of wage rises, so the fall in real wages was significant. This was borne out by a shift in eating habits from animal to vegetable products. The fall in the value of wages was for many groups of workers partly compensated by the fact that remuneration was often in kind, in one way or another. This could be direct, in the form of meals provided during working hours, supplies of grain as part-payment of wages, or as the so-called 'warehouse system' at Kongsberg silver mine, where from 1774 onwards the workers could buy foodstuffs at fixed low prices, something which in a particularly expensive year may have cost 50,000 *rigsdalers*.<sup>72</sup> There are indications that some estate owners chose to hand out more payment in kind during the inflationary surge in the last quarter of the century, in order to avoid increasing money wages. Otherwise, we should take into account that the lower classes compensated by working more, finding ancillary occupations and changing over to cheaper foodstuffs.

<sup>70</sup> Dyrvik, *Den lange fredstiden*, p. 179.

<sup>71</sup> København 1789: calculation carried out by Henrik J. Meyer for this publication on the basis of H. J. Meyer, 'The Distribution of Income in Copenhagen at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 45 (1997), p. 44.

<sup>72</sup> Berg, 'Årsaker til Kongsberg Sølvverks nedgang 1769–1805', pp. 133f.; M. D. Hansen, 'Levestandarden for løsarbejdere ved Løvenborg gods i anden halvdel af det 18. århundrede', unpubl. paper, University of København (2001); L. S. Jensen, 'Reallønsudviklingen for københavnske murersvende 1750–1800', unpubl. paper, University of København (2001).

## Material and popular culture

JENS CHR. V. JOHANSEN

### The festivals

The year was characterised by a long series of festivals, which were bound up with the farming year and the church year. Christmas and Easter occupied a central place among the festivals of the church year. On the third day of Christmas the traditional *julestuer* began. These were parties held by young people with dancing, Christmas games and games involving singing. However, as the authorities viewed these festivals as a Catholic tradition, several attempts were made in vain to ban them among the peasants after the Reformation. For the community it was of the utmost significance to mark the transition from one period to another, and accordingly this transition was made overt. Celebrations of Whitsun and harvest figured among the festivals of the farming year.

Among the Scandinavian countries, it was only in Denmark that Shrovetide played any role. This was no doubt because the cold weather in February prevented people from holding festivals outside. By contrast, the festival which marked the coming of spring was important everywhere.

The later arrival of spring in Finland, Norway and Sweden than in Denmark influenced the timing of the festivals in these countries. One evening, at the beginning of May, the menfolk in Denmark would erect a tree in the middle of their village, and the girls would decorate it with wreaths and ribbons. The participants would dance around the tree and enjoy themselves all night long. Early next morning everyone in the village would gather at a farm which had been chosen in advance. Everyone who was able to would come on horseback, while those who had no horse had to content themselves with coming on foot. When everyone was present, they would begin to process towards the nearest forest, where a King of the May would be chosen. The King's first act seems to have been to choose himself a Queen of the May, and after this all the other men would take a May bride.

The King and Queen of the May might be chosen just for this one festival, or they might be the appointed festival choice for the village guild of the coming year. The pact that had been entered upon was expressed by giving the May brides a little wreath of flowers which had been plaited the previous evening at the wreath-making party.

After this, the signal was given to break up, and everyone equipped themselves with a blossoming twig from the trees, and with these in their hands, and to musical accompaniment, the procession made its way back to the village. Once there, they rode from farm to farm, the riders with beech twigs (*majgrene*) in their hands and their hats. At each farm they attached a twig to the roof above the gate or the door and sang spring songs, including May ballads. In return they received presents 'for the May'. The May ballad,<sup>1</sup> which was known as early as 1670, goes:

Hey! Now we're bringing in the summer  
Rolling in with glorious May and lusty summer.

In the evening the dancing started up again, and was followed by the actual King of the May party.

The festival went under the name of *sommer-i-by riden* (literally, 'riding summer into town'). Clearly, the fetching of beech twigs into the village was bound up with some fertility rituals.

The festival lasted for several days, and at night things could often take a violent turn when the men from the neighbouring village attempted to steal the tree, to prevent the festival being held. For the same reason the authorities tried several times to prevent the vigils by the May tree – in vain.<sup>2</sup>

In Scandinavia a significant part of the festivities surrounding the King of the May was bound up with beer drinking, and the clergy frequently complained about the large consumption of beer at the festivals, which lasted from two to three days. The sexual abandon of the young, which the priests believed themselves to be witnessing, was also a thorn in their flesh. Accordingly, an ordinance was promulgated in Denmark in 1735 forbidding all peasant festivals, in particular 'riding-in-the-summer', but such a widespread festival could not be rooted out by a simple ordinance. This latter prohibition was in fact lifted by an ordinance of 1748. Nevertheless, the authorities tried again twenty-five years later to regulate what went on, but in vain.

<sup>1</sup> J. S. Møller, *Fester og Højtider i gamle Dage. Aarets Fester* (Holbæk, 1933), p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Even during the time of the Reformation, the Reformers were trying to take action against the 'riding-in-the-summer' festivities.

In Sweden, the festivities commenced rather later in May with a battle between 'summer' and 'winter' which was very reminiscent of the battle between 'Shrovetide' and 'Lent' in Southern Europe. In consequence, there was a degree of disparity between the festivities in the two countries, so that some of the individual customs known from Denmark were only enacted later in the summer in Sweden. The May tree was certainly known by the same name in both Denmark and Sweden, but in Sweden it could with some justification have been called the Midsummer tree.

Sweden's actual King of the May party was also held on Midsummer Day. In contrast to Denmark, church traditions played a role in the festival in Sweden, as Midsummer Day falls on St John's day. Girls wove wreaths not only for the menfolk but also to decorate the church, which all the participants visited as the first destination of their procession. There was also a tradition of setting up maypoles in the churches, but these were dispensed with in the course of the eighteenth century. After the sermon in church, the King of the May joined the Queen of the May in approaching the altar to offer their gifts. Only then could the festival begin.<sup>3</sup>

Finnish festivals were similar to the Western Christian calendar and Protestant traditions. Yet Easter, for example, was a combination of Christian and pagan customs. The spring festival also began on 1 May, with people cleansing themselves with new birch twigs. On the same day the battle between 'winter' and 'spring' was fought. The smartly dressed King of the May fought against the dishevelled figure of winter.<sup>4</sup> The actual festivities were however put off until *juhannus* (midsummer). In many places it was the custom to place birches on either side of the doors by which one entered the farm. A fir-tree was stripped of its bark and branches and erected in the middle of the yard, with only the top remaining. There was dancing round this tree. The farm was decorated with branches and flowers, which had been collected the previous evening. In many places the men went from farm to farm with leaves, demanding cheese from the girls. In Ahvenanmaa (the Åland islands) the Swedish-originated tradition of dancing around the maypole was common. The festivities also included different versions of pairing magic.

Also in Norway, Midsummer Eve was the most important festival time. Houses had to be washed – which corresponds to the Danish peasant tradition of whitewashing the house for Whitsun – and were decorated outside and inside with green leaves. Midsummer was a people's festival

3 N.-A. Bringéus, *Årets festseder* (Stockholm, 1976), p. 169.

4 K. Vilkkuna, *Finnisches Brauchtum im Jahreslauf* (Helsinki, 1969), pp. 135f.

with a bonfire as the central focus, as in Denmark and Finland. 'Bringing-in-the-summer' was celebrated in the towns too. The festival was known from Bergen to København, just as much as from Stockholm to Turku (Åbo). But here it was the guilds and fraternities which arranged the festivities. In the 1690s the maypole stood in front of a house in Nyboder in København, where the royal boatsmen were celebrating the arrival of spring.<sup>5</sup> Things could take a violent turn in the towns, just as in the countryside, and in Stockholm an apprentice blacksmith once killed a saddle-maker when the members of the guild came back from Solna with their King of the May.

## Clothes

Old and young alike put on their best clothes for festivals. The clothes worn by country-dwellers took their inspiration from those worn by the townspeople, with adjustments dictated by local need. It is also possible to discern variations within the same district. So clothing was not invariable; neither the townspeople nor the country-dwellers were dressed in the same manner in 1650 as they were in 1750.

From ancient times, undyed white wadmal had been the peasants' everyday dress. But after a bit of wear, wadmal soon took on a dirty, grey, muddy tinge. Accordingly, festive clothes had to have another colour, and for this reason a couple of black sheep were always kept in the flock to provide wool for the black material which was the preferred colour for festive clothing.<sup>6</sup>

Peasant women in Denmark received a black skirt at their confirmation or wedding. Those who could not afford this had to make do with a black jacket and shirt. These would be their festive garments throughout their life.<sup>7</sup> In the eighteenth century shirts as a rule came down to the wearer's feet, but this might of course be influenced by changing fashions, so that they might well be a fraction shorter, bringing the feet into view. Women's dresses were cut in one piece, with sleeves. A fastening with hooks or laces, which became more common after the mid-eighteenth century, might mean that the dress was now divided into a bodice and a skirt.

A jacket with sleeves was a peasant woman's everyday garment. The jacket was fastened only at the throat and bodice, leaving a vent over the chest, but this space was occupied by the bodice, fastened with silver eyes

5 L. Børthy, 'Højtid og fest', in A. Steensberg (ed.), *Dagligliv i Danmark i det syttende og attende århundrede 1620–1720* (København, 1969), p. 66.

6 E. Andersen, *Danske bønderes klædedragt* (København, 1960), p. 17.      7 *Ibid.*, p. 42.



and hooks, which was the town dress of well-to-do peasant women and was fashioned from linsey-woolsey (i.e. with strong linen yarn in one direction and black woollen yarn in the other) or calamanco (a woollen stuff from Flanders) in lively colours such as blue, brown, green and red. Skirts were as a rule made of the tatty grey wadmal.

On festive occasions townswomen wore more colourful clothes than women in the countryside. The predominant colour for dresses was blue, but yellow became more and more widespread.<sup>8</sup>

Married women's caps were black, while those of unmarried women were white. Not until the end of the eighteenth century did colourful caps of silk, velvet and calico with lace come into use. It was by women's headgear in particular that one could see which part of the country they came from. The part covering the neck was embroidered with silk threads, often in floral motifs.<sup>9</sup>

Men's dress was almost identical over the whole of Denmark. It comprised white knitted stockings and knee breeches of white wadmal. For festivals, white wadmal jackets were worn with a long waistcoat whose skirts came down to the thighs, alternating with a coat with upright collar of red wadmal. Underneath, the men wore a brightly striped chest covering of four-hafted linsey-woolsey. Brightly striped (*højstribet*) meant that the dominant colour in the stripes was red.

Peasants with money wore a dress-coat of dark-blue wadmal – a long, skirted, single-breasted coat with buttons which reached to the shin. It was dyed with indigo, which could be bought from and applied by the dyer in the market town. In the eighteenth century the cut was influenced by that of the jerkin, and there were cuffs and pocket flaps on the dress-coats, even buttonholes, where previously hooks had been viewed as sufficient. Silver buttons were yet another expression of power. But women too put silver buttons on their jackets.

In the towns, men often drew inspiration from the more colourful clothes of the country nobility, to the extent that a red dress-coat with blue taffeta lining and a blue silk waistcoat was the height of fashion.<sup>10</sup> The knitted cap was the headgear of all Danish men, just as all of them wore clogs for footwear.

Norwegian peasant women went about in knitted wadmal jackets under a laced bodice. The dominant colour was black, followed by red and blue. The

8 E. Lorenzen, *Folks tøj i og omkring Århus ca. 1675-ca. 1850* (Århus, 1975), p. 98.

9 M. Kragelund, *Folkedragter. Landboliv i fællesskabets tid* (København, 1989), p. 29.

10 Lorenzen, *Folks tøj i og omkring Århus ca. 1675-ca. 1850*, p. 111.

jackets had hooks and were provided with red or blue ribbons and edging. Common to all the different types of jacket was a plunging neckline, tight sleeves and a back with a seam in the middle and on either side. All of these jackets tapered in sharply at the waist. The jackets were fastened in front.

The laced bodice was in use all over Norway. It was sewn from velvet taffeta, kersey or wadmal in blue, green, white, red or black colours. Black and blue colours dominated in skirts.

So it cannot be said that Norwegian peasant women had a particular form of festive dress. It was the age of the clothes which decided if they were everyday or festive garments. The newest ones were worn at festivities.<sup>11</sup>

For everyday use Norwegian peasants wore grey, bottle-shaped wadmal jackets, changing into jackets of livelier green or red colours for festivals. Over the jacket the peasants wore a waistcoat of fulled wadmal with large buttons of brass or pewter. The use of cuffs on waistcoats indicates that they were used as overcoats, as the cuffs would make them ill-suited for wearing under other clothes. In many places at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the waistcoat was replaced by a chest covering or bodice which, in contrast to the waistcoat, was sleeveless, and of which the back and front were of the same material. Those who could afford it substituted a dress-coat for the waistcoat at festivities.<sup>12</sup> Men's coats, which fastened with buttons and reached to the knees, were as a rule of grey wadmal. The cuffs on the grey coats were blue, green or red, partly of imported material like *kirs*. There may have been local variations in these cuffs, as Bishop Erik Pontoppidan wrote in the 1740s, with regard to men's dress in the Bergen area, that peasant cuffs in Hardanger were red, in Voss they were black and in Sogndal yellow. At festivals the men wore black wadmal knee-breeches, which hung down below the knees.

In Sweden, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, people's clothing was regulated by legislation aimed at curbing luxury and extravagance. The enactment of this legislation was monitored by *sockenstämmorna* (parish meetings), where the parish priest had the last word. It should be pointed out, however, that the actual outward appearance of the clothes never became the target of interference. But at Vingåker in Södermanland it was the priest, Marcus Simming, who was the prime mover behind the energetic clothing policy which found expression in 1693, when the parish meeting decided that everyone belonging to the peasant estate should

<sup>11</sup> T. Gjessing, *Gudbrandsdalens folkedragter. Et bidrag til norsk drakthistorie i 1700- og begynnelsen av 1800-årene* (Oslo, 1949), p. 214.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

continue to wear the old costume of Vingåker. The men were to attend church in trousers reaching to their feet, jackets with a turned-in seam, and otter-skin caps or a high hat.<sup>13</sup> Generally speaking, Swedish costumes were even more tradition-bound than those of the other Scandinavian countries.

In the parish of Unnaryd in Småland the clothing worn in the first half of the eighteenth century was strongly reminiscent of aristocratic dress at the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Women's clothing in Sweden consisted of kirtles in strong colours, with or without a bodice. Kirtles without an integral bodice had detachable ones. These detachable bodices were introduced as an item of dress at the end of the seventeenth century. Kirtles were worn outside the skirt, which was open at the back and sides. The brown or green jackets which were worn on top had cuffs on the sleeves. A cloak or cape was also part of a woman's dress. On marrying, the wife was expected to don a cap, the everyday symbol of the housewife.

Men's clothing consisted of a shirt with half-sleeves. For a particularly smart appearance, they would attach a pair of sleeves with gathers, which fastened at the wrist, or a jacket extending to the knees, fastened with hooks. Trousers had straps fastened round the knees, and stockings were grey or blue. Over the shirt or jacket they wore a bodice sewn in one piece front and back, but open at one side, where it was held together with hooks. Colours were grey or black. Headgear consisted of a sort of skull-cap of cloth or skin. At festivals, a long, white scarf was tied under the chin.

Finnish men's costume in general bore obvious similarities to that of Sweden. Only the knitted jackets of Karjala (Karelia) hint at a Russian influence. As regards Finnish women's dress, their headgear shows the most pronounced regional differences. In Karelia women wore scarves which went right down their backs, while those further west wore caps or scarves with a ribbon, the ends of which hung down their backs.

## Music

During festivals the popular tunes of the day were played to accompany dancing round the maypole. Throughout the Scandinavian countries music was performed by town musicians and peasant *spillemænd* (traditional musicians). While town musicians in Denmark and Norway were organised in a similar fashion to

<sup>13</sup> A.-M. Nylén, *Folkligt dräktskick i Västra Vingåker och Österåker* (Uppsala, 1947), p. 227.

<sup>14</sup> P. G. Wistrand, *Svenska folkdräkter* (Stockholm, 1907), p. 26.

a guild, in Sweden and Finland it was the organists in the market towns who had the privilege of playing music.<sup>15</sup>

There were privileged musicians in Denmark and Norway from the time of the introduction of the autocracy in 1660 until the nineteenth century. These people had by royal assent been assigned a particular territory, but as these territories could be rather large, there was a widespread system of tenancies in force. In Norway, holders of such tenancies might have to be tested by the town musician, but it is unclear whether or not the town musician sent out his journeymen to play in villages in the dales. Town musicians were kept very busy, and for this reason they often employed a couple of journeymen and a corresponding number of apprentices. Between May and November 1759, Hans Ditlevsen, the town musician in Roskilde, on the island of Sjælland, and his musicians played on no fewer than ninety-nine occasions in the town of Roskilde and the surrounding region.<sup>16</sup>

In Sweden-Finland the organist had to employ some fellow musicians in order to fulfil his commissions, and these musicians had to be able to play several instruments. His musical colleagues were normally recruited from the ranks of the rustic *spillemænd*.

Drums and the violin seem to have been the preferred instruments for peasant musicians in Scandinavia, but in the entourage of the above-mentioned Hans Ditlevsen, for example, there might be a much larger selection of instruments. Registered in his line-up are six violins, a bass, two dulcians, two oboes, one oboe d'amore, one flute, two clarinets, one cornet, six wald-horns, two posthorns and six trumpets.

The composition of the troupe was dependent on circumstances. The full complement of instruments would be employed in the towns when the town council was in attendance, or for private functions. At festivals in the countryside, the commonest practice seems to have been to send only a journeyman to play the violin or trumpet. No doubt one of the apprentices would also have been present, although this is not overtly stated. In Sweden-Finland the *nyckelharpa* was employed. This is a stringed instrument which is stroked

15 J. H. Koudal, 'Town Waits and Country Fiddlers in Denmark', in D. Stockmann and A. Erler (eds.), *Historische Volksmusikforschung. Beiträge der 10. Arbeitstagung in Göttingen 1991* (Göttingen, 1994), p. 285; G. Andersson, 'Stad och landsbygd', in L. Johnsson et al. (eds.), *Musiken i Sverige, 1: Från forntid til stormaktstidens slut 1720* (Stockholm, 1994), p. 363.

16 J. H. Koudal, 'Stadsmusikanter og bondespillemænd', in F. Eriksen (ed.), *Foreningen til Folkedansens Fremme, Jubilæumsskrift 1986-1991* (København, 1991), p. 89.

with a bow, but like the hurdy-gurdy it has keys, and is often found together with the violin. In Finland the national musical instrument was *kantele*, originally with five strings stretched across a flat sounding board and plucked by hand. In Norway the Hardanger fiddle was the instrument most often found along with the violin.

Even if the town musicians in Denmark and Norway had the privilege of playing at country festivities, they had to fight hard everywhere – like their counterparts in Sweden and Finland – against the unorganised music-making of the *spillemand*. The peasants naturally wished to avoid paying for organised music, and in any case they had permission to employ their own *spillemand* on special occasions, e.g. at betrothal parties or celebrations of the birth of a child. As well as the competition from these village music-makers, professional musicians had to reckon with competition from itinerant musicians of all kinds.

The music played at festivals in the Scandinavian countries belonged to a layer of popular melodies which were common to the whole of Northern Europe. Some of these melodies were employed by nobles, burghers and peasants alike. The town musicians' dance melodies were not written down, by and large. But an analysis of the oldest folk-dance notebook from Denmark, written down around 1760, shows that almost half of the melodies can be found in contemporary sources from Leipzig in the south to Finland in the north.<sup>17</sup> But the melodies are always found in variant forms, making clear that they were passed on by ear and by copying.

The common people also sang along with the dance, without any instrumental music being involved. This form of music has not left many traces behind, so that it is impossible to say how widespread this kind of singing was. In more isolated communities, of course, the tradition was maintained longer, and here the singing was so essential that people with no access to instruments always had one of their number singing the melody.

There is considerable evidence that the music of the common people differed from professional music in the actual performance, and although the professional musicians who visited the country villages often captured the essence of the common music when they played, conflicts could nevertheless arise at festivals.

The above-mentioned Roskilde town musician, Hans Ditlevsen, once sent one of his apprentices to a 'bringing-in-the-summer' festival, although he had promised two musicians. The apprentice had a trumpet and a violin with

<sup>17</sup> Koudal, 'Stadsmusikanter og bondespillemand', p. 92.

him and he played the polskas and minuets that the audience demanded. But they thought he played poorly on his violin when accompanying the dance, and while they were dancing they asked him to play particular tunes, which he declined to do, doubtless because he did not know them. Some individuals left the festivities, and the apprentice expressed a desire to return to Roskilde as quickly as possible. However, he was persuaded to play on until the sun went down. When he was about to pack up, a couple of men demanded that he leave his instruments until the following day. The apprentice refused, and a fight ensued. In the end, he was forced to leave his instruments in the village and to return empty-handed to Roskilde.<sup>18</sup> This story, which has been preserved in the form of court proceedings, gives a good picture of instruments, repertoire and playing technique. The apprentice had no problem playing reels and minuets, but he could not play the specific and no doubt traditional melodies which the peasants were expecting; and those melodies he did play were, in the peasants' opinion, played wrongly.

The above-mentioned polska (*polsk dans*) reached Denmark by, at the latest, the mid-seventeenth century. The trading towns were the first to take it up, but it is not possible to say how quickly it found its way out into the countryside. Dances were most often designed for couples. A round dance (*spring*) was a regular feature after a slow forward movement by couples together. The music was divided into two parts: a 'fore-dance' in equal time, and an 'after-dance' in triple time. As early as 1697, Professor Harald Vallerius of Uppsala pointed out that the common people danced differently from the nobility, in that even time (*dupla*) was changed to a faster 'after-dance' in triple time (*tripla*).<sup>19</sup> The minuet was also danced. The minuet seems to have dominated in Sweden at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but in the course of the century it was replaced by and often changed to a *polska*.<sup>20</sup>

Roundels (*springdansen*) were another dominant type of village dance in Norway. The melodies of the polska and the roundel were in asymmetrical triple time. The eighteenth-century polonaise was in 3/4 time and had many similarities with the polska.<sup>21</sup> New dances such as the English dance and the

18 Koudal, 'Stadsmusikanter og bondespillemand', p. 91.

19 Andersson, 'Stad och landsbygd', p. 381.

20 G. Andersson, 'Städerna som musikmiljöer', in L. Johnsson *et al.* (eds.), *Musiken i Sverige. Frihetstid och Gustaviansk tid 1720–1810* (Stockholm, 1993), p. 197.

21 B. Aksdal, 'Dansemusikken', in B. Aksdal and S. Nyhus (eds.), *Fanitullen i norsk og samisk folkemusikk* (Oslo, 1993), pp. 130–3.

contre-dance were likewise accepted into the repertoire when they reached the Scandinavian countries and speedily assimilated into a traditional framework.

## Food

Food was a vital component of festivals. Inviting other people to eat and drink meant that they were accepted. Each shared festivity affirmed a feeling of communality or group solidarity among the participants. Nothing underlines the cultural differences between the Scandinavian countries more clearly than the food that was served on festive occasions.

Surprisingly enough, there was in fact very little difference between everyday food and festive fare. The striking feature of Scandinavian food is an amazing lack of imagination and variety, if one compares it to the food of Southern Europe. To take just one example, one wonders why there was never a fish soup made from several different kinds of fish, perhaps with the addition of shellfish. Fish soups in Scandinavia were never made with more than one species of fish.<sup>22</sup>

Everyday food consisted of porridge and gruel, peas, fish, bacon, salted meat and bread. The bread in Denmark was usually made from rye, and wheat-bread was eaten only in small amounts. One of the first courses at festivals was always salted food: bacon, meat and sausages. In Hollænderyen on Amager this was followed by rice porridge, and finally chicken – or some other meat – soup.

The distribution of the courses could vary between different parts of the country. Whilst on Amager the meal ended with soup, in other places one began with soup, boiled up with beef, lamb or chicken. But this was always followed by the salt-meat dish, with ham, salted and smoked meat. Pigs were formerly rather small, and as a result there was little meat on them, making pork a decidedly festive food. Rice porridge cooked in fresh milk and eggs was often served as an intermediate course. Syrup and cinnamon were poured over the porridge.

The fish was fresh, when available; otherwise people ate 'greensalted' or freshly salted fish. Among the fisherfolk on Denmark's west coast cod and whiting, in general the commonest kinds of fish eaten in Denmark, were the festive fare.

Since roasting was the most advanced form of cooking, it was mostly roast chicken and duck that were served. Since less well-off households had no

22 E. K. Westergaard, *Danske egnsretter* (København, 1974), p. 246.

spit, it may be assumed that beef was also boiled, after which it would be grilled on the gridiron which every home possessed.<sup>23</sup>

As dessert, so-called 'green cheese' or *æggeost* was served. This consisted of milk mixed with egg and added rennet, which has more or less the same function as gelatine in mousses. Another dessert was sweet buckwheat porridge and waffles. Eggs featured in more dishes in Denmark than in the other Scandinavian countries. Chickens were poorer layers then than they are now, so the eggs had to be saved. But whereas in Norway and Sweden eggs were very often collected for sale in the market, in Denmark they were to a certain extent utilised as food by the peasants. Egg dishes contain fresh products that have to be eaten immediately. They gave a bit of variety to everyday fare, which helped raise the status of egg dishes generally. The importance of eggs as festive food is illustrated not least by the Swedish practice of going out into the forest on the eve of May Day to break twigs from the trees, after which one went from farm to farm in the village singing in the May. By way of thanks, the participants received gifts of eggs, which were saved up for the May party.<sup>24</sup>

In Norway bread and milk, especially curdled milk, along with cheese and porridge formed the main courses at every mealtime. Norwegian bread consisted overwhelmingly of crispbread. This was made from unfermented barley meal, and has the advantage that it can be kept intact for as long as ten to twenty years. Bread baked from rye meal was also eaten at festivals. In Denmark, this was the traditional grain used for making bread, while wheat bread was hardly known. Cheese in various forms was an important part of the diet.

Fresh fish was seldom consumed in Norway. Salted and smoked fish and meat dominated in those places where meat of one kind or another was most widespread. It is safe to say that the taste for sour, salted, smoked and cured food was predominant. But this is linked to the fact that a large proportion of the food consumed had to be prepared in such a way that it could be preserved for later use. Cured food, like crispbread, can be kept for years.<sup>25</sup> Curing consists of drying and dyeing fish or meat which has already been salted or smoked. One can safely assume that in some places, fresh meat was never a constituent of the diet.

23 L. Friis, 'Æde og drikke', in A. Steensberg (ed.), *Dagligliv i Danmark 1620–1720* (København, 1969), p. 423.

24 N.-A. Bringéus, *Matkultur i Skåne* (Stockholm, 1981), p. 59.

25 F. Grøn, *Om kostholdet i Norge fra omkring 1500-tallet og op til vår tid* (Oslo, 1942), p. 15.



In Norway in particular there was a big difference between the coastal villages and the inland regions in the way they prepared fish. On the coast they ate fresh fish boiled in water, with soured cream mixed in. Nor is it surprising that food varied in relation to socio-economic circumstances. For example in Sunnfjord, north of Bergen, the daily diet consisted of oaten bread with salt herring, curdled milk and a soup of oatmeal with whey, while meat soup, peas and bacon might be the festive fare, in contrast to the more prosperous Lier in south-west Norway, where the latter items were the daily fare. *Lutefisk* was also served at festivals. This was dried fish which had lain for several days in a thin solution of lye. When required, it was rinsed in water and then cooked like any other fish. Another speciality was coarse *lefse*, a pancake-like bread of rye-meal spread with butter. *Rommegrød*, a preparation of soured cream, was the traditional festive porridge.

In Sweden, the festive meal contained five or six courses. As in the other Scandinavian countries, there was a connection between the festive meal and the question of whether animal or vegetable products dominated the local diet. But as in Denmark, the first course served up was a dish of salted, smoked meat, e.g. mutton or goose. This was followed by ham, then soup with many kinds of meat in it, together with fish and a roast. Last of all came the rice porridge, cakes, omelettes made from those eggs collected in the village after singing in the May, and *æggeost*.<sup>26</sup> Throughout the meal, butter – a real luxury item – was available on the table.

In Finland peasant food consisted of rye bread, salted fish, peas, cabbage, porridge and gruel. Meat and butter were rare items. At festivals there was a greater variety of food, with the addition of meat soup, and in some places pea or bean soup was served with pigs' trotters. Otherwise, the festive fare was blood sausage, mutton or veal steaks, pirogi and cheese. At midsummer people ate cream, pancakes with butter and *æggesmør* (chopped boiled eggs mixed with butter) with milk gruel. Pirogi were particularly popular in Savo (Savolax) and Karjala (Karelia), in south-eastern Finland, while in Pohjanmaa (Österbotten) in the north-west people ate 'red' or 'sweet' cheese, which consists of warmed-up skimmed milk. When the milk was lukewarm, rennet was added, then a wheatmeal dough was stirred in, and the whole dish was boiled up whilst continuously stirred. When the 'sweet cheese' was ready, it was eaten with added milk.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Bringéus, *Matkultur i Skåne*, p. 51.

<sup>27</sup> I. Talve, *Folkligt kosthåll i Finland. En översikt* (Lund, 1977), p. 120. See also I. Axelsson, 'Äggost. Från kröningskost till landskapsrätt', *Rig*, 76:4 (1993), p. 66.

The difference between the towns and the countryside manifested itself in the way that roasts became common in the towns at an earlier date, but also in the way that townspeople spiced their food with foreign spices and ate imported foodstuffs like Spanish anchovies and fruits from Southern Europe. Festive food in the Scandinavian countries, then, consisted of a combination of traditional fare with quite specific elements of expensive and seldom-eaten dishes, which in Norway, for example, manifested itself in the importation of Danish and Dutch cheeses, together with apples and pears.<sup>28</sup>

Beer flowed like water at festivals, to such a degree that, as mentioned earlier, clergymen in particular complained about the massive amount of beer-drinking, although the beer itself was sour, cloudy and bitter. However, a somewhat stronger beer was often produced for festivals, the so-called *gildeøl* (guild ale), as a change from the beer which was brewed according to need. In the towns, in particular, beer from Hamburg or Rostock was drunk.

Spirits were also drunk in the towns, becoming common everywhere from the end of the sixteenth century and increasingly popular thereafter. Other stimulants which became more and more widely used, especially, at first, in the towns, were coffee and tea. The consumption of these drinks also led to complaints on the part of the authorities.

## Conclusion

Daily life was filled with real or imaginary dangers. Accordingly, from time to time it was necessary to cleanse the village so that normal life could continue. When at night the men of the neighbouring village tried to steal the May tree, things could take a violent turn. But these outbreaks of violence acted as a safety-valve, preventing more serious fighting in the village. In the struggle against outsiders, individuals realised their sense of belonging to the collective. The situation in the towns was different, but popular festivals with dancing, music, singing and food occurred here too, entrenching the feeling of belonging to a social entity. Mishaps and fears were temporarily forgotten.

<sup>28</sup> Grøn, *Om kostholdet i Norge*, p. 39.

## The situation of the commoners, 1650–1750

HARALD GUSTAFSSON

In about 1650 two young immigrant brothers were living in Stockholm. Their names were Abraham and Jacob Momma, and they had been born around 1625 in the duchy of Jülich in Germany. They both worked for Dutch trading houses, and the extensive trading links between Amsterdam and Stockholm took them to Sweden, where their careers rapidly took off. In that very year of 1650, Abraham Momma bought his way into the Färna ironworks in Västmanland, and in 1653 the two brothers joined forces to exploit the ore reserves of Tornedalen in the far north.

Before long they belonged to the leading trade and financial circles in Stockholm, and thereby Sweden. They bought up and founded ironworks, forges and factories, they engaged in the wholesale trade – Jacob’s firm being probably the largest in Sweden for its time – and they farmed Gotland and Saaremaa (Ösel) for Queen Kristina, who had been granted those lands for her upkeep after her abdication. They were in a position to supply everything from pots and fabrics to cannons and grenades to private and government customers in and beyond Sweden.

The Momma brothers’ enterprise was appreciated at the highest level. They were entrusted with a series of assignments within the state administration, such as seats on the Board of Commerce, and within the state economic sector, like the Tar Company. In 1669 they achieved the ultimate distinction when they were ennobled under the name of Reenstierna. In material and cultural terms they lived at an aristocratic level and, for example, Jacob’s numerous children received the best education that was available. An economic depression and unwise investments overshadowed their last years to some extent, but that is another story.

If we jump forward one hundred years, to 1750, this was the year in which a peasant’s son from northern Jylland came to København. His name was Niels Ryberg, his father was a tenant farmer, but his maternal uncle was a merchant in Ålborg. He quickly set up a trading firm which was a runaway

success, and in 1752 he was able to buy a farm which he donated to his parents. The following year he became a citizen in the capital.

Niels Ryberg's wholesale business became one of the largest in Denmark. He had a share in all the major business enterprises in the kingdom and around the monarchy. From 1757 to 1763 he acted on behalf of the crown in running the Iceland trade, and strove assiduously to improve the fisheries there. Later, he had a major influence on the Asiatic Company and sat on the board of the Royal West India Company. He was also one of the most prominent shipowners. He took a lively interest in the civic administration of København, and especially in the provision of poor relief, but never required its services himself, dying in comfortable circumstances in 1804.

The comparison between the Momma-Reenstierna brothers and Niels Ryberg says something about both the similarities and the dissimilarities between the two closing ends of the centuries. Their careers show that there was some social mobility: the Scandinavian countries provided opportunities for energetic individuals to advance socially in the seventeenth as well as in the eighteenth century. But while the expanding Great Power that was Sweden in the seventeenth century needed a large influx of immigrants, it is significant that Ryberg was a pure product of Denmark. He came from a peasant background, which was certainly not a common type of origin within the eighteenth-century Scandinavian elite, especially in Denmark, but nevertheless can stand as a symbol of the slowly increasing room for manoeuvre which the peasant class enjoyed during this century.

What is perhaps most striking of all is that the Momma-Reenstierna brothers operated in a world in which basic aristocratic values still dominated the culture. They were ennobled and lived as noblemen. Thus Niels Ryberg seems to typify the period when the middle class was beginning to emerge with a new self-assurance, and a bourgeois culture was about to replace the aristocratic one as the norm in that society. However, the differences should not be overstated. One similarity is that the interests of the Momma-Reenstierna brothers as well as those of Niels Ryberg, and the opportunities that they enjoyed, were firmly bound up with those of the government. All of them had posts in the administration and carried out business on behalf of their governments. The role played by government in the early modern Scandinavian countries, with a small elite and middle class, is clearly discernible.

Another thought-provoking point is that Niels Ryberg invested a large proportion of his profits in country estates. He owned two good-sized manors, on Sjælland and Fyn, where he could live in a manner befitting his status and saw through typical agricultural reforms of the period with his

subordinate peasants, just as his noble estate-owning colleagues were doing at the same time. In that sense, he obviously retained aristocratic cultural ideals regarding how a man from the elite ranks of society should live. However, it was no longer necessary to further reinforce that position by formal ennoblement.

Here will be discussed the social development of the non-noble estates from 1650 to 1750. Even if, as intimated above, significant changes did take place during this period, it is not a natural timescale. It would be more accurate to say that this period included the culmination and end of one epoch and the beginning of a new one. The authoritarian social order which was built up during the previous centuries, with aristocratic, hierarchical and orthodox religious values, reached its culmination at the end of the seventeenth century. During the eighteenth century, in Scandinavia just as elsewhere in Europe, there began to emerge the outlines of a bourgeois middle class, with new values and a new culture. Around 1750, nevertheless, these new tendencies were still only in their infancy, and they are best described in a timeframe which also includes the end of the eighteenth century; although this will not be covered in the present text.

How did the situation change for the different groups of commoners in society between 1650 and 1750? The groups discussed here are the burghers, the non-noble persons of standing, the civil servants and the peasants. But first, something about the differing circumstances of men and women.

### The importance of gender

In writing history one likes to divide people according to societal dividing lines. Groups like the burghers and the nobility were legally defined as estates, while 'bourgeoisie', 'aristocracy' or 'lords' are more terms denoting status. They demonstrate how we can lump together people with a similar lifestyle, or how people were grouped together by their contemporaries. But within each group, irrespective of how it was defined, people's circumstances also differed according to sex.

Throughout pre-industrial Europe, the patriarchally organised household was the basic unit of society. In this respect there is nothing distinctive about the Nordic area, nor were there any far-reaching changes in our particular period of 1650–1750. Yet it is important not to forget that gender, the social construct of sex, was one of the organising principles in society.

In all social groups the household was in principle represented by a man. The woman was an important part of the household workforce. She had her

own independent authority over the housework in a narrow sense: the home, food preparation, the children, the domestic animals, except the horses – the stable was a male preserve. The man was not allowed to interfere here, something which was symbolised by the peasant wife's bunch of keys, and the suspicion which greeted men who dwelt in the cowshed. But despite this sphere of her own which the married woman enjoyed, the law nevertheless ensured that she remained half a step beneath the man in the hierarchy, under his domestic responsibility, the object of his right to punish the members of his household and legally dependent on him in order to take any action, e.g. in a court of law.

In this area, recent research on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scandinavia utilising well-preserved court records has documented that actual practice often diverged radically from the letter of the law. Women were engaged in a comprehensive range of business enterprises on their own behalf. In the towns in particular, women – both burgher housewives and others – carried on extensive small-scale trade, worked in textile handicrafts and sometimes, as widows, continued their menfolk's business enterprises or crafts. On the whole, it is often only after they had become widows that one can distinguish women in the sources as independently running businesses. The court records show that women often acted independently in initiating or defending a court case in a way that, according to the law, they ought not to have done.

The Swedish historian Gudrun Andersson draws the following conclusion from her comprehensive studies of these registers: 'The picture of women's subordination is more complex than previous research has led us to believe. It varies between different spheres, which means that their opportunities to exercise power changed too.'<sup>1</sup> Women were not passive victims of an oppressive gender-system; in fact, various alternative forms of action were available to them, as to men.

According to some historians, there was a distinction in the agricultural community between the cereal-growing areas on the plains of Denmark and southern and central Sweden, where gender patterns were more fixed, and the more flexible systems of the forest and coastal areas. When the men of Iceland and coastal Norway were away at fishing, the women had more to do back home on the farm. Foreign visitors were amazed to find individual females working in the Swedish iron mines. Perhaps this flexibility was a

1 G. Andersson, *Tingets kvinnor och män. Genus som norm och strategi under 1600- och 1700-tal* (Uppsala, 1998), pp. 300f.

precondition for the economic expansion in Norway in early modern times, which to a large degree depended on the fact that men could go out and cut down forests, drive timber, saw it and sell it in the towns. Perhaps this also made possible the extensive recruitment of soldiers in Sweden and Finland. In any case we can see that the proportion of female heads of household increased in wartime. On the other hand, widows were quick to remarry. This was also true of widowers.

It required a married couple to run a business, whether it was a farm, a cottage industry or a merchant house. Even civil servants depended on their wives, and there are examples of wives replacing their husbands if, for example, they were ill or absent. They can be found working as, for instance, customs officers or postmistresses. It also says something about the position of unmarried people in earlier society: as an unmarried person one was in principle excluded from independence. This applied first and foremost to women, but even unmarried men were regarded with great suspicion if they did not enter service in another's household. Civil status was an organising principle in society in a way that we have difficulty in understanding nowadays.

### The burghers

By international standards, Scandinavian towns were few in numbers and small, and this situation did not alter during the period under review. As a rule 10 per cent of the population lived in the towns, but in Denmark the figure rose to 20 per cent and in parts of Sweden and Norway it was considerably lower. In Finland for example it was 4 per cent, while large parts of northern Sweden, north Norway and Iceland lacked towns altogether.

Even fewer in number were citizens in the legal sense. Only the independent traders in the town – merchants and craftsmen – could have burgher status, and with it those rights and duties which the privileges of burgher status and the individual town charter prescribed. It is difficult to put a definite figure on the proportion of the urban population in earlier times who enjoyed the status of burghers. One method is to calculate only those men who had the status of burghers as against the total number of individuals in the town. One ends up with a low figure, say around 2 per cent. But if one instead counts all the members of the burgher households, or counts the number of households, one naturally arrives at a higher proportion, perhaps 25 per cent of the town's population or more. The burghers in the legal sense were in any case always an elite in the town, not least in so far as they had the

sole right to participate in the town government; and among the burghers the merchants represented the upper strata.

The end of the seventeenth century saw the culmination of the vigorous growth of the capital cities which had started earlier. By the mid-eighteenth century the two seats of royalty constituted the real giants of the Scandinavian urban landscape, with around 100,000 inhabitants in København and 70,000 in Stockholm. København continued to expand during the eighteenth century, while at the beginning of that century Stockholm entered a period of stagnation which lasted for 150 years. The two capitals were different from other towns not only in terms of size but also by virtue of the lustre conveyed by the vicinity of a court and aristocracy, not least where culture was concerned. The festivities of the court and the upper reaches of the aristocracy set the pattern for social life, and the magnificent buildings of the capital cities became models for lesser copies throughout the two realms. One can see, for example, how the Katarina Church in Stockholm, whose cupola dominated the view for sailors entering from the east, inspired imitations in wood in country parishes deep in the interior of Finland.

Next in the hierarchy were a small number of towns with between 5,000 and 15,000 inhabitants, the most important of which were Bergen, Christiania and Trondheim in Norway, together with Göteborg in Sweden and Turku (Åbo) in Finland. Trade policy still held back the small towns, most of which had only a few thousand inhabitants or less. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a time when new towns were founded, especially in the kingdom of Sweden. After this there were only a few new foundations, in particular several new towns on Finland's coasts and border with Russia. Most new towns remained small, but to take two examples, the Swedish naval base of Karlskrona in Blekinge (founded in 1680) and the southern Norwegian administrative centre of Kristiansand (founded in 1641) became notable.

The social structure within the individual towns hardly changed at all during this period. A thin layer of important merchants, who, in the larger trading towns, had foreign connections, usually dominated and had the seats in the town councils. A broader circle of small traders had a more local field of operation. Among the craftsmen, there could be considerable differences between, for example, goldsmiths – who in terms of status came close to the big merchants – and simple shoemakers or carpenters. In addition, there was a large underclass of labourers of different sorts, who led an anonymous existence outside the merchants' clubs and societies, the craftsmen's guilds and the community of town life.



In reality, the composition of the population varied considerably between towns of different character. In 1697 there were around 2,200 inhabitants in the Swedish diocesan centre and regional capital of Västerås. Of those, barely 200 were attached to the church and educational establishment, and 125 to the state administration. The 'pure' urban occupations of trade and crafts accounted for about 1,000 people, while the rest belonged to the town's lower strata. In a tax roll of 1687 from the Norwegian town of Trondheim, which gives only heads of household, we find around 240 merchants, about as many craftsmen and around 1,000 tax-paying workmen and servants. There were also some forty civil servants here, and fifteen officers, as well as another fifty people with titles that are hard to place. In a little Swedish town like Enköping, which in 1750 had around 230 households, the burghers seem nevertheless to have made up as much as 80 per cent of the population. The actual urban occupations were poorly represented here, and many burghers earned their living from commercial farming, the products of which were sent to Stockholm. When one passed the toll barriers into these towns, one encountered many different types of local community.

The Momma-Reenstierna brothers and Niels Ryberg, who were mentioned in the introduction, belonged to a different layer of society from the prosperous merchants of the provincial towns. In certain limited circles there developed a veritable patriciate of an international type, families with an interest in international trade, mines and factories, shipping and financial affairs. In Denmark itself it was to a large extent only in the capital København that such a haute bourgeoisie developed, even if the towns in the Danish parts of Schleswig and Holstein, especially Flensburg, are taken into account. The burghers of København played a decisive role as supporters of royal authority against the aristocracy when absolutism was introduced in 1660, and in the eighteenth century a figure like the wholesaler and shipbuilder Andreas Bjørn rose to a position where he was on level terms with the high nobility and leading civil servants, and became a personal friend and drinking crony of King Frederik V.

In Norway, as in Finland, such internationally oriented big merchants are more thinly spread among a series of trading towns which had intensive commercial and cultural contacts with the Netherlands and, to an increasing degree, with England. It was predominantly the trade in timber goods which formed the basis for this 'wood-freight patriciate' which was to leave a lasting stamp in Norwegian towns in the form of magnificent buildings and charitable institutions. The Swedish equivalent was the so-called 'Skeppsbro nobility' in Stockholm and the circles around the East India Company (set up in 1731) in

Göteborg. The Norwegian bourgeoisie's bias towards the West was not yet really matched in Denmark, Sweden or Finland, where contacts with and cultural input from Germany were still of prime importance. If one looks for a counterpart to the Norwegian timber-exporting ports, it would perhaps be the enterprising tar- and timber-exporting trading towns on the coast of Pohjanmaa (Österbotten) in Finland.

The burghers had achieved a more stable, central standing in society by the middle of the eighteenth century, though more so in Norway and Finland, or even more in Sweden, than in Denmark. The political system that pertained during Sweden's Age of Freedom afforded great opportunities to influence policies, and the Swedish historian Leos Müller, in his study of the Stockholm burghers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, concludes: 'If the relations between the state and the merchants can be characterised as reciprocal dependence in the seventeenth century, when the state provided monopoly privileges and merchants provided money, networks and knowledge, the economic policy of the Age of Liberty was more or less shaped by the interests of the Stockholm merchant elite.'<sup>2</sup>

### Social mobility and commoners of rank

The concept of society's division into separate estates, legally defined groups in society which, in relation to a central power, were allotted specified rights and duties in society, was deeply embedded in early modern Scandinavia. In a society with a numerically small elite and an economy based on independent family farming, it was natural to modify the general European doctrine of the three estates by dividing the third estate into two: burghers and peasants. The concept of the four estates – the nobles, the clergy, burghers and peasantry – corresponded relatively well to reality even at the beginning of the eighteenth century in the sense that, to quote the Swedish historian Sten Carlsson: 'All four estates were political and social realities within the frame . . . that Absolutism admitted. Those groups which stood outside the estates-based society had no major political, economic nor social role to play.'<sup>3</sup> This was particularly marked in Sweden-Finland, where decision-making in the parliament was also practised by these four bodies.

2 L. Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm, c. 1640–1800: A Comparative Study of Early-modern Entrepreneurial Behavior* (Uppsala, 1998), p. 141.

3 S. Carlsson, *Ståndssamhälle och ståndspersoner 1700–1865. Studier rörande det svenska ståndssamhällets upplösning*, 2nd edn (Lund, 1973), p. 13.

In the course of time, however, more and more people came to fall outside these parameters. In Sweden, they were called *ofrälse ståndspersoner* (commoners of rank), which is actually a peculiar term, as three out of the four estates were, after all, commoners. A 'person of rank' should, however, be understood not as referring to belonging to an estate (*stånd*) but as a mark of status; *ståndspersoner* and their families lived like gentlemen, were not peasants, did not belong to the simpler levels of society and could actually have the lifestyle of a nobleman. This could apply to civil servants, military officers, intellectuals or entrepreneurs who did not belong to any estate.

There was nothing new about individuals from a modest background working their way up. There had always been a certain, and at times powerful, trend to move upwards between estates. During the seventeenth century, immigration from abroad had been a decisive factor in filling the new posts in the expanding states. During the Age of Greatness the Swedish civil service and army were full of, for example, Germans and Scots at the middle levels, and sometimes also in the highest posts. But these men, like Swedish or Finnish commoners who had trained themselves to enter the service of the state, were as a rule ennobled when they reached a certain level. The same goes for successful entrepreneurs, as in the case of the Momma-Reenstiernas. In this way the noble estate grew significantly in the course of the seventeenth century.

Things were rather different in Norway. The Norwegian elite in the seventeenth century, to an even greater degree than its Swedish counterpart, was composed of immigrants: from Denmark, from the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, and from the rest of the continent. Both civil servants and burghers were recruited in this way, and gradually they came to constitute the real elite of Norwegian society. Some of them were raised to the nobility, like the originally German officer families of Wedel, Tritschler and Lützwow, but this was exceptional. A burgher like Jørgen Thormøhlen from Hamburg, who became a burgher of Bergen in 1664, did not need this. He became Norway's richest merchant with, among other things, a monopoly on the production of salt in Norway, Denmark and the duchies. Out of 149 new burghers in Bergen between 1696 and 1710, fifty-five were from the Holy Roman Empire and ten from Denmark. Many clergymen from Denmark were included in this immigrant but swiftly Norwegianised elite. The Norwegian example, with few additions to the nobility and the growth of a non-noble elite, came to be followed to some degree in Denmark and Sweden too.

After the introduction of absolutism in Denmark in 1660, the regime distanced itself quite clearly from the old nobility. It was no longer necessary

to be ennobled in order to own tax-exempt land, and over time even the highest offices could be within reach of individuals who neither possessed a noble background nor had been ennobled themselves. But this did not mean that noble status ceased to have any importance. In 1671 the regime introduced the new noble titles of *greve* (count) and *friherre* (baron), with certain administrative privileges for their estates, privileges which could be allotted to a newly ennobled person and which in principle anyone who owned an estate of a certain size could attain. Nevertheless, the principle of nobility as the sole, exclusive route to high status had been weakened. Another step in that direction was the ordinances regarding rank which began to come into force that same year, and which divided official status among a series of social groups, giving many civil service posts higher priority than noble dignity.

In Sweden the change after the fall of absolutism (1718–21) was more drastic. Those regimes based on the council or the *riksdag* which succeeded each other during the Age of Liberty (until 1772) were far less inclined to use ennoblement as a political tool than the monarch as sole ruler had done. As the Swedish nobility had a low birth rate, it was forced by purely demographic considerations to recruit new blood in order not to die out, and thus the low frequency of ennoblements during the Age of Liberty – after an initial mass conferment of titles to fill the gaps left by the Great Northern War – meant that the number of nobles slowly decreased. Nevertheless, to an even lesser degree than in Denmark was there any question of doing away with the aristocracy as an estate. In principle, their monopoly of tax-exempt lands was maintained, as well as an even stricter requirement that only nobles were allowed to occupy the highest offices of state.

All the same, by the mid-eighteenth century membership of the nobility was not such a necessary criterion of, nor prerequisite for, social success. Nor was burgher status the be-all and end-all for running a business. There were now people in the towns running businesses and factories without being either nobles or burghers, and there were intellectuals who were not clergymen, and there were doctors and teachers, not to mention the increasing numbers of civil servants and military personnel, who were not noble.

### The officials

The seventeenth century had seen a sizeable extension of the state apparatus in the Scandinavian countries. In Sweden-Finland this was largely implemented during the early seventeenth century, in the time of Gustav II Adolf and Axel Oxenstierna. In Denmark-Norway the great period of expansion

came after the introduction of absolutism in 1660. The old central administration with chancery and exchequer was extended with several civil service departments organised on a collegiate basis, these being so firmly organised and so large that they had to be permanently sited in the royal residential towns, which thus for the first time became capitals in the modern sense.

At regional level in both countries a homogeneous administration was introduced with professionally run units: the *amt* in Denmark-Norway and the *län* (*lääni*) in Sweden-Finland. The local administration was not reformed to the same extent and continued to vary significantly in different parts of the two states, but even the local officers, like *kronofogdar* (bailiffs) and *häradshövdingar* (local judges) in Sweden and Finland, *herredsfogeder* (bailiffs and local judges) in Denmark, *futer* (bailiffs) and *sorenskrivere* (local judges) in Norway and *sýslumenn* (bailiffs and local judges) in Iceland, were more tightly controlled than before and became more clearly defined as state officials.

One can talk of a continuing bureaucratisation within the civil service during this period. The officials were forced by the controlling central power to make an ever clearer distinction between themselves as officials and as private individuals. For many of them, their state salary became their main or only source of income, even if henceforth many officials were also big landowners, or involved in some trade. Rules and instructions regulated more and more of their work. From a European perspective, the central authorities in København and Stockholm in the mid-eighteenth century presided over unusually effective apparatuses for collecting taxes and keeping order in their territories.

The crown's servants were many and can also be seen as a social group of their own. It is difficult to say exactly how many of them there were. It has been calculated, for example, that in Norway around 1750 there were 270 civil servants, the clergy consisted of about 500 individuals and there were a good 800 officers in the army. But these are minimum figures. If one counts all those included in the civil service, administration and law, one arrives at a total of some 3,000. They usually had a wife, children and servants. This means that quite a few people were directly dependent on state employment for their income. It has been calculated that in the Norwegian diocesan capitals, which were also centres for the civil administration, between 35 per cent and 40 per cent of the inhabitants were directly or indirectly dependent on the crown.

At the same time it is difficult to characterise the crown's servants as a whole in terms of a social group. There were gigantic economic, social and cultural differences between, for example, provincial governors drawn from

the highest ranks of the Swedish nobility, and the parish constables in every parish (*fjärdingsmän*), who at this time were still peasants forced to take on an unpopular ancillary occupation. Naturally enough they could hardly feel that they belonged to the same social group. There were many different layers in between: noble and non-noble civil servants in the central provincial administration, bailiffs out in the shires, constables (*länsmän*) at district level. The bailiffs constituted a relatively homogeneous group, in which their sons often succeeded them as bailiffs or in other middling posts in local government, and their daughters married within the same circles, even if there were also relationships with burghers and clergymen. From their estate inventories can be seen how the bailiffs lived like gentlemen. They lived in minor country houses; details such as tea-tables, mirrors with silver frames and wall-mounted clocks reveal their status in lists of their furnishings; they dressed like gentlemen in knee-breeches, waistcoat, silk cravat and gloves; they wore wigs; and as a symbol of their authority they carried a sword.

Certain groups of crown servants could in particular circumstances become politically important. The fact that the Danish king had at his disposal a loyal and relatively professionalised officer corps was of major importance during the introduction of absolutist rule in Denmark. Similarly, the distrust felt by newly ennobled state officials towards the old high nobility was of great assistance to Karl XI in his manoeuvring towards royal absolutism in Sweden twenty years later.

Swedish scholars have discussed the question of whether or not the interests of officialdom came to influence policy in the estates-based *riksdag* of the Age of Liberty. The clergy as an entity represented one group of state officials, many nobles were officials and, among the burghers, the towns were often represented by their mayors or aldermen. Another approach has been to claim that the apparatus of society was permeated by the interests of the military, as even many civilian officials had a military background.

Nevertheless, even in that sense it hardly seems appropriate to talk of a militarisation or bureaucratisation of society. Only rarely did officials act in concert purely as officials with the particular interests of officialdom in mind. Even if the towns, for example, were represented by mayors and aldermen, these men were in most cases also burghers running a trade in their respective towns, and it was primarily such business interests that they stood for. The fact that many high officials also had a military function was unavoidable after the Great Northern War, but also does not appear to have led to any concerted thrust in society as a whole. On the contrary, the wars of the 1740s and 1750s demonstrated how wretchedly equipped the Swedish army was.

It is equally important for our picture of the estates-based *riksdag* to point out that the military leaders in wartime constituted something of a fifth estate in the parliaments, even if their role was only advisory. Representatives of the officers were called to special meetings where questions concerning the army and the navy were discussed during each parliamentary session. It is thought-provoking, moreover, that another group on its own initiative put together an organisation parallel to the political system. This was the representatives of the iron industry, who in 1747 set up *Jernkontoret* (the Iron Office), a permanent interest organisation based in Stockholm. Officers and owners of ironworks were two groups who were big enough to carry on organised lobbying.

It has been argued that officials also came to form something of an estate in Norway, a substitute for or strengthening of the very weak Norwegian nobility. However, later research has shown how intertwined the whole of the Norwegian elite was. The same families, and often the same individuals, possessed offices, leased the right to levy customs dues, operated sawmills and factories and ran large business enterprises and shipping firms in the towns. The Norwegian historian Øystein Rian calls this group *ämbetsköpmän* (office-merchants).

The power of officialdom was perhaps found in its purest form in Iceland. The Icelandic land-owning elite gave their sons a higher education at København University, and in this way were enabled to hold on to the most important offices from generation to generation. The central power had hardly any other candidates at its disposal who were familiar with Icelandic conditions and were equally qualified. There were few landowners here who were not also officials; almost no freehold farmers nor any burghers. So the officials themselves became the social elite and in many respects they could maintain their privileged position while they ran the island in the king's name. In cultural terms it was largely themselves who supported the small degree of upper-class culture that existed in Iceland. In conclusion, though, it still seems more accurate to talk of different groups of officials as sections of the middle class which slowly began to come together, rather than as an individual, homogeneous group within society.

## The peasants

The great majority of the population, between 80 per cent and almost 100 per cent over the whole of Scandinavia, were linked to peasant households. Those whom we usually think of as 'peasants' were the male heads of

household on farms, those units of cultivation in agriculture which could normally supply the needs of a nuclear family and yield a little surplus for taxes and dues to their lords. But on each farm there was also of course normally a peasant housewife with her important tasks to perform, as well as children still at home and, in most cases, one or more unmarried servants.

The farm's population could vary as much in terms of the size of the farm as by its type of production and the ages of the family. Large farms naturally required more workers, and could also support teenage sons and daughters. When the children were very young and unable to work, there could also be a need for more servants than when there were teenage children. Often, when children had been confirmed, they would leave home to work on other farms, and then perhaps a son could be replaced by a farm labourer if an extra worker was required. Husbandry farms, which might send their animals to mountain pasture farms (*fåbodrar*) during the summer, needed more female servants than farms with a more narrow specialisation in grain production. Farms which were situated near the routes taken by iron transports from Swedish Bergslagen on their way to the ports might even have a few extra labourers to take advantage of the opportunity of extra income.

Also included in the peasantry were other groups in the countryside who did not belong to the household of a full-scale farm. They could be crofters, who worked small farms and also worked for others, or cottars with even smaller parcels of land, perhaps only enough room for a cow or a few goats, and possibly with fishing as a supplementary source of income if they lived on the coast. There were paupers who were wholly dependent on others for their survival. During the period focused on here, 1650–1750, the peasant household was nevertheless the normal one in the country. The end of the period saw the beginning of a development whereby small entities expanded and there was a polarisation in country areas where the 'real' peasants gradually came to stand out as an elite in an increasingly proletarianised countryside. But the actual breakthrough in this polarisation belongs to the late eighteenth or, in certain areas like Iceland, the nineteenth century.

In the Scandinavian countries the peasantry was often counted as an estate. Certainly, they were a group clearly demarcated from others. They dressed differently, spoke differently, and differed – in many ways quite tangibly – from the lords. No one could mistake a manorial estate for a peasant farm. Even if, from a Continental European perspective, the markers of status might be insignificant, the red-painted timber cottage on a little Swedish estate in the mid-seventeenth century was easily distinguished from the



unpainted grey peasant cottage. A hundred years later the richer peasants' houses might also be painted red, but by now the manor-houses and perhaps also the larger rectories were gleaming with light-coloured plaster. In the estates-based Swedish parliament the peasantry was also defined as an identifiable group, the lowest estate in the hierarchy.

At the same time, it is rather unreal to talk of a 'peasant estate'. There was no charter of privileges for the peasants; in that sense, they were not defined as a special group in relation to a state authority. The peasantry were rather the unprivileged exception which made it possible for other groups to be distinguished by their privileges. It is noteworthy, for example, that contemporaries could also talk of the humbler stratum of town-dwellers as *allmoge* (peasantry).

The peasants were, to quote the epithet applied to them in the Swedish *riksdag*, *hedervärda* (honourable, worthy). They maintained everyone else by their work, and yet undoubtedly occupied the lowest position in the social hierarchy. But they were not serfs, like their opposite numbers south and east of the Baltic, as the Swedish peasants pointed out in the *riksdag* of 1650, where they defended their free status against the aggressive nobility. However, the huge flood of crown lands and rights to levy tax into the hands of the aristocracy in Sweden came to an end with the introduction of absolutism in 1680. Now there ensued the so-called *reduktion*, which meant that most of the lands and rights which the crown had conveyed to the nobles after 1604 were taken back again. In 1680 the nobility controlled about two-thirds of the taxable value of Swedish land. In the 1720s the figure had dropped to one-third.

It would hardly be correct, however, to portray absolutism as in principle well disposed towards the peasants. There was a flood of new taxes and conscription orders during Karl XII's war. But that system which was established during the Caroline Absolutism remained in force, and during the Age of Liberty the national budgets were tied to the levels which had pertained in the 1690s. This meant, among other things, that the taxes on the peasantry in principle did not increase, and thereby a certain margin could be created for an increase in the peasant household's own surplus. It is unclear how large this margin was and what role it played in the economic growth within the agricultural sector, but the lessening of the demands made on them must have been important for the peasants' self-esteem.

The redistribution of land continued in the eighteenth century, but not any longer as a consequence of state intervention, rather because of a growing market. There were three types of farms according to their fiscal status in

Sweden: tax land (*skattejord*), where the peasant paid taxes to the crown and in fact was a freeholder; crown land (*kronojord*), where the tenant paid rent to the crown as owner, and noble land (*frälsejord*), which was exempt from most taxes and where the tenant paid rent to his noble lord. The relative proportions of the three types were altered by the *skatteköp*, where crown land was bought by the peasant or someone else, and *frälseköp*, where non-noble persons, in spite of this usually being forbidden, bought noble land. *Skatteköp* were regulated in an ordinance of 1723 and this was regarded by the peasant estate as an estate privilege. *Skatteköp* meant that crown land passed into private hands and was entered as tax land instead of crown land in the land registers. In 1772 the proportion of tax land was as high as 47 per cent calculated on the value of all land in the land registers. Groups other than the peasantry, like burghers and factory owners, were large-scale purchasers, but the crown's tenants also bought out their farms, and after 1750 the majority of purchasers were peasants.

The nobility's monopoly of the low-taxed noble land (*frälsejord*) was eaten away by the buying-out of this land. Although it was actually forbidden, or at least fenced in with powerful restrictions, more and more *frälsejord* ended up in the hands of commoners. Here too, it was a case of bourgeois land speculators as much as the peasants themselves. By the end of the Age of Liberty the commoners owned 16.3 per cent of the *frälsejord* in Sweden (apart from Finland), reckoned by its value in the land registers.

It is important to remember that these changes in land-ownership cannot quite be compared with market transactions in modern society. Perceptions of land-ownership were still more perceptions of different levels of the right to dispose of land rather than unambiguous possession of it. When a crown peasant 'bought' his land, what this actually meant for him was that the right of disposal over the land that he had previously enjoyed was now completed by the addition of some of the rights that the crown had earlier possessed over the same farm. He could still be evicted if he got behind in paying his tax. During the course of the eighteenth century, however, more and more levels of disposal over land came to be collected in the same hands; thus a modern concept of ownership was on its way.

There was also, to some degree, a redistribution of land in Denmark-Norway. The crown sold off large amounts of crown land in Norway in different batches in order to raise ready money. In the first round of selling, in the 1660s, it was mostly burghers and civil servants who bought whole estate complexes, but a generation later the peasants themselves began to buy their farms from the new owners. When, post-1720, the state began once

again to run out of money and starting selling land, it was now predominantly the peasants who bought it. During the course of the eighteenth century the proportion of individual ownership in Norway as a whole rose from about one-third to two-thirds. Sometimes it was a case of 'selling by easy stages', like when the crown in 1728 sold all its property at Snåsa in Trøndelag. It was bought by Trondheim burghers with plenty of ready cash, who then sold it to the peasants sometimes for up to three times as much as they had paid for it. The burghers enriched themselves, but it is worth noting that many peasants nevertheless could afford to pay what they asked.

There was no corresponding development in Denmark. The whole country consisted of around 700 estates and their dependent peasants. To the peasants, it was probably a matter of indifference whether the estate was owned by nobles, the crown or non-noble proprietors. When crown estates were sold, it was almost exclusively in the form of whole estate-complexes. After 1660, anyone who was not noble could easily own manors, and they did so to an ever greater degree, but this brought hardly any changes in methods of cultivation, social relations or cultural distance between lords and peasants. Of Danish peasants 95 per cent were tenants. The same was true in Iceland, even if a system based on landed estates did not actually fit into the Icelandic economy, based as it was on the rearing of domestic animals and fishing. The rural population of Iceland had never had any administrative link to the landed proprietors, as was the case in Denmark.

The administrative reforms enacted by absolutism bound the Danish peasantry more firmly to the estate proprietors who often were civil servants, being answerable for tax-raising and conscription of soldiers from their tenants, and on many estates – the privileged baronies and counties – they had more or less complete administrative responsibility. The crown's officials were kept outside the bounds of the estates. This can perhaps be seen as a compensation for the nobility having lost its special political standing on the introduction of absolutism. But it was also the quickest way to improve administrative effectiveness. Instead of building up a costly civil service system, as in Sweden, one could in fact reach more or less all the peasants by utilising the landed proprietors as an unpaid labour force.

As long as the landed interests did not feel that the state's actions were militating too much against their own interests, the system worked satisfactorily. In 1733 the peasants were bound even more closely to their estates by the *stavnband*, which meant that adult men capable of bearing weapons were not allowed to move from the estate on which they worked without the permission of the proprietor. Yet there is no evidence that the estate owners

systematically abused their authority. On the contrary, modern research underlines the fact that the system created a certain patriarchally tinged solidarity within the estate. But it is clear that the improved agricultural conditions from the 1740s onwards could not have the same stimulating effect on the Danish peasants as on those of Sweden, Finland and Norway, who normally could dispose of their resources more freely.

With the fall of absolutism in Sweden after 1718, the peasants also came to advance their position politically. This did not apply to the peasants on land owned by the nobility, but the others continued as before to elect representatives to the peasant estate in the *riksdag*, thereby gaining increased influence when the *riksdag* began more and more to take over power in the kingdom. However, this was not seen as an unambiguously good thing in the peasants' conceptual universe. There was some sympathy for a stronger royal authority, even among peasants in the *riksdag*, who had long regarded the method of government of the Age of Liberty as a return to the old way of rule by the nobles. The peasants also constituted the least influential estate in the *riksdag* and lacked most of all representatives in the Secret Committee, where the most important policy decisions were taken.

The discontent of the peasants found concrete expression in the last great peasant uprising in Sweden, the Dalarna Uprising of 1743. In part, it was a classic peasant uprising. The peasants in Dalarna, in particular, rebelled against the government's demand that more men be conscripted for the war against Russia. Crop failure and dissatisfaction with the regulations governing border trade with Norway also played a part. To some extent it was also a new type of political demonstration. Several of the peasants' demands were purely political: those responsible for the fiasco of the war should be put on trial, the Russians' demands should not be acceded to and a Danish prince should be elected as heir to the throne. So the peasants were to a high degree aware of and involved in politics at the highest level. They also chose to adhere as long as possible to legal or pseudo-legal formalities in their protests. They marched on Stockholm, but in good military order and utilising the local military and officials to organise the march, just as in regular military movements. They used no violence, and seem to have imagined that they could negotiate with the government. Even in terms of an uprising, these events show how a political culture had developed where the established structures of society were perceived as legitimate and negotiations as central.

The uprising was crushed. To be sure, at the decisive moment, in what is now Gustav Adolf Square in the centre of Stockholm, a number of the soldiers who had been ordered out pointed their guns skywards in protest;

but a sufficient number were loyal enough to the regime to shoot into the hordes of peasants, causing them to panic and flee. However, the punishments meted out after the uprising were strikingly mild. Only six of the leaders were sentenced to death and executed, about forty were handed milder punishments and most of the thousands of participants escaped with warnings. For the first and last time, the peasant estate was now admitted into the Secret Committee. For a long time to come, the other estates moderated their demands on the peasants. The Dalarna Uprising had demonstrated in drastic fashion the increased self-confidence of the landed peasants, which would find expression in many other, more peaceful ways in Sweden and to an increasing degree in the whole of Scandinavia during the coming century and a half.

### Cultural contrasts

One can talk in a very general way of the culmination, in the whole of Scandinavia, of an old, hierarchical and aristocratically tinged society during the second half of the seventeenth century, and of the first signs of the appearance of a non-noble middle class during the first half of the eighteenth century. However, it is important to underline that those groups which are here called 'the commoners' were very heterogeneous. The fact that a peasant somewhere in the Swedish countryside was paying the state a sum of money to obtain greater power of disposal over his farm had, from his contemporaries' perspective, very little to do with the fact that the wholesaler Andreas Bjørn was at the same time entertaining Frederik V in his house in Christianshavn. There were considerable cultural contrasts in society.

The English historian Peter Burke talks of a 'great' culture, an international elite culture, and a 'little' tradition of popular culture. These two traditions certainly met from time to time and enriched each other, especially in so far as the elite, for a long time, participated in both. The difference gradually increased during early modern times and the elite finally became so alienated from the more popular expressions of culture that these could be 'rediscovered' and idealised during the romantic era. However, this point had not yet been reached in 1750. The contrasts were great, and the elite were more inclined to see their task as 'bringing up', or, as it was increasingly expressed in the eighteenth century, to 'enlighten' the broad layers of the populace and to reform popular culture.

This battle of culture had been going on for several centuries and had become especially noticeable in the Protestant countries. Lutheran orthodoxy

reached its culmination in both Scandinavian states during the final years of the seventeenth century. One sees, for example, in bishops' visitations how the bishops were constantly issuing exhortations regarding order, regular church-going and godliness. In Denmark-Norway, where pietism became the official interpretation of Christianity after 1730, campaigns were launched for a more committed Christianity and, not least, increased literacy, so that ordinary people might be able to share in learned men's interpretations of God's word. A campaign of this nature in Iceland, begun in the 1740s by the future bishop of Sjælland, Ludvig Harboe, resulted in, for instance, a dramatic increase in literacy in a couple of decades. The same trend can be observed in Finland.

Perhaps there was also a current in the opposite direction. It has, for example, been claimed that one can detect in the simple chapbook literature which circulated among the people an increasing empathy and individualisation in the depiction of ever-popular themes such as ill-fated romance and suicide. In this way, according to the Swedish historian Arne Jarrick, there also spread 'from below' what we in the higher culture call Enlightenment ideals.

The new general public which began to emerge in the eighteenth century was almost exclusively connected with the higher estates. Journals and newspapers, theatres, public concerts, coffee-houses and learned salons began to see the light of day during the decades around 1750. Danish cultural historians usually stress that a middle-class, Danish-speaking public emerged in the 1740s, with the Norwegian-born author Ludvig Holberg as its central figure. The language of this public was Danish, which was thereby presented in earnest as an alternative to the strong position of German in the highest circles.

One should not overemphasise the tendencies for tensions to develop between the old elite and the new middling groups. To a large extent it was a question of divisions within one and the same higher culture. The aristocratic way of life, with palatial houses in town and manorial country properties for use in the summer, was also the ideal for burghers and civil servants. Nobles, burghers and civil servants all invested in factories and business enterprises. Often, traditional and modern tendencies co-existed in the same family, even in the same person.

On the other hand the distance downwards, towards the peasants, was great. This was particularly noticeable in Denmark where society was still based around the country estate. A female Danish estate owner expressed the attitude of the 'lords' towards the peasants very aptly in a letter to her bailiff

in 1745. They were the basis of society by virtue of their hard work and they deserved a fatherly goodwill, but their way of life bordered on that of animals and they had to be kept on a short rein:

God knows how great a defender of the peasants I am, when they are fairly inoffensive. In view of the fact that it is, after all, by the labour of that estate's hands, who must work and struggle for everything, that the other estates are maintained, there is therefore due to them a certain gratitude. But as they are insubordinate, and do not know how to live like other people, let alone as Christians, they must be subjected and kept in obedience, or they are worse than dumb beasts.<sup>4</sup>

The peasants may sometimes have regarded the lifestyle of the lords with a mildly indulgent shake of the head, as in the story of the Norwegian peasant who had been granted an audience with a wealthy merchant in Trondheim when the latter was eating a salad. When he returned home, he told everyone that the merchant was now facing ruin, as he could only afford to eat grass.

On the whole, the way in which society was structured seems to have struck large sections of the population as legitimate, as much in the absolutism of Denmark-Norway as in the more varied political systems of Sweden-Finland. As mentioned above, the peasants were far from delighted by the constitutionalist form of government of the Age of Liberty. They saw a strong monarch as a defence against the nobles. A large degree of direct political influence was, therefore, unnecessary from their perspective.

The political culture was marked by a deep respect for honoured and legally validated forms, and a dialogue between the rulers and the ruled; a dialogue in which established arenas and channels like the *ting* (local court) and the right of sending petitions to the authorities played a large part. The role of the *ting* as the legitimate arena for the local community ought to be underlined. In the political sense there was not such a difference between Denmark-Norway during absolutism and Sweden-Finland in the Age of Liberty as one might think. But there was nevertheless a certain difference. Political consciousness spread during the Age of Liberty to larger groups in Sweden-Finland, as a large part of the population became involved every second or third year in electing a member of parliament and drawing up appeals, suggestions for new laws which the latter had to bring with them to the *riksdag*.

4 C. Bjørn, *Bonde Herremand Konge. Bonden i 1700-tallets Danmark* (København, 1981), p. 24.

Within Denmark-Norway, there was a socially conditioned difference between Denmark and Iceland, where the conditions of land-ownership meant that the peasants were much further removed from the state authority, and Norway, where the peasants were much more inclined to use the civil service and the courts for their complaints and their right to send petitions to København. But it is important to stress that political processes, a dialogue between the rulers and the ruled, also played their part within the autocracy. Another uniting factor was their common Lutheran religion. All groups in society lived and experienced the world within the same religious world-view. God and the higher meaning of life existed as an often unspoken matter of course, as the higher meaning of the whole fabric of society. Even by the mid-eighteenth century no serious threat to this fundamental mental platform for all human conduct had appeared.

Finally, though, it is important not to overemphasise the degree of consensus. Violent conflicts broke out during this period, as for example when the Danish burghers allied themselves with the king against the nobility at the introduction of royal absolutism in 1660, or when the old nobility in Sweden found the newly created nobles, the commoners and the king all ranged against them in a similar situation in 1680. There were also bitter conflicts over privilege in the first parliaments held during the Age of Liberty. Fear of a peasant uprising was always present among the elite of the society. But this fear was only justified in earnest in Sweden in 1743, and then it was more a case of a well-ordered demonstration than some bloody uprising – a demonstration which was directed against the state, not the estate owners. These conflicts were waged mostly with words, in political arenas and within a political culture where people had a more or less common perception of how to conduct a dispute. The Scandinavian countries were full of conflict and became even more so as a result of their social, economic and cultural development, but they were conflicts which seldom, if ever, flared up to the extent that they threatened the basic unity of society.



## Religious and intellectual currents

SEPPO SALMINEN

### The spread of pietism, morals, standards and restrictions

#### *Less evident in Sweden than in Denmark*

'It is true that we live like hermits', wrote King Christian VI of Denmark to a German count, whom he had taken into his confidence. The king was expressing his bewilderment over the immense changes introduced by pietism into the life of the Danish court. The spread of Hallean pietism in the 1730s involved not only the court but also one important state institution after another: the central administration, the church, the schools, and various academic and social institutions. Denmark had become a pietist realm, and as such unique in the whole world. The monarch himself had become a prisoner of the moral standards and restrictions which he had placed on his people. Over-abundant religiosity and related hypocrisy were an integral part of the public image of this ruler and court. King Christian did not dare to hold even innocent court festivities, although he admitted that he missed them and complained of the drabness of life in the court.<sup>1</sup> The pietism of Halle, which introduced thoroughgoing changes into Danish life, was not an original Danish phenomenon, but a German import.

Among the new religious currents, the pietism of Halle was the only one to have any opportunity of success in early eighteenth century Scandinavia, where Lutheran uniformity dating from the period of orthodoxy still prevailed. The close coalition of church and state, which imposed mandatory membership of the state church, political and religious censorship and strict social control, stopped most religious and intellectual currents from having any permanent effect. Currents aiming to overthrow uniformity were

1 J. Danstrup, *Danmarks historia, fra äldsta till våra dagar*, 1: *De nordiske Folk genom Tiderna* (Malmö, 1946), p. 302; S. Cedergreen Bech, *Danmarks historie, oplysning og tolerance: 1721–1784*, 9, 3rd edn (København, 1965).

doomed to fail, but attempts to modernise that uniformity could have some chance of success.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the Danish pietists modelled their activities on Philipp Jacob Spener's pietist programme of reform and August Hermann Francke's attempts to implement it.

Instead of the purity of dogma of orthodoxy, Spener made personal piety the new ideal that would shape the manner in which the Lutheran church, schools and universities were to be reformed. In this respect, he relied on Francke, whom he assisted to obtain an academic position at the University of Halle (founded 1694). Francke had established in Halle a school for the poor, a grammar school, an orphanage, a hospital and a publishing centre for printing and distributing religious books. His efforts aimed at replacing declining orthodoxy with a movement of religious reform that responded to the challenges of the day. Bourgeois objectives, organisational efficiency and close co-operation with the secular authorities ensured success. The young kingdom of Prussia lent political support to Francke's ambitious religious, pedagogical and social reforms. Despite the opposition of orthodox elements, Francke initiated domestic and foreign Lutheran missionary activity. The pietism of Halle developed into a markedly expansive religious current, spreading most quickly – after Prussia – to Denmark. As the radical pietist currents, with Gottfried Arnold and Johann Konrad Dippel as their authorities, were based on the concept of separatism, their expansive power was outflanked in the Lutheran countries by the ecclesiastical pietism of Spener and Francke.<sup>3</sup>

In Denmark, the progress of pietism began around the turn of the century with a pietist court circle that had formed around Queen Louise. This circle included Princess Sophie Hedvig, the king's sister, and his brother, Prince Carl, as well as a few influential noble families, such as the Holsteins and the Plessens. This group was at first influenced by German radical pietism, but when Frantz Julius Lütken, a clergyman from Berlin and a friend of Spener, was appointed court chaplain in 1704, the Hallean orientation began to establish itself. German was the language of the court, and the German pietists therefore had no language barrier to overcome. Until the 1720s King Frederik IV followed a lifestyle that was anything but pietist. He preferred a court life filled with amusements and kept several mistresses. The queen, in

2 H. Koch, *Danmarks kyrka genom tiderna* (Stockholm, 1942), pp. 90–8; C. A. Hessler, *Stat och religion i upplysningstidens Sverige* (Uppsala, 1956), p. 12; C. E. Normann, *Enhetskyrka och upplysningssidéer* (Lund, 1963), pp. 7–10.

3 W. Oschlies, *Die Arbeits- und Berufspädagogik August Hermann Franckes* (Witten, 1969), pp. 94, 152; D. Blaufuss, *Spener-Arbeiten* (Frankfurt am Main, 1975), pp. 131–3.

turn, sought solace in religion and political support from the ambitious pietists of the court. The only way to implement pietist expansion and reforms was to influence the decisions of the monarch. The king was influenced by the court circle, particularly in his decisions concerning appointments to official positions and missionary activities. The appointment of Lütkens marked the beginning of a series of pietist appointments, and it soon became the rule that when a representative of Lutheran orthodoxy left his post he was replaced by a pietist. The years 1709–10 became an important watershed with regard to positions and appointments within the church. At this stage, four major opponents of pietism died in succession.<sup>4</sup>

The expansionist strategy of the pietists included the conversion of heathens, which could well be combined with current mercantilist and political goals. The Danish colonies and the nation's large fleet provided the external preconditions for missionary activities. In 1705, when King Frederik IV collaborated with the pietists of Halle to establish a mission at Tranquebar in India, a completely new field of activity – the foreign mission – emerged within the Lutheran church. Lütkens recruited from Germany Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau, who were to initiate the work. Both had studied at the University of Halle and arrived in Tranquebar in the summer of 1706. In 1714 a Missions Board (*Missionskollegium*) was established in København to direct this work.<sup>5</sup>

While pietism established itself at the Danish court, the new religious currents also spread among the common people. The most effective channels were pietist devotional meetings known as conventicles, modelled after meetings begun in 1670 by Spener in Frankfurt am Main. The German radical pietists Johann Otto Eberhard and Christoffer Glüsing introduced conventicles in København. A fervent trailblazer in Schleswig was the defrocked minister Otto Lorentzen Strandiger. A third important centre was southern Norway, particularly Christiania, where the radical pietist Johann Otto Glüsing began to hold conventicles. A similar trend appeared in all the centres where pietist ideas were disseminated. At first, the layman-led conventicles of the radical pietists were extremely successful, but after the prohibition of

4 J. Pedersen, 'Pietismens tid 1699–1746', in H. Koch (ed.), *Den danske kirkes historie*, 5 (København, 1951), p. 41; M. Schwarz Lausten, *Danmarks Kirkehistorie* (København, 1983), p. 175.

5 A. Nielsen, *Dänische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Jena, 1933), p. 288; C. Degn, 'Heidenmission im Dänischen Gesamtstaat', in H. Lehmann and D. Lohmeier (eds.), *Aufklärung und Pietismus im dänischen Gesamtstaat* (Neumünster, 1983), pp. 121–2; S. Clausen and J. Gade, 'Dansk Ostindien', in P. Hoxcer Jensen (ed.), *Dansk kolonihistorie* (Århus, 1983), p. 62.

private conventicles in 1706, ecclesiastical pietism soon gained the upper hand, which meant that fewer conventicles were held or that they were led by members of the clergy.<sup>6</sup>

After the death of Queen Louise in 1721, Crown Prince Christian, who had been given a pietist upbringing, became the highest patron of this current of opinion. His spouse, Sophie Magdalene, was the daughter of a pietist family in Halle. When the king married his last mistress, Anne Sophie Reventlow, soon after the death of the queen, his actions provoked unlimited contempt and anger in the court of the crown prince. The last years of the autocrat's reign led matters in a pietist direction with increasing speed, because the king suddenly found himself in a moral crisis and condemned 'the desires of the flesh'. Accordingly, the whole realm soon experienced a marked expansion of pietism and the effects of the resulting new moralism. As final victory loomed, the pietists regarded all the institutions of society as objectives to be conquered by their movement. Following the court, Hallean pietism took over the church through efficient policies of appointment. A completely new type of clergy emerged, who sought not only to convert people to the pietist faith but also to keep a close watch on the piety of their actions. Signs of a major change were clearly in the air between 1725 and 1730, when the leading posts for clergymen in København went to young, fervent pietists. Johannes Bartholomaeus Bluhme became court chaplain and other key posts were awarded to Peder Hersleb, Anton Christopher Rohn, Ole Hersleb and Enevold Ewald. Because the schools and the university were closely linked to the church, their takeover proceeded at a suitable pace. Pietism could not, of course, enjoy continued success without the ideological struggle for domination which it waged on the one hand against Lutheran orthodoxy and on the other hand against rationalism. Skilled proponents of orthodoxy and also convinced opponents of pietism were Bishop Henrik Bornemann, Diocesan Dean Morten Reenberg and the professors Hector Gottfried Masius, Hans Wandal and Hans Bartholin. Early representatives of a cautious rationalism were Professor Christian Reitzer and his pupils Hans Gram, Andreas Hojer and Ludvig Holberg. On both fronts Hallean pietism crushed its opponents in the 1720s.<sup>7</sup>

Missionary activity became the farthest-reaching channel for spreading pietism. Following the mission at Tranquebar, focus shifted to Finnmark,

6 J. Pedersen, *Fra brydningen mellem orthodoxi og pietisme*, 2 (København, 1948), pp. 18–19, 36–48; O. Feldbæk, 'Tiden 1730–1814', in A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Danmarks historie*, 4 (København, 1982), p. 231.

7 Pedersen, 'Pietismens tid', pp. 93f.; Schwarz Lausten, *Danmarks kirkehistorie*, pp. 175f.

where the Norwegian clergyman Thomas von Westen worked among the local Sami (Lapps). He was the head of a group of seven clergymen later known as *Syvtjernen*, which was instrumental in the 1710s in making the pietism of Halle dominate over radical trends in Norway. When von Westen began his missionary work, a war was still raging between Denmark and Sweden, and the main political objective of missionary activity was to ensure that the northern regions remained part of the realm. Hans Egede, also a Norwegian clergyman, wanted to initiate missionary work in Greenland, applying on several occasions to the king for permission, albeit without success. However, in 1720, when Egede finally succeeded in founding a trading company known as *Det Bergenske Compagnie* (the Bergen company), which was intended to take over trade with Greenland, the monarch's attitude changed. In the summer of 1721 Egede and his energetic wife, Gertrud Rask, were able to sail to Greenland, where they began missionary work that proved to be highly successful. The king regarded the missionary work as so important that he himself headed the Missions Board, which he had founded; the five other members of the board were members of the court and clergymen. The purpose of this body was to direct missionary activities and to spread enthusiasm for the missions among the common people. The board was so efficient in distributing Bibles, catechisms, reading primers, hymnals and devotional books that it served not only the missions but also the church as a whole. The *Vajsenhuset*, established in 1727, however, inherited the publication privileges two years later, which signified a shift to publishing activities of an increasingly pietist nature. In addition to books used by the church, works by Spener, Francke and Danish pietists were published.<sup>8</sup>

The war and the ensuing period of reconstruction placed the social objectives of pietism to the fore. There was an unprecedented number of orphans and destitute people. No sooner had the *Vajsenhuset*, mainly modelled after an orphanage established by Francke in 1698, been founded than it took in one hundred orphans and poor children. Ewald, a strong-willed pietist clergyman, was instrumental in diversifying the work of the orphanage. The ambitions of the pietists soon extended much further than caring for orphans alone. The goal was to make the orphanage a nationwide centre for

8 Degn, 'Heidenmission im Dänischen Gesamtstaat', pp. 122f.; H. C. Petersen, 'Grønlandernes identitet og en kortfattet historisk oversigt frem til år 1900', in H. C. Petersen (ed.), *Grønlandernes historie før 1925* (Nuuk, 1991), pp. 20–6; H. Rasmussen, 'Fra reformatjonen til 1814', in B. T. Ottestad (ed.), *Norsk kirkehistorie* (Oslo, 1991), pp. 149–53.

spreading pietism – a Danish institution corresponding to the Halle orphanage and the publication centre. The focus of the strategy for expansion had to be shifted from the foreign missions to the domestic scene, and the people as a whole had to be guided onto the path of piety. The monarch approved a plan for the conversion of København's Jews. In obedience to a royal order, the city's Jews were to come to the church of the orphanage to attend divine services and to convert to Christianity. According to conclusions based on Spener's theology, Christ could not return if the Jews and pagans had not first been converted. The disastrous fire of København in 1728, however, was a temporary setback for the grand pietist schemes. The orphanage was partly destroyed, and its church burned down completely. Like the programme for the forced conversion of the Jews, King Frederik IV's Sabbath Ordinance of 1730 was a declaration of increasingly intolerant pietist policies. It was now possible for the first time – through royal autocratic order – to implement pietist regulations and restrictions applying to the whole realm whose content was essentially the rigid Sabbath theology of Francke transferred to an official document of state. The ordinance emphasised the holiness of the Sabbath and compulsory attendance at church, the latter being an unavoidable obligation for all. On Sundays it was forbidden not only to work but also to stage comedy performances, masquerades and other entertainments. This ordinance contained features foreshadowing the future and making it perfectly clear that this future belonged to pietism.<sup>9</sup>

While pietism spread almost unchecked into Denmark, there were tendencies in Sweden preventing it from even crossing the borders of the realm. The war reinforced these conflicting tendencies on either side of the border. In 1694, the year when the University of Halle was founded, King Karl XI of Sweden issued a proclamation directed against pietism in the German provinces belonging to Sweden. These actions marked the beginnings of a permanent commitment to anti-pietist ecclesiastical policies. Pietism was regarded as a dangerous German influence threatening the unity of the realm. In 1706 Karl XII issued an edict banning the spreading of pietism in all parts of the realm, by which time it had become evident that any attempts to stem completely the spread of the new currents from the south were doomed to fail. Pietism had reached Karlskrona, Stockholm and Umeå, where small conventicle circles already operated. As the highest-ranking

<sup>9</sup> Pedersen, 'Pietismens tid', pp. 111f.; Schwarz Lausten, *Danmarks kirke historie*, pp. 178f.; K. J. V. Jespersen, *Danmarks historie*, 3: *Tiden 1648–1730*, ed. S. Mørch, *Danmarks historie* (København, 1989), pp. 318f.

protector of Lutheran orthodoxy, the monarch ordered that under the prevailing severe wartime conditions foreign religious propaganda was to be combated with particular vigilance, thus indicating his intransigence towards Prussia and Denmark, his potential enemies. In 1709 the latter countries joined the war against Sweden, and in 1713 a new anti-pietist edict was issued. The extremely strict censorship permitted only publications pointing out that the pietists were traitors and that the pietism of Halle was a greater threat than radical pietism.<sup>10</sup>

The collapse of absolutist rule and the advent of the so-called Age of Liberty led at first to a cautious granting of permission for conventicles, and their renewed activity. Elias Wolker, an energetic trailblazer of Hallean pietism, who – like a few other Swedish and Finnish pietists – had been imprisoned for his faith, was even given a noble title in 1720 under the name of von Walcker. *Mose och Lamsens visor* (Songs of Moses and the Lamb), the song-book of the pietist circle in Stockholm which he led, was distributed widely. Despite this, the persecution of the pietists did not end. Nils Grubb, vicar of Umeå and an indefatigable supporter of Hallean pietism, was indicted for organising conventicles. He died in 1724 in the midst of his trial. During the war, many Swedish and Finnish officers had experienced a pietist revival in a place as exotic as Tobolsk in Siberia, where they had been taken as prisoners of war after the Swedish defeat at Poltava. They organised their own congregation there, led jointly by laymen and the clergy. Josias Cederhielm, a returnee from Siberia, rose to the rank of privy councillor and – relying on the support of the nobility – vigorously began to implement pietist ecclesiastical policies. The whole Lutheran church of Sweden was to be led by a body known as the *consistorium generale mixtum*, consisting of laymen and members of the clergy. However, the clergy assembled at the parliament (*riksdag*) defended Lutheran orthodoxy, aware of the ecclesiastical authority awarded to it in privileges issued in 1723, and, terming itself the *consistorium regni*, defeated these efforts.<sup>11</sup>

As the clergy assembled in parliament had achieved a political victory and enlarged its powers to an unprecedented extent, the other estates, following a heated debate, had to approve the so-called Conventicle Proclamation, one of the *riksdag* clergy's programmatic objectives. This ruling, officially

<sup>10</sup> H. Pleijel, *Karolinska kyrkofromhet, pietism och herrnhutism 1680–1772. Svenska kyrkans historia*, 5 (Uppsala, 1935), pp. 167, 178, 195f.; N. Staf, *Pietistisk kyrkokritik* (Lund, 1962), pp. 11f.; S. J. Salminen, *Den finländska teologin under frihetstiden* (Helsinki, 1994), pp. 28–33.

<sup>11</sup> Pleijel, *Svenska kyrkans historia*, 5, pp. 286–307; K. Kjellberg, *Väckelsearvet. Pietism och herrnhutism i Sverige under 1700-talet* (Värgårda, 1986), pp. 39–42.

endorsed by King Frederik I in 1726, was modelled on similar proclamations by a number of German princes. It explicitly forbade all manner of religious or devotional meetings, which could no longer be convened, even by a clergyman. It also stressed that the divine services of the Lutheran church were compulsory for all and that alongside them only the most strictly defined devotional gatherings in the home could be held. Sweden had now been given official restrictions and regulations concerning pietism; transgressors could expect fines, imprisonment or deportation. The struggle between pietism and Lutheran orthodoxy, which in Denmark had ended in the victory of the former, was accordingly won by the latter in Sweden. The Conventicle Proclamation marked a return to extreme intolerance and that was almost a death-blow to ecclesiastical pietism. The radicals now had their long-awaited opportunity, which they did not fail to use. Dippel arrived in Sweden in the same year. In Stockholm, he visited Laurentius Ulstadius, a former grammar school teacher and leader of a group of radical pietists in the 1680s in Turku, in Smedjegården prison, where the latter had been incarcerated. Ulstadius had been in prison without respite since 1688, and the supporters of the movement venerated him as an unofficial saint. The illegal conventicle meetings held by Dippel in Stockholm in 1727 were enormously popular, giving rise to an unprecedented tide of religious radicalism over the next few years in Sweden, although Dippel himself had been deported. In 1726, the estate of the clergy made the council of state issue a deportation order concerning Dippel, but owing to opposition from the estate of the nobility the clergy had to engage in a propaganda struggle for over a year to have the deportation finally enforced.<sup>12</sup>

Dippel also tried his luck in Denmark, the promised land of pietism, but he was far less successful there than in Sweden. There was considerable competition between the various movements and currents. Moravianism, the third main current within pietism, had already scored a prominent success in Denmark in 1727, when the brothers Johann and David Nitschmann, sent by Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, met Prince Carl and Princess Sophie Hedvig. The count met the Danish crown prince for the first time in

12 H. Pleijel, *Der schwedische Pietismus in seinen Beziehungen zu Deutschland* (Lund, 1935), pp. 181–99; N. Staf, *Religionsdebatten under förra hälften av 1700-talet* (Uppsala, 1969), pp. 124–65; H. Lenhammar, 'Paracelsus, Dippel und die Familie Hjärne – zur Rezeption pietistischer Gedanken', in E. M. Laine (ed.), *Der Pietismus in seiner europäischen und außereuropäischen Ausstrahlung* (Helsinki, 1992), pp. 32–46; H. Schneider, 'Beziehungen deutscher radikaler Pietisten zu Skandinavien', in E. M. Laine (ed.), *Der Pietismus in seiner europäischen und außereuropäischen Ausstrahlung* (Helsinki, 1992), pp. 102, 112f.



Germany in 1728. The count's own statements underlined absolute loyalty to the Lutheran *Landeskirche* of Saxony, but in practice he led the Herrnhuter Moravianist community, founded in 1727, into far-reaching separatism and an emotional religiosity radically different from the Lutheran heritage. Zinzendorf came to København for the coronation of Christian VI. He soon proposed an ambitious pietist strategy to the young monarch, wishing to take personal control of the missions in the Danish colonies. During the next few years, he was partly successful in realising this scheme. Zinzendorf also wished to establish a new Danish university at Flensburg, which would 'fill the whole world with the gospel of Christ'. He also assumed that he would be appointed to a high post – preferably as governor – and he also wished to receive a medal from the king. The monarch, enthused by Moravianism, did not yet have any clear position on these proposals or on the person who presented them, but his views were to mature in the future. The years that followed were an almost chaotic time in København, where conventicles of various kinds suddenly grew in number, and Zinzendorf's disunited supporters played a leading role. Religious fanaticism and criticism of the church grew to such proportions that the king finally had to appoint a commission to study the disorder caused by the pietists. The commission gradually succeeded in restoring order in 1734–5, after the most fervent of Zinzendorf's and Dippel's supporters had been punished. Those who had come from abroad were deported, and Danish subjects were punished with dismissals from their posts and fines. Zinzendorf, who had left Denmark during the period of turmoil, returned to København in 1735, but was quickly deported, with only three days' prior warning.<sup>13</sup>

The political influence of Moravianism in Denmark ended with the deportation of Zinzendorf. This marked the beginning of the triumph of the pietism of the state church, as Christian VI returned to the ideals of his youth, which he now began to implement in a consistent manner. In addition to the monarch and Queen Sophie Magdalene, the inner circle of the court included Count Christian Ernst Stolberg-Wernigerode, the king's cousin, who had led the struggle against Moravianism, and Court Chaplain Bluhme, who became the main organiser of pietist reforms. The court became a kind of headquarters for pietism and a centre for its expansion. As the main

<sup>13</sup> L. Bergmann, *Grev Zinzendorf og hans indsats i kirkens og missionens historie*, 1 (København, 1957), pp. 160–7, 176–99; E. Beyreuther, *Der junge Zinzendorf* (Marburg, 1974), p. 34; Degn, 'Heidenmission im Dänischen Gesamtstaat', pp. 123–5; O. Sandgreen, 'Menighedeme', in H. C. Petersen (ed.), *Grønlandernes historie før 1925* (Nuuk, 1991), pp. 208f.

institutions of the realm were solidly in the hands of the monarch, they soon became a means for the dissemination of pietism with the intention of extending the reforms to all parts of the realm. Within the state administration, unswerving support for Halleian pietism – or skilled acquiescence with it – was from now on the key to success. *Gehejmestatsminister* Johan Ludvig Holstein was openly a member of the movement, while the jurist and historian Andreas Hojer, who had become an influential adviser to the king, had to renounce publicly the rationalist influences of his early years before being able to set out on a career as a pietist politician. Appointment by appointment, the bishops of the Lutheran church became pietists. A few of them even made considerable cultural contributions. For example, Hans Adolf Brorson, Denmark's most prominent pietist poet was highly talented in his field. Erik Pontoppidan rose to fame as a preacher and pietist author before being appointed bishop. Peder Hersleb, a pietist clergyman of Norwegian birth, was one of the favourites of King Christian VI. He specifically dismissed the bishop of Christiania, who was replaced by Hersleb in order to ensure the effective implementation of the pietist programme in Norway. Reforms in the schools, university and social institutions also proceeded in other parts of the realm as the Lutheran church, which had the supervisory role, became pietist in character.<sup>14</sup>

After moving in 1734 to new and hitherto more impressive premises, the *Vajsenhuset* was able to expand its work both in the social sector and within the area of pietist publishing. The progress of reform also spelled an increasingly strict control in accordance with pietist norms and restrictions. The Sabbath Ordinance of 1735 stipulated in further detail bans on amusements and laid down a more uniform range of punishments. Those who resisted mandatory church attendance were fined or placed in the stocks. Most opposition was encountered by restrictions and bans involving old folk customs. The pietist apparatus of government unsuccessfully tried to abolish traditional Christmas feasts, maypole dances and horse-riding in the summer. On the other hand, the Confirmation Ordinance of 1736 was a success. The pietist administration was able to establish the practice of confirmation, which was made mandatory for all children. As it was from now on a precondition not only for marriage but also for employment, the authorities

14 Pedersen, 'Pietismens tid', pp. 67–9; P. G. Lindhardt, 'Reformation, ortodoxi, pietisme, oplysning', in J. L. Balling and P. G. Lindhardt (eds.), *Den nordiske kirkes historie* (København, 1973), p. 147; S. Arndal, 'Den store, hvide flok vi se . . .'. *H. A. Brorson og tysk pietistisk vækkelsessang* (Odense, 1989), p. 26.

had found a new and effective weapon. Pontoppidan wrote *Sandhed til Gudfrygtighed*, a textbook for confirmation classes, which was partly a translation and partly a paraphrased version of Spener's corresponding work. This book remained the official catechism manual of the realm until 1794, and it was more effective than any other printed work in representing the moral principles of pietism in all strata of society.<sup>15</sup>

During the latter stages of pietist domination, intolerance almost gained a stranglehold on society. Theatres were closed, and dancing and card-games were prohibited. The numerous regulations concerning Sundays were enforced more strictly than previously, and the authorities were informed about the opponents of pietism to an increasing degree. Those deemed most dangerous were sentenced to imprisonment or were forced to choose between exile or resettlement in a so-called free town. The system of informers and control maintained by Bluhme, which concerned the clergy in particular, was given bureaucratic form in 1737, when a general inspectorate of the churches (*Generalkirkeinspektions-kollegium*) was introduced. This institution maintained censorship, church discipline and the purity of pietist doctrine, in addition to monitoring the work of the clergy and the piety of their private lives. According to some accounts, Bluhme, who had developed the informer system, became Denmark's most hated man. The strong opposition that emerged at the local level gradually paralysed the whole institution, which became the symbol of the failure of the markedly centralised pietist system of administration. This hated institution contributed to the tightening of the intellectual climate and its development in a more sombre direction, which overshadowed even the realisation of the grand visions of pietism. By the early 1740s Halleian pietism held the whole realm in its grip. Even in Iceland, which resisted these tendencies, a breakthrough of state-church pietism occurred in 1741–5. A similar pietism had extended to the furthest outposts of the realm, and even to the colonies. Despite this, small conventicle circles of radical pietists and Moravianists – particularly in Norway, Fyn and København – continued to aggravate the pietist administration. According to Bluhme, eliminating them would be the salvation of Danish uniformity. The Conventicle Proclamation of 1741 was explicitly directed against them; these regulations made the vicars of parishes responsible for holding conventicle meetings of the right character. Vicars were also

<sup>15</sup> M. Neiiendam, *Erik Pontoppidan. Studier och bidrag till pietismens historie*, 2 (København, 1933), pp. 81–7; F. E. Jensen, *Pietisme i Jylland* (København, 1944), pp. 139–47; P. G. Lindhardt, *Konfirmationens historie i Danmark* (København, 1936), pp. 36–42.

required to supervise conventicles held by laymen in their parishes. Because the proclamation was not as effective as expected, a series of more severe ordinances was issued between 1744 and 1746 to combat separatist currents. In 1744 members of Moravianist communities were banned from holding office in the Lutheran church, and subsequently all toleration of Moravianists was prohibited. Bishop Hersleb proposed that all unbaptised children were to be baptised mandatorily and that parents resisting these measures were to be imprisoned. A royal decree issued in 1745 banned 'separatism, anabaptism and other heresies', stipulating that only the faith preached by the Lutheran church was to be allowed. A last resort for the opponents of Hallean pietism was to move to one of the four free towns in the realm, where there was no mandatory observance of religion. The last years of King Christian VI's reign were also the last years of mandatory pietist religious observance, which was impossible to maintain in the Europe of the Enlightenment.<sup>16</sup>

During the reign of King Frederik V and the early years of Christian VII's reign, the spread of Hallean pietism had stopped and a gradual decline set in. Although the pietist ordinances were not repealed, they were ignored to an increasing degree. The institutions established by the pietists were not discontinued, but they gradually sank to a state of insignificance. Pietists were not dismissed from their high offices, but the period of state-church pietism had come to an end. The main indicator of major changes was the obvious liberalisation of the whole atmosphere of Danish society. As pietist standards and restrictions lost their former significance, it became possible to steer a course towards pluralism, and even the rationalism of the Enlightenment – whose development the pietist regime had interrupted. The efforts of Holberg, who had studied rationalist currents in his youth, now began to bear fruit. The most skilled and talented pietists now changed course, and for instance Pontoppidan, who was appointed vice-chancellor of the University of København, soon distanced himself from pietism. Bluhme still had some of his former authority in the early stages of the new administration, but he died in 1753. Moravianism, the third main current within pietism, became the religious trend that was able to utilise the liberalisation of society, and in the 1750s and 1760s it expanded to a considerable degree. Like the pietism of Halle, radical pietism had by now exhausted its own potential for expansion.

16 G. Hansen, *Præsten paa Landet i Danmark i det 18. aarhundrede* (Holbæk, 1947), pp. 147f.; K. Ottosen, 'Den herrnhutiske bevægelse', in A. P. Thyssen (ed.), *Vækkelsesnes frembrud*, 3:1 (København, 1964), pp. 45f.; Schwarz Lausten, *Danmarks kirkehistorie*, pp. 184–6; M. Bregnsbo, *Gejstlighedens syn på samfundet* (København, 1992), pp. 171–3.

The tiny Moravianist circle of København grew into an active community, with as many as 365 members in 1765. The island of Fyn, the Ålborg region and many other parts of Jylland were also centres for the spread of Moravianism, where new communities emerged and older ones expanded. The prohibitions and restrictions laid down by King Christian VI had not broken this movement, but had paradoxically strengthened it. The moderate August Gottlieb Spangenberg became the new leader of the Moravianists in Germany after the death of Zinzendorf. This also influenced the situation in Denmark. From 1765, the Moravianist community in København took an increasingly moderate line, and many clergymen joined the movement. The dissolution of Lutheran uniformity, which had been effectively delayed by the coalition of absolutism and pietism, now began in earnest within the church.<sup>17</sup>

While Denmark witnessed a unique coalition of absolutism and pietism within the state church, which was not possible even in Prussia, steps were taken in the Swedish realm to eradicate pietism completely. Ulstadius and Petter Schaefer, the first trailblazers of radical pietism in Finland and all Scandinavia, had been sentenced to imprisonment without delay, but in the 1730s radical currents spread so quickly that new and more effective measures had to be adopted, including mass deportations. The Finnish separatists of Pohjanmaa (Österbotten), the brothers Jacob and Erik Eriksson and their supporters were deported in 1734 by order of the Turku court of appeal, duly ratified by King Frederik I. A total of eighty-seven persons were made to leave the realm. Most of them found their way to Denmark, torn by pietist disputes, from where they were deported on a long odyssey to Holland and Germany. Only a few of this group ever managed to return to Finland. Around the middle of the decade, separatist currents had become an increasingly threatening scenario from the perspectives of both Danish and Swedish uniformity.<sup>18</sup>

The intolerant anti-pietist tendencies of Swedish uniformity were heightened in 1735, when King Frederik I ratified an extremely strict

17 P. G. Lindhardt, *Vækkelser og kirkelige retninger i Danmark* (København, 1951), p. 29; K. Baagø, 'Vækkelse og kirkeliv i København og omegn i første halvdel af det 19. Århundrede', in A. P. Thyssen (ed.), *Vækkelsernes frembrud*, 1 (København, 1960), pp. 19–21; A. P. Thyssen, 'Brødremenigheden i Christiansfeld og herrnhutismen i Jylland til o. 1815', in A. P. Thyssen (ed.), *Vækkelsernes frembrud*, 4 (København, 1967), pp. 21–8; A. Riising, *Gudsfrygt og oplysning. Odense 1700–1789. Odense Bys Historie* (Odense, 1981), p. 185.

18 E. Lönnnerholm, *Olikänkande i gångna tiders Sverige* (Tranås, 1979), p. 155; Kjellberg, *Väckelsearvet*, pp. 72–5.

proclamation of the Caps Party, which opened the way for punishment not only for those who spread pietist views but also for those who simply subscribed to them, if only a clergyman could reveal this state of affairs. The proclamation particularly applied to the underground separatist circles of Stockholm, which sought to remain on their own, out of the reach of ecclesiastical and state authorities. One of the leaders was Anna Maria van den Aveelen, who was accused of supporting the teachings of Arnold and Dippel in a separatist commune. The male members of the commune were sentenced to imprisonment and the women to the workhouse. All were to undergo severe brainwashing before being set free again. Another important lay leader was Carl Michael von Strokirch. Some of the members of Strokirch's underground congregation were sentenced to imprisonment, while others were banned from assembling. Sven Rosén, the foremost representative of Swedish radical pietism and a member of the congregation since 1735, was sentenced to deportation. Rosén finally made his way to Pennsylvania in 1747, where he became one of the standard-bearers of American Moravianism.<sup>19</sup>

Living in exile, Rosén was in close correspondence with Swedish pietist leaders and was partly instrumental in the 1740s in the marked expansion of Moravianism, which had been introduced into Sweden by Germans in the early 1730s. Active Moravianist circles emerged in Stockholm, Turku, Uppsala and in the province of Västergötland, where radical pietist currents played an important role. The atmosphere was now more tolerant of both pietist and rationalist currents, as the Hats Party, which had come to power in 1739, admired the French Enlightenment. Unlike the Caps, they did not keep a close and minute watch on restrictions concerning pietism. Clergymen openly in support of the pietism of Halle, such as Eric Tolstadius and Peter Murbeck in Stockholm and Gabriel Lauraeus in Turku, now had more freedom than ever before to spread the word of pietism. The expansion of separatism, however, shocked the Hats into striking back. In 1751 they issued an edict directed against Moravianism. This was to be the last of the long series of anti-pietist regulations laid down in Sweden, because it proved to have practically no effect. Moravianism continued to spread, with new centres emerging particularly in southern Sweden. After coming to power, the Caps wanted to check the spread of separatist currents and to reinstate the anti-pietist restrictions. To do so, they resorted to their own tried means of coercion. Anders Carl Rutström, a clergyman of Stockholm and the

19 Pleijel, *Svenska kyrkans historia*, 5, pp. 339–54; Kjellberg, *Väckelsearvet*, pp. 69–71, 76–86.

nation's most influential Moravianist leader as well as supporter of the Hats Party, was sentenced to exile in 1765. After spending five years in Germany, he was allowed to return to Sweden, where he was soon imprisoned. Rutström died in prison in 1772. The Caps, who had formed an alliance with the Court Party, which was now gaining strength, promoted not only anti-pietist policies but also the rationalism of the Enlightenment, whose earliest breakthrough in the realm took place towards the close of the Age of Liberty.<sup>20</sup>

In Denmark, rationalism was promoted by Struensee. During his brief period in power, he strove to repeal all the norms and restrictions engendered by the pietism of the state church. Struensee's actions decisively improved the position of the Moravianists persecuted by the Halle pietists. The strict ordinances concerning them were revoked, and in December 1771 the Moravianists were permitted to establish their own congregation in the duchy of Schleswig. The congregation, Christiansfeld, had already developed into a thriving community by the 1770s, for Struensee had awarded its inhabitants complete freedom of worship and a number of commercial and political privileges. By the 1790s, this well-organised community had over 500 members. During Struensee's term of office, the pietist ordinances – including the hated Sabbath Ordinance – were repealed, and most of the pietist institutions, including the *Vajsenhuset*, which was highly valued by the common people, were dissolved. Although these abrupt measures proved to be fateful for Struensee, there was no return to pietism under Guldberg. No new pietist ordinances were issued. The period of new expansive achievements for the currents of pietism was over.<sup>21</sup>

The expansion of pietism had also passed its peak in Sweden, and was followed by a period of slow decline, since rationalism had tightened its grip after the coup of King Gustav III. Enlightened tolerance emerged in many ways, but it did not particularly affect the rare separatist currents. The anti-pietist regulations were not repealed, but were in some cases applied with considerable ruthlessness. For example, in 1775 the Svea court of appeal sentenced Chaplain Mårten Thunborg, the energetic leader of the radical pietists of Norrland, to be dismissed from office and to be committed as a lunatic to the hospital of Härnösand. This was not done, however, as King

20 N. Jacobsson, *Den svenska herrnhutismens uppkomst* (Uppsala, 1908), pp. 51–80; H. Pleijel, *Das Kirchenproblem der Brüdergemeinde in Schweden* (Lund, 1938), pp. 16–19; Kjellberg, *Väckelsearvet*, pp. 115f.

21 J. Lundbye, *Herrnhutismen i Danmark* (København, 1903), pp. 150–2; Thyssen, 'Brødremenigheden i Christiansfeld og herrnhutismen i Jylland til o. 1815', pp. 29–42.

Gustav III pardoned Thunborg, who nevertheless died in Stockholm during this drawn-out process. When Åke Svensson, a young lay leader of radical pietists in Blekinge, his wife and six of his closest supporters were given a similar sentence, all eight were committed to the Danvik asylum in Stockholm in January 1786. Åke Svensson and two others died in the asylum, but his wife was freed in 1794, as one of the last of the group. In the 1780s, a radical pietist movement headed by Anders Collin and a more moderate one led by Pehr Tolleson operated in Stockholm. Despite these developments, the waning of pietism was inevitable. The trend was similar in both the Swedish and Danish realms. Pietism, however, provided the seeds for the popular religious awakenings of the following century.<sup>22</sup>

### Attempts at providing elementary education

The attempts by the Danish pietists to create a system of elementary education serving the whole nation were mainly modelled on the famous school village of Halle. In 1695 Francke founded a school for poor children in connection with his parsonage. This was soon followed by a grammar school, which was a boarding school for the offspring of more affluent families. Both institutions sought initially to bring about the religious conversion of their pupils, followed by maintaining a religious life in accordance with pietist norms. The teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic was of course important, but it had to serve the primary goals. These activities soon expanded to become a 'school village', with around 2,200 pupils in 1727, the year of Francke's death. According to Francke, the children of poor families should be given priority in pedagogical reforms. Accordingly, the founding of schools for poor children also became one of the objectives of the Danish pietists even at the initial stage of their success. A manifesto for the whole realm was contained in the 1708 law concerning relief for the poor, whereby the children of the poor were to receive instruction free of charge. The bishops, deans and county bailiffs were made jointly responsible for the establishment of church schools in the parishes. In actual fact, only a small number of new schools were established as a result of this decree, which had already been anticipated when the law was issued. If the founding of a school proved impossible, the decree stipulated that 'skilled and pleasant' men were to be found to teach the children of the poor at no cost. The pietist court

22 A. Palmqvist, 'De religiösa folkrörelserna och samhället ca 1750–1850. Sverige', *Historiallinen arkisto*, 62 (1967), pp. 60–2; Kjellberg, *Väckelsearvet*, pp. 92, 156f.



circle of Queen Louise played an important role in the establishment of several schools for poor children in København even before the acts were laid down. These schools became the kernel of København's primary school system, and this example was followed in other cities and towns. As there was no joint school ordinance, the standards and content of teaching varied. The schools were inspired by the corresponding institutions of Halle and various German schools for poor children, as well as the charity schools of England. The acts at least partly fulfilled the role of a school ordinance, as they made the various schools for the poor into church schools maintained by the parishes. Their Danish prototype was the church school system of northern Schleswig. The church schools of the cities and towns were an important initial step towards a uniform Danish system of primary education. Teaching was above all based on the rote learning of the Lutheran catechism. Most of the pupils were the children of poor parents, or orphans, because more affluent parents traditionally took care of the primary education of their children themselves, either in private schools or through tutors. The reformist efforts of the pietists focused next on the most acute problem of education in the realm, the almost complete lack of any elementary education for the broad masses of the rural poor. During the 1710s, Prince Carl and Princess Sophie Hedvig established in their personal domains rural schools following a simple pietist curriculum. The children of the countryside were to be brought up to adopt true Christianity and an industrious spirit. Many private landowners followed the royal example and founded similar rural schools on their properties.<sup>23</sup>

On his fiftieth birthday in 1721, King Frederik IV decided to establish 240 rural schools on the crown estates. The official objective was now for the people to adopt the Word of God, for which purpose education also had to be extended to children in country villages. The initiative for this far-reaching decision came from Peder Hersleb, the pietist chaplain of Frederiksborg castle. By 1727, a total of 241 rural schools had in fact been built by royal order. These were known as *rytterskoler* and were matched by school districts, where children aged between 5 and 14 were obliged to attend school. Lessons were taught for eight hours a day in summer and six hours a day in winter. Of the new schools, 113 were established in Sjælland and 59 in

23 J. Larsen, *Bidrag til Kjøbenhavns offentlige Skolevæsens Historie* (København, 1881), pp. 6–10; J. Larsen, *Bidrag til den danske folkeundervisnings og folkeskoles historie 1536–1784* (København, 1916), pp. 152f.; G. Schmalenberg, *Pietismus – Schule – Religionsunterricht* (Bern, 1974), pp. 11f.

northern Jylland. The other regions of Denmark had to make do with a sparser network of schools. These schools, built according to the same basic design, were often among the most impressive buildings in rural villages, being outranked only by the churches. The curriculum of the rural schools was dominated by religion, the main textbooks being Luther's Small Catechism and the particular manual to the catechism that was in use in the diocese concerned. As at Halle, learning to read was only a secondary goal, and writing and arithmetic were only taught to those who paid separately for these subjects. The local vicar was responsible for selecting the schoolmaster, whose appointment was ratified by the dean. He was also responsible for the supervision of the school, which was complemented by inspections carried out by the dean and the bishop. Although the rural schools introduced a great number of children to education for the first time, the reforms were not implemented to the full. The peasants were often unwilling to send their children to school, as this reduced their income. The general level of the teaching remained low and teachers' salaries were meagre. Teaching was primarily based on rote learning.<sup>24</sup>

King Christian VI followed in his father's footsteps also in the area of school reform. The Confirmation Ordinance issued in January 1736 underlined, in somewhat confusing terms, the importance of confirmation as the graduation stage of the period of compulsory education, although there were not enough schools and there was no school ordinance for the realm as a whole. The pietists' programme of reform, however, placed confirmation before schooling, and wished to make the former obligatory for all. According to the ordinance, each child's knowledge of the catechism was to be tested at confirmation, which was usually held at the age of 16. Because church attendance and visits to a clergyman's home could not ensure that all children in the realm would achieve these skills, the pietist administration realised the necessity of a general school reform. In December of the same year the schools commission headed by Bluhme proposed that some 700 new schoolhouses were to be built in the realm on the model of the rural schools and that the main responsibility for teaching the catechism should be given to the schools. The king himself had set an example by establishing some twenty new rural schools on crown land. The ordinance of 1737 ordered the

24 P. G. Lindhardt, *Peder Hersleb, 1 (1689–1737)* (København, 1939), pp. 70–8; G. Hansen, 'Undervisningen på landet', in A. Steensberg (ed.), *Dagligliv i Danmark* (København, 1964), pp. 113f.; H. C. Johansen, *Dansk social historie, 4: En samfundsorganisation i opbrud* (København, 1979), p. 248.

bishops of the realm to ensure that the pupils were taught not only the contents of the catechism but also reading skills. After the schools commission, which sat for two years, completed its proposal for a new school law, this proposal was checked and revised in the royal chancery. Bishop Hersleb was instrumental in the final formulation of the text. In January 1739 King Christian VI issued a new School Ordinance, which applied to the whole realm. According to this ordinance, a public school was to be established in all parishes hitherto lacking such schools. These schools were primarily responsible for teaching the 'fundamentals of Christianity'. Skills in reading, writing and arithmetic were the goals of the next level. Poor pupils were given the educational materials free of charge, but the wealthier parents were required to pay. From now on, wealthy parents hiring private tutors were also required to pay for the local school. This regulation greatly reduced private tuition. A reading primer, Luther's Smaller Catechism, Pontoppidan's manual to the catechism, the hymnal and the Bible were the main textbooks. School was begun at the age of 5 or 6 and completed at the age of 9 or 10. Following this, additional classes were held yearly for a couple of months in winter until the confirmation stage. The policy was to preserve the old rural school model as far as possible, but now responsibility for their founding was placed on the shoulders of the landowners. The supervision of the schools remained the task of the ecclesiastical authorities. The School Ordinance met with a great deal of resistance. The peasants were as opposed as before and the landowners were reluctant to pay for the costs of the schools; the church authorities, in turn, were often unable to control what had become a difficult situation. The uniformity of the school system appeared complete, now that the city and town schools and the Latin schools were subjected to the same pietist measures through a decree enacted in the same year. There were forty-six Latin schools which led to university studies and which were very popular during the period of Lutheran orthodoxy. Their number was now reduced to twenty, and the proportion of Danish, homiletics and catechetics was increased. Pontoppidan's book became required reading, and the ordinance strove to make these schools operate as 'workshops of the Holy Spirit' in the future.<sup>25</sup>

In 1739 school reform appeared to be a triumph for the pietists, but by the 1740s it began to turn into what was almost a fiasco, when a number of

25 Larsen, *Bidrag til den danske folkeundervisnings og folkeskoles historie*, pp. 188–91; Lindhardt, *Konfirmationens historie*, p. 40; I. Markussen and V. Skovgaard Petersen, 'Læseindlæring og læsebehov i Danmark ca. 1550–ca. 1850', *Studia historica Jyväskyläensia*, 22:3 (Jyväskylä, 1981), pp. 26–9.

failings were revealed. The uniform, centralised school system had been created through the actions and ordinances of a pietist administration, but they had failed to be effective at the local level. This failure was indirectly acknowledged in the royal proclamation of 1740, which stipulated that in the rural areas the landlords were to assess the number of schools that had to be established; they were also required to see to the maintenance of the schools. The immediate control of the schools was taken away from the church. The *stavnsbånd* regulations laid down in 1733 by the pietist administration ensured the continued existence of the unfree status of the peasant and the patriarchal rights of the landlords, whereas the proclamation only applied to schools. The pietist reforms were weakened as several landlords neglected their duties and control on the part of the church remained almost non-existent. The standard of instruction remained poor, and there was a continual shortage of proper teaching staff. Many localities had to accept less ambitious peripatetic schools. The trailblazing reforms of the pietists led, however, to results in terms of the continued growth of the number of schools. In 1735 there were some 600 schools in Denmark; the corresponding figure for the 1780s was around 1,700. In Norway too, the school reforms were carried out on the basis of the legislation issued in 1736 and 1739, since pietist domination of the central administration was accompanied by a diminished role for Christiania, the Norwegian capital, and an increasing degree of rule directly from København. Because the founding of schools progressed very slowly, the Norwegian peasantry were given permission in 1741 to establish schools on their own initiative. They were active in this respect in southern Norway, but only a few schools were established in the north. In Norway, the peripatetic schools remained the elementary schools of the poor.<sup>26</sup>

In the early eighteenth century, elementary education in the rural areas of Sweden and Finland was the task of the so-called parish schools, which were maintained on the responsibility of the parish council and in particular the vicar, who chaired it. According to the church law of 1686, the vicar had to ensure that the children of his parish learned to read and write. In practice, these goals often remained unachieved, because there were schools in only a few parishes and instruction relied on the learning of the catechism by rote. Of the public, or state-funded, schools, the lowest level was that of the

26 E. Høigård and H. Ruge, *Den norske skoles historie* (Oslo, 1947), pp. 43–8; Hansen, 'Undervisningen på landet', pp. 114f.; S. Dyrvik, *Den lange fredstiden 1720–1784. Norges historie*, 8 (Oslo, 1978), pp. 352–5; Markussen and Skovgaard Petersen, 'Læseindlærning og læsebehov i Danmark ca. 1550–ca. 1850', pp. 27f.

elementary school (*pedagogi*), which, just like their teachers, were of varying standards. The upper classes of the cities and towns rarely sent their children to public elementary schools, the trend being largely the same as in Denmark. At the next level were the *trivialsolor*, or grammar schools, paralleled by the cathedral schools of the diocesan sees. The third level was represented by the *gymnasia*, leading to university studies and training for a career in the church. The school ordinance adopted by the estates in 1724 preserved the old system almost unchanged, because the power of the estate of the clergy blocked all attempts at ecclesiastical reform. New intellectual and pietist currents were rejected as the schools were left to follow their old orthodox course. The three secular estates had fervently demanded reforms, but finally they had to agree to keeping the 1724 school ordinance in force on a temporary basis until the next *riksdag*. In fact, it remained in force until 1807 – in 1724, only minimal changes were approved. A new feature for the grammar schools was the apologist's or counting master's class, after which the focus was no longer solely on entry into the clergy. In practice, however, ecclesiastical control of the school system continued to grow. Authority to appoint rectors and senior teachers passed from the king to the bishops. Control by the church made sure that instruction in the catechism in the elementary and grammar schools led directly to learning Greek and Hebrew in the *gymnasia*, and onwards to academic studies in theology. Once created, this system survived, despite growing dissatisfaction.<sup>27</sup>

During the rule of the Hats, discontent with the public school system led to a major pedagogical debate, in which the secularisation of teaching was a particular demand. John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, which had already been translated into Swedish in 1709, was much quoted. In practice, however, efforts to obtain reform led to only meagre results. Natural history, experimental physics, geography, biology and the history of Sweden were introduced as subjects in the mid-eighteenth century in a few *gymnasia* in Sweden and Finland, but the purely ecclesiastical curriculum of the lower-level schools continued as before. In 1760 a proposal for an educational ordinance drawn up by a commission on education appointed by the estates recommended the teaching of natural history and economic subjects at the grammar school level, but this was not accepted. Attempts

27 A. Halila, *Suomen kansakoululaitoksen historia*, 1 (Helsinki, 1949), pp. 50–60; A. Åberg, 'Undervisning i hem och skola', in J. Cornell (ed.), *Den svenska historien*, 6 (Stockholm, 1967), pp. 300–3; J. Isosaari, *Suomen koululaitoksen rakenne ja kehitys* (Helsinki, 1973), pp. 9–12.

at reform inspired by the Enlightenment did not succeed in changing the basic ecclesiastical curriculum of the schools. Instruction requiring the learning of religious texts by rote continued almost as before. By the close of the Age of Liberty only some 10 per cent of the rural parishes had been able to establish a permanent or peripatetic school. Because the reform of the public schools was also thwarted under the Hats by the opposition of the estate of the clergy, both the nobility and the affluent burghers increasingly resorted to private tuition and private schools, which they maintained and whose curricula were not restricted by the school ordinance of 1724. Developments in Sweden thus took an opposite course to those in Denmark. In Stockholm, in particular, private schools for boys and girls flourished. In these institutions the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic was given primacy over religion and, in keeping with the ideals of the Enlightenment, children were enabled to obtain knowledge on as broad a basis as possible. Similar teaching was provided in the rural areas in a few schools maintained by leading local figures. One example was a school established in 1746 by Baron Johan von Bremer on his lands in the province of Uppland. At the *riksdag* of 1765, which marked the beginning of rule by the Caps, the estate of the clergy began to agitate against private schools in the realm. The public system of schools now faced serious competition, as private schools had been established in all the cities and major towns of Sweden and Finland. The clergy maintained that these schools neglected the most important subject, the Lutheran faith. Enlightened permissiveness, however, had progressed so far in the realm that the estate of the clergy was no longer able to stop the competing school system, although it would clearly have wished to do so. The rare pietist schools had, at most, a marginal influence on the existing school system. In 1728 Tolstadius established in Stockholm a small and short-lived school for the poor, organised as a boarding school along the model of Halle. The boys admitted to the school (fifteen in 1734) received, free of charge, a pietist elementary education, clothing, food and board. Murbeck, another pietist clergyman, set up a foundation in Stockholm, which in 1749 moved into its own house and opened a small school for poor girls there.<sup>28</sup>

In Denmark, the school system created by the pietists was adapted during Guldberg's period in power with regard to schools leading to university

28 N. G. Ohlson, *Det pedagogiska problemet i Sverige under frihetstiden och gustavianska tiden* (Stockholm, 1939), p. 75; W. Sjöstrand, *Pedagogikens historia*, 3:1 (Stockholm, 1961), pp. 70–96; S. Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Gustavianska tiden*, 4 (Stockholm, 1975–81), pp. 67–74; Kjellberg, *Väckelsearvet*, pp. 54, 57.

studies. As a former academic, Guldberg decided to participate in the Latin school commission, as he felt that the level of education of those entering university must necessarily be raised. The commission wished to cut back somewhat on the pietist goals of education, and provide more room for history, geography and astronomy. The commission proposed that for these purposes schools focusing on practical, or non-classical, subjects (*realskoler*) should be established alongside the Latin schools. The proposal was implemented in a law passed in 1775. Guldberg's own theological works were taken as the basis of religious instruction, which implied a genuine departure from pietism. New schools of this kind were also established in Norway according to the provisions of the law. Once power had passed into the hands of Crown Prince Frederik in 1784, the whole school system was singled out for reform, but the grand schools commission, appointed in 1789 for this purpose, sat for a quarter of a century, which meant that its results were not seen until the nineteenth century. On a practical level, however, the reforms were already taking effect in the eighteenth century. From 1783 onwards, Count Ludvig Reventlow sought to implement the reformist ideas of the Enlightenment in elementary schools which he had established on his own estates. These were based on concepts developed by Rousseau, the Germans Johann Bernhard Basedow, who had also been a professor in Denmark, and Joachim Heinrich Campe, among others. Reventlow's schools were the first which effectively taught reading, writing and arithmetic, followed by geography, history, the natural sciences and agriculture. All peasant children were required to attend school. These schools became a model for other landowners, and later for the school reforms of the whole realm. In 1789 it was decreed that a school reform along Reventlow's lines was to be carried out in two provinces, coinciding with the decision to abolish the *stavnsbånd* system. As the land reform progressed, the farmers and peasants increasingly took responsibility for maintaining schools. Before the turn of the century, the first teacher-training institutes were established, and the remaining pietist schoolbooks were placed alongside texts in the spirit of the Enlightenment. Following these developments, the schools of Denmark and Norway were able to provide more proficient and up-to-date teaching than previously.<sup>29</sup>

29 Larsen, *Bidrag til den danske folkeskoles historie*, pp. 42–7; Høigård and Ruge, *Den norske skoles historie*, pp. 52–61; B. Kornerup, 'Oplysningstiden 1746–1799', in H. Koch, *Den danske kirkes historie*, 5 (København, 1951), pp. 347f., 429–34; Markussen and Skovgaard Petersen, 'Læseindlæring og læsebehov i Danmark ca. 1550–ca. 1850', pp. 31f.

Although the Enlightenment was in official favour in Sweden and Finland at the beginning of the Gustavian Era, school reform in the spirit of the Enlightenment did not make progress. As the general reform of the school system foundered on the resistance of the clergy, King Gustav III tried to correct the worst failings by issuing decrees. Because funds for public schools had always been insufficient, collections of money were a traditional means of rectifying the situation. These collections were known as *sockengång* in the countryside and as *korgång* in the towns and cities; twice a year, the teachers and pupils would go from farm to farm or from house to house to collect funds for their school. Gustav III, however, banned this practice in a decree issued in 1780. Subsequently, the numbers of pupils in public schools started to diminish, while attendance at private schools increased. The number of public schools, however, grew slowly; by the close of the century around 15 per cent of the rural parishes had been able to establish at least some kind of school. As in Denmark, the reform of Sweden's public school system was postponed until the early nineteenth century, but it already had enthusiastic proponents in the late eighteenth century. These included popular educators such as Adolf Modeer and societies such as the *Pro fide et christianismo* association. Modeer wished to reduce the overwhelming preponderance of religion and ancient languages in the curriculum and accordingly expand the teaching of arithmetic, writing, natural history, Swedish and other modern languages. In practice, these proposals were already being implemented in many private schools. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Stockholm is reported to have had around one hundred private schools, with several thousand pupils, while the public schools had only a total of some 1,200 pupils.<sup>30</sup>

### Attempts at university reforms

Not long after the beginning of the eighteenth century, the relatively liberal university policies of earlier times were rejected at Halle in favour of an increasingly exclusive pietism. These developments were soon reflected in Denmark. A culmination of sorts was reached at Halle in 1723, when Joachim Lange, professor of theology, and a pupil of Francke, had a ruling passed which led to the banishment from the university of Christian Wolff, a

<sup>30</sup> Halila, *Suomen kansakoululaitoksen historia*, 1, pp. 92–9; W. Sjöstrand, 'Skola och universitet', in J. Cornell (ed.), *Den svenska historien, 7: Gustavianska tiden 1772–1809* (Stockholm, 1968), pp. 296–9.



professor of mathematics who had voiced rationalist ideas. Wolff was accused of 'opinions contrary to the Word of God'. In Denmark, exclusive pietism was partly responsible for the discontinuation of the Noble Academy of København in 1710 after almost two decades of activity. This institution had striven to promote the free exchange of ideas, useful sciences and arts such as mathematics, philology and history, and military exercises. Because the University of København was above all a training institute for clergymen, the pietist strategy on its part aimed at a takeover, which began around the same time. Most of the professors were originally proponents of Lutheran orthodoxy, but were frightened by the political power of the rising tide of pietism and became collaborators. After the deaths of two adamant opponents of pietism, Masius (1709) and Wandal (1710), and after Reitzer had put his academic role aside to become an assistant judge of the supreme court in 1709, no academic provided any appreciable resistance to the pietists. On the other hand, the recession caused by the war and finally the great fire of København effectively slowed down the pietists' attempts at reform, for the university buildings lay in ruins in 1728–30. Upon the orders of King Christian VI, university reform began while reconstruction was still in progress. The only remaining members of the faculty of theology were Christen Worm, bishop of Sjælland, who had a positive attitude towards pietism, and Hans Steenbuch, a supporter of the pietism of Halle, which meant that these reforms made rapid progress. Zinzendorf's reform plans had no influence on the university. Worm was an influential background figure when the university was given new statutes in March 1732 to ensure continuation of the pietist trend. The university remained a school for future clergymen. Studies primarily led to a theological degree for clerical office and service in a congregation. This required at least two years of study. The reduction in the curriculum of the proportion of dogmatics, the discipline preferred by the orthodox Lutherans, was a reform inspired from Halle. But the statutes of Halle were never copied directly, and changes were ultimately of minor scope.<sup>31</sup>

Pietist attempts at reform gained momentum in the spring of 1736, when the energetic Christian Langemach Leth was appointed extraordinary professor of catechetics. According to Francke, catechetics was the most important

<sup>31</sup> A. Timm, *Die Universität Halle-Wittenberg* (Frankfurt am Main, 1960), pp. 51f.; S. Cedergreen Bech, *Københavns Historie gennem 800 år* (København, 1967), pp. 239f., 267; O. B. Thomsen, *Embedsstudiernes universitet*, 1 (København, 1975), pp. 70–3, 101–5; H.-J. Birkner, 'Christian Wolff', in M. Greschat (ed.), *Die Aufklärung* (Stuttgart, 1983), pp. 190f.

subject in the theological curriculum. Leth was active in the background as early as autumn of the same year, when a decree issued by King Christian VI introduced stricter theological censorship. All the professors of the university were ordered to monitor censorship. It was especially important to combat all efforts by Moravianists and radical pietists to influence printed matter. From then on, the Hallean trend was the only current permitted in university theology. In 1738 Leth had a ruling passed whereby Pontoppidan's book was given official status throughout the realm. In the same year, Pontoppidan became professor. The exclusivity of attempts at reform culminated in the minutely detailed instructions of the pietist administration concerning the relations of the university with its twin institution in Halle. King Christian VI, for instance, annually awarded grants to students for study abroad, but consistently upon the express condition that the recipient was to travel only to Halle to study. Other universities were excluded. A decree issued in August 1741 went further in this connection: even while in Halle, Danish students were to limit their studies to attending lectures by Lange and Gotthilf August Francke. The ultimate purpose of the decree was, upon royal authority, to prevent students from attending the lectures of Wolff, who had returned to Halle in 1740.<sup>32</sup>

At this very time, Wolff was rising to the status of a model philosopher in the Swedish realm. Wolffianism retained its position of authority at the University of Uppsala into the nineteenth century, because the faculties of theology and philosophy both rejected occasional attempts to unseat it. An unprecedented growth in botanical studies in the established university environment, in the era of Carl von Linné, now became possible. Because the university wished to keep the orthodox constitution of 1655 in force, attempts at university reform ultimately foundered. The status quo, which was preferred by the Caps and from which cautious exceptions were made by establishing a number of new chairs, did not satisfy the Hats in their desire for reform. Between 1745 and 1750, two influential Hat politicians, Carl Gustaf Tessin and Claes Ekeblad, headed a commission on education appointed by the Hats, which sought to carry out a major reform of the universities of the realm. Despite this – or more likely for this very reason – not a single academic was appointed to the commission. The proposal of the commission's subcommittee for academic education was completed in 1750.

<sup>32</sup> Pedersen, 'Pietismens tid', pp. 187f.; K. Banning, 'Det teologiske Fakultet 1732–1830', in L. Grane (ed.), *Københavns Universitet 1479–1979*, 5 (København, 1980), pp. 227–31; V. Helk, *Dansk-norske studierejser 1661–1813*, 1 (Odense, 1991), p. 95.

According to this document, education was to be changed in the spirit of the Enlightenment to have a strict focus on useful professions. From now on, the universities were to give primacy to the training of civil servants for the crown. According to the proposal, scientific or scholarly research was not even part of the brief of the universities, and was to be placed under the aegis of the Royal Academy of Sciences. The medieval system of faculties was to be discontinued and replaced by a so-called fundamental faculty for all students and advanced studies in four professional curricula, or faculties. The faculty of theology would train clergymen and teachers, the faculty of mathematics would provide officers and surveyors, the 'physical' faculty would train physicians and the civil faculty would give the nation officials and civil servants for the government offices and courts of appeal.<sup>33</sup>

In 1751, the senate of the University of Uppsala rejected the proposed reform with a great deal of indignation. Linné, Anders Celsius, Samuel Klingenstierna, Nils Rosén von Rosenstein, Johan Gottschalk Wallerius, Torbern Bergman and a number of others had been successfully developing their respective disciplines and sciences to their full potential. If the universities were now to become training institutes for the state's apparatus of government, the sciences would disappear from the realm, as pointed out by Linné. The administrative model, which was almost a hundred years old, in no way prevented the flourishing of science and scholarship, and it was to be left unchanged. Although the grand reform scheme failed, the Hats were able to implement a number of minor reforms. From 1740 onwards Swedish began to replace Latin as the language of theses, dissertations and lectures, which marked the beginning of a far-reaching process of reform, affecting not only Uppsala but also the Universities of Turku (Åbo) and Lund. A further result of the Hats' enthusiasm for reform was the establishment of several new chairs. At Uppsala *oeconomia publica* was given its first professorship in 1741, when the Hat administration – without consulting the university – appointed the young clerk Anders Berch to this post. In similar fashion, the modestly qualified Nils Risell, who was politically loyal to the Hats, was appointed to the new chair of constitutional law. Political loyalty became an academic merit, for the reformist ideology of the Hats aimed at the gradual takeover of the universities. The faculty of theology gained its sixth professorship in 1755, when a crusade was launched against atheism. No less trivial

<sup>33</sup> A. Gyllenkrok and A. Jeffner, 'Theological and Ideological Studies', in H. Ringgren (ed.), *Faculty of Theology at Uppsala University* (Stockholm, 1976), p. 120; Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Frihetstiden*, pp. 25f.

was another chair founded with donated funds, which focused from 1759 onwards on so-called practical economics. In 1747 the University of Turku, which had operated since 1640, obtained a chair in economics upon the initiative of Tessin, and in 1761 a chair in chemistry. On the other hand, no chairs were established at Lund upon the initiative of the Hats, and this university sank to minor provincial status. An even worse reputation had been gained by the University of Greifswald, where journeyman field surgeons could gain doctorates in medicine almost without any formal study.<sup>34</sup>

After the period of pietist reforms, Denmark adopted in the early years of the reign of Frederik V a completely different kind of reformism, partly resembling the objectives voiced in Sweden during the Age of Liberty. The heritage of the old Noble Academy was revived in 1747, when the new Noble Academy of Sorø was founded. Jens Kraff who became a professor at the academy in the same year, introduced the philosophy of Wolff into Denmark. Jens Schielderup Sneedorff, who was cautiously orientated towards the Enlightenment, became professor in 1751, followed in that year by the German Basedow, who displayed some tendencies towards theological rationalism. Basedow was to become one of the leading figures to inspire the school reforms of Denmark. As professor at Sorø, however, he brought upon himself the animosity of the government, which favoured conservative ecclesiastical policies. Basedow was dismissed from his post in 1761. Cautious attempts at reform also bore fruit at the University of København. Vice-Chancellor Pontoppidan of the university had been interested in botany and zoology even when he was bishop of Bergen. He was later an enthusiastic follower of Wolff's physico-theology. A commission appointed in 1754 reformed the theological curriculum to increase the proportion of physico-theology. From 1757 Pontoppidan himself lectured and instructed at the faculty of theology in addition to his duties as vice-chancellor, and in this connection he was able to do much to establish this new current of theological teaching. The supporters of Wolffianism included Johan Ernst Gunnerus, bishop of Trondheim, a convinced proponent of a university for Norway. Upon the initiative of Gunnerus and a number of others, *Det kongelige norske vitenskapers selskap*, Norway's first learned society, was established in Trondheim in 1760. In 1771 Gunnerus submitted a detailed proposal for a university to be founded in Norway, but Struensee refused even to consider it. Norway had still to make do with four Latin or cathedral schools in its diocesan towns as the

34 Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Frihetstiden*, pp. 23f., 26f.

nation's sole sources of higher education. After Struensee had introduced freedom of the press in the Danish realm in 1770, there were publicly voiced demands for reforms at the University of København. In December 1771 Gunnerus submitted a detailed proposal concerning these to Struensee, containing suggestions for several changes to the system of positions and administration. Struensee's attitude was now much more positive, but his period of power ended in catastrophe only a month later.<sup>35</sup>

The new administration suspended the reforms of its predecessor, with the exception of dismissing the last champions of pietism from the faculty, as proposed by Gunnerus. During Guldberg's term, however, an *examen philologicum*, especially intended for those intending to teach in Latin schools, and a reform of the theological examination for clerical office were also introduced. Because the *gehejmestatsminister* himself valued skills in the biblical languages, the examination providing official proficiency for position in the church specifically tested these skills. The grades – just like the positions in the church that corresponded to them – were ranked into a top, a middle and a lowest class. Under the administration that followed, the university's new Enlightenment-influenced statutes were prepared, and were ratified in 1788. The university's leading theologian, Hector Frederik Janson, appointed vice-chancellor in 1786, had the greatest influence on the content of the statutes. Several new professorships were established in the faculty of philosophy, while the faculty of theology was awarded only one extraordinary professorship. The regulations concerning teaching and degrees were now more detailed than before. The biblical criticism of the Enlightenment became a central aspect of teaching, and natural theology was mentioned as the equal of revealed theology. From now on the teaching of symbolics was associated with church history and no longer with dogmatics. The statutes contained not only an innovative but also a conservative component. Most of the regulations were old. Accordingly each professor, upon taking his oath of office, had to bind himself to the *Confessio Augustana invariata*, which had come to be regarded as the best of the symbolical books in the theological disputes of the sixteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

In Sweden, attempts at reform towards the close of the century were of much smaller scope than in Denmark, because King Gustav III had hardly

35 Kornerup, 'Oplysningstiden 1746–1799', pp. 328f.; S. Holm, *Filosofien i Norden før 1900* (København, 1967), pp. 25–8; S. Cedergreen Bech, *Struensee og hans tid* (København, 1972), p. 235; Lindhardt, 'Reformation, ortodoksi, pietisme, oplysning', p. 171.

36 Kornerup, 'Oplysningstiden 1746–1799', pp. 350f., 412–15.

any interest in the sciences or in reforming the universities. However, literature (*vitterhet*), which he valued, was given a new chair at Uppsala in 1785 and at Turku in 1798. Following the boom of the Age of Liberty, Uppsala now suffered from a recession, as dwindling political support and resources considerably lowered the standard of academic teaching and the numbers of students plummeted. In the 1740s, an average of 1,000 students had been in attendance during termtime, while the corresponding figure for the 1780s was around 400. The University of Lund fared even worse. The only exception to the downward trend was the University of Turku, which underwent thorough reforms. It was still bound to the administrative schema of the University of Uppsala, and there were no opportunities for original administrative reforms. Owing to the exceptional amount of leeway for academic freedom resulting from relatively lax political and ecclesiastical control, innovations focused on bringing about changes within the practices of science and scholarship in the various disciplines. The so-called national disciplines, which explicitly strove to underline the singular nature of the Finnish language and people and the history of Finland, flourished in an unprecedented manner, particularly as a result of the efforts of Professor Henrik Gabriel Porthan and his school. Porthan, known as the father of Finnish historiography (e.g. *Historia bibliothecae regiae academicae Aboensis*, 1772–87; *De scepticismo historica*, 1792), had received impulses and influences in Göttingen, where he came to know August Ludwig von Schlözer's pioneering *Allgemeine nordische Geschichte*. There theology had rejected rigid Lutheran dogmatism, stressing instead the rational, moral and social dimensions of religion.<sup>37</sup>

### Attempts at reforms in social care

According to Francke, the indicator of true Christianity was *praxis pietatis*, which above all called for social and pedagogical care of the poor and orphans. From the first years of the eighteenth century, the pietist circle at

37 Sjöstrand, 'Skola och universitet', pp. 299f.; Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Den gustavianska tiden*, pp. 25f.; S. J. Salminen, 'Porthan uskontokriittikkona', *Suomen Kirkkohistoriallisen Seuran vuosikirja*, 80–1 (1991), pp. 91–3; M. Klinge, *A European University: The University of Helsinki 1640–2010* (Helsinki, 2010). See further N. E. Villstrand, 'Finska och svenska språken som myn, hjärna och hjärta', in *Stiftelsen, Riksbankens Jubileumsfond Årsberättelse* (Stockholm, 2003), pp. 59f.; E. I. Kouri, 'Die Stellung des Finnischen als Verwaltungssprache bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in T. Niclas and M. Schnettger (eds.), *Politik und Sprache im Frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Mainz, 2007), p. 145.

the Danish court sought to carry out these ideals. Working in association with Queen Louise in 1704–45, Lütken established a school for the poor in connection with his parsonage in København. The pupils of the school received, free of charge, a strong dose of the pietist message in addition to food and clothing. The social objectives were also combined with pedagogical goals in a decree concerning the care of the poor which was issued in 1708. The schools for the poor were made uniform and they became the responsibility of the parishes. The decree stipulated that care for all the poor in the parish was above all the responsibility of the vicar. Assistance for the poor was collected solely on a voluntary basis. The alms went into the parish poor-relief fund, from which assistance was distributed according to need. The acts placed the poor into three classes: those unable to work, orphans and others who, for various reasons, were unable to earn a livelihood. Particular attention was paid to beggars, who were to be found in all parts of the realm. In the countryside, soldiers, who – unlike in Sweden – were volunteers and not maintained on allotted land, were often forced to beg together with their families. The beggar problem in København was aggravated by foreign beggars, who came from ships in the port from time to time. Begging was forbidden in the decree of 1708 and a board of governors was appointed for *Konventhuset*, the institution responsible for beggars and the poor. The decree concerning the care of the poor included a moralising element congruent with the goals of pietism. According to Francke, it was immoral to maintain indecency by giving alms. Nor was the giving of alms supposed to be an end in itself, but was intended to steer the poor towards the path of personal conversion and true Christianity. The acts of 1708 made improving the moral state of the poor the specific obligation of the clergy. Pastors were to admonish poor people who engaged in drunkenness, fighting, quarrels or indecency. If this had no effect, the poor were to lose their alms, and if even the latter failed to have an effect, the adults concerned were to be imprisoned and the children sent to an orphanage.<sup>38</sup>

During the war, the pietists' attempts at reform particularly focused on improving the position of children without parents. At first, *Konventhuset* in København took poor children temporarily into its charge, but as their numbers rapidly grew more permanent solutions had to be considered.

38 E. Peschke, *Studien zur Theologie A.H. Franckes*, 1 (Berlin, 1964), p. 140; Johansen, *Dansk social historie*, 4, pp. 247f.; H. Jørgensen, 'Det offentlige Fattigvæsen i Danmark 1708–1778', in K.-G. Andersson (ed.), *Oppdaginga av fattigdommen: social lovgiving; Norden på 1700-tallet* (Oslo, 1983), p. 32; T. Krogh, *Staten og de besiddelsesløse på landet 1500–1800* (Odense, 1987), pp. 97f.

The pietist circle at the court wished to establish in Denmark a genuinely pietist institution, an orphanage according to Francke's model. Social care and providing a foundation for a pietist upbringing went hand in hand at the orphanage in Halle. When they grew older, the children usually went from the orphanage to a pietist school. The first plan for an orphanage to be founded in København was presented at court in 1713, but as the war continued the scheme was abandoned because of lack of funds – in the same way as many other reforms. In 1720 King Frederik IV donated the house of the former Noble Academy for the orphanage and a sum of 2,000 *rigsdaler* as its basic capital. *Vajsenhuset* was established in July 1727 and was opened on 11 October, the king's birthday. In November Ewald was appointed chaplain of the orphanage, which was also provided with three other teachers. At first, the institution admitted orphans aged 5 and 6, thirteen girls and seventeen boys. Then *Konventhuset* sent a further seventy children before the end of the year. The state made sure that the funds of this orphanage, intended for orphans throughout the realm, grew in proportion to the expansion of its activities. The *Missionskollegium* (the Missions Board) headed by the king took over supervision of the work. The solemn inauguration was held in April 1728 in the church of the orphanage in the presence of the royal family. Court chaplain Peder Hersleb delivered a sermon and installed Ewald in office.<sup>39</sup>

In the 1730s the pietist administration began to implement strictly centralised policies concerning care for the poor. As many as thirteen decrees were issued, to ban illegal begging and to improve the efficacy of the funds for the care of the poor. A decree issued in 1734 transferred chief economic responsibility for the poor-relief funds of the counties. The funds of the parishes now continued their operations under the authority of larger funds. The activities of the pietist administration in the 1730s established in Denmark a system for the relief of the poor that was largely based on the decree of 1708. When King Christian VI visited Norway in 1733, he was astounded by the large number of beggars. One result of this visit was that Norway was also provided with a system of poor relief, which was initially implemented only in the diocese of Akershus.<sup>40</sup>

In the early eighteenth century, poor relief in the Swedish realm was based not only on the social work of the church as required by Lutheran orthodoxy

<sup>39</sup> Pedersen, 'Pietismens tid', pp. 84–8; Jespersen, *Danmarks historie*, 3, pp. 318f.

<sup>40</sup> Dyrvik, *Norges historie*, 8, pp. 356–64; Krogh, *Staten og de besiddelsesløse på landet 1500–1800*, pp. 98–102.



but also on mercantilist policies applying to beggars. The existence of a certain number of poor people was even regarded as necessary for the continued availability of cheap labour in large numbers. In contrast to Denmark, begging was permitted, but only within one's own town or parish. The Church Act of 1686 and regulations on begging issued in 1698 required congregations to look after their poor. The regulations obliged congregations to build poorhouses and to maintain funds for the relief of the poor. The money for this purpose mainly came from mandatory fees, and not voluntarily as in Denmark. The funds received 0.5 per cent of all property bequeathed by will, 12.5 per cent of the probate value of an estate, all church collections gathered during burial services and naturally all voluntary alms. The Church Act and the begging regulations served as guidelines for poor relief until 1763. The problems of this sector were largely the same in Sweden and Finland as in Denmark and Norway. Beggars were at times a veritable plague. The centralised policy of poor relief, maintained through the rulings of the central administration, did not properly extend down to the local level and was thus not suited to eradicate the worst problems. Many congregations neglected their responsibilities. Like København, Stockholm also faced problems of a somewhat larger scale, which an order and fire-brigade commission, founded in 1724, tried to solve. The commission was also responsible for social welfare matters in the city. In 1737 around 1.7 per cent of the inhabitants of Stockholm (i.e. 939 persons) met the commission's criteria for poverty and were thus entitled to financial assistance from the city's poor-relief fund.<sup>41</sup>

In Denmark, *Opfostringshuset*, established by King Frederik V in 1753 and intended for poor children throughout the realm, carried on the traditions of pietist care for the poor. This was also done by the *Vajsenhuset*, a social achievement which endured longer than its underlying pietism did as a system of administration. With assistance from the state, the orphanage was restored and improved after the disastrous fires. In 1734, the institution was installed in a new building. The new premises were partly destroyed in the fire that affected the city. Following considerable reconstruction, the orphanage was again in the 1760s one of København's largest buildings, housing 140 children clad in uniform and with a large staff. The children

41 U. Johansen, *Fattiga och tiggare i Stockholms stad och län under 1700-talet* (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 25, 40. For an excellent comparison of poor relief in Scandinavia see K.-G. Andersson et al. (eds.), *Oppdaginga av fattigdomen. Social lovgivning i Norden på 1700-talet* (Oslo, 1982).

were given room and board in addition to instruction. The house also contained a church, printing works and a pharmacy. One of the major social achievements of its time was the King Frederik Hospital of København, completed in 1757. With 320 beds, this was Denmark's first modern hospital, where patients arrived from all parts of the country. Writing in 1760, Pontoppidan described the high standard of the hospital and its sound order, but he was mainly impressed by the care accorded to the patients. The author praised this institution, noting that hardly anywhere else could better care be provided. On the other hand, Struensee's abrupt attempts at reform, also in the social sphere, led to protests. Some of these were soon cancelled under the next administration, but the dissolution of pietist institutions and practices continued. Institutions regarded as pietist such as *Opfostringshuset* and *Vajsenhuset*, were discontinued. They were replaced in late 1770 by a foundation which maintained, among other things, a reception centre for foundlings. This work was financed by the proceeds of lotteries held in København. The church of the King Frederik Hospital and the clergymen's quarters connected with it were converted into a clinic for venereal diseases. Representatives of the conservative ecclesiastical party accused Struensee of being an enemy of religion and morality. His affair with the queen was regarded as treasonable, and Struensee's colourful career ended in his beheading.<sup>42</sup>

In Sweden, the reign of the Hat Party saw changes to poor-relief policies from the middle of the century onwards, as an Enlightenment-inspired philanthropy replaced the centralised system created during the period of orthodoxy. On the initiative of Councillor of State Tessin, the Seraphim Order, re-established in 1748, launched not only attempts at reforms which improved the practical aspects of poor relief in Stockholm, but also a political debate on revising poor relief throughout the realm. The most tangible result of the debate was the appointment in 1757 of an orphanage and hospital committee by the estates. This body was the first nationwide authority in the field of social care. Its duty was to supervise and control orphanages, hospitals and poorhouses, and to make preparations for a nationwide reform to be enacted. The hospital and orphanage acts of 1763 and 1766 required each congregation to care for its poor, and it became mandatory to maintain a poor-relief fund. Among others, the senile, persons with long-term illnesses,

42 Kornerup, 'Oplysningstiden 1746–1799', p. 322; K. Krüger, 'Johann Friedrich Struensee und der Aufgeklärte Absolutismus', in H. Lehmann and D. Lohmeier (eds.), *Aufklärung und Pietismus im dänischen Gesamtstaat* (Neumünster, 1983), pp. 28–31.

helpless invalids, the mentally ill and the incurably ill were to be sent to the hospitals. The orphanages, in turn, were for poor children needing care. In the spirit of the new act the cities and larger towns of Sweden and Finland in particular adopted a decentralised system of social care by the end of the 1770s. The system operated better than its predecessor on the local level and it also implemented demographic policies typical of the Age of Enlightenment. By the close of the century, a provincial hospital was established in each province hitherto lacking one. All the hospitals were explicitly intended for poor people who were ill, and few entered them voluntarily. Also in Finland the ill were mainly cared for in private homes. At the local level, philanthropy was particularly evident in the growing sums donated by private individuals to poor relief.<sup>43</sup>

Enlightenment-inspired philanthropy also flourished in Denmark towards the end of the century. This was evident, for example, in the school reform launched by Count Reventlow. These measures had a considerable social influence, particularly in the way they raised the social status of the peasants. Upward social mobility was accelerated, when the *stavnsbånd* system developed by the pietist administration was abolished, and Danish peasants regained their long-lost freedom. Land reform was linked to reform in the care of the poor. In 1787 a national committee was appointed to study this issue. The committee presented in 1791 a detailed proposal for reform running to 120 pages. This document underlined that from now on each congregation was to take regular care of the ill and of those unable to work, as well as children needing care. On the other hand, the poor-relief commission of each congregation was also required to obtain employment for those who were even partly able to work. The proposal called for increased control of poor relief in order finally to eradicate begging. Regular audits were required for the control of the poor-relief funds. As in Sweden and Finland, Denmark also initiated a process of decentralisation to improve social care, when many of the proposals of the reform scheme were realised in the early nineteenth century. Social reform in Norway followed its own, faster schedule. The well-functioning poor-relief system of the diocese of Akershus was taken as a model when a similar system was established in three other

<sup>43</sup> Å. Sandholm, *Kyrkan och hospitalshjonen* (Helsinki, 1973), pp. 36–41; G. Utterström, *Fattig och föräldralös i Stockholm på 1600- och 1700-talen* (Umeå, 1978), pp. 136f.; Johanson, *Fattiga och tiggare i Stockholms stad och län under 1700-talet*, pp. 74, 91f.; P. Pulma, *Fattigvård i frihetstidens Finland* (Helsingfors, 1985), pp. 86–9; E. I. Kouri, 'Health Care and Poor Relief in Finland 1700–1900', in M. Enbuske *et al.* (eds.), *Historian selkosilla. J. Vahtolan juhlakirja*, *Studia Historica Septentrionalia*, 65 (Rovaniemi, 2012), pp. 213–27.

dioceses before the end of the century. The progress of social reforms in all the Scandinavian countries was closely linked to the weakening of rigid religious doctrines – orthodoxy and pietism – and the rise of rationalism.<sup>44</sup>

### Rationalism – God is rational and practical

The breakthrough of Wolffianism at the University of Uppsala did not by any means mark the victory of rationalism. By the 1730s Wolff himself had rejected the rationalist starting point of his early years and had oriented himself towards Lutheran orthodoxy. From now on, his goal was to make his whole system of learning only a handmaiden of the faith, *ancilla fidei*. Wolffianism became one of the many anti-Enlightenment and anti-rationalist currents which from time to time were readily clothed in the valued and respected garb of the Enlightenment. At Halle, even the heirs of Francke's theology enthusiastically received Wolff, who returned to this university in 1740. At Uppsala Wolffianism pushed aside the eclectic tradition of the early eighteenth century, which had implied the positive influence, with certain orthodox reservations, of Descartes, Bayle, Locke, Thomasius and other forerunners of the Enlightenment. Because Uppsala was the seat of the archdiocese, strong ecclesiastical control extended to the university. This was skilfully maintained by, among others, Eric, Jacob and Henric Benzelius, three brothers, each of whom became archbishop of Sweden. They were convinced opponents of both pietism and rationalism. Only some top-level scholars – Linné and Klingenskierna above all others – dared to differ explicitly from Wolff's system of learning. Their attitudes of rejection, however, did not lead them to any active criticism of Wolffianism, now in its ascendancy.<sup>45</sup>

Wolff also gained a solid position of authority at the University of Turku in Finland in the 1720s and 1730s alongside Descartes, Leibniz, Thomasius, Bayle and Locke. Wolffianism, however, never became a leading current of thought in Turku as it had in Uppsala. The control of the church was more lax in Turku and most of the bishops were in favour of a cautious eclectic rationalism balanced by traditional orthodoxy. The young Wolff, who provided impulses for biblical criticism, had a greater influence on academic

44 Dyrvik, *Norges historie*, 8, pp. 364–7; Johansen, *Dansk social historie*, 4, pp. 289–96; Krogh, *Staten og de besiddelsesløse på landet 1500–1800*, pp. 139–44.

45 T. Frängsmyr, *Wolffianismens genombrott i Uppsala* (Uppsala, 1972), pp. 234–49; P. Kondylis, *Die Aufklärung im Rahmen des neuzeitlichen Rationalismus* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 568f.

thought in Finland than the ageing warrior of the faith. In 1745 Professor Jakob Gadolin initiated a sharp criticism of Wolff's whole system of learning, which he found to be mistaken and uncritical throughout. It was a serious obstacle to progress in science and scholarship, because it was instrumental in preventing the influence of Newton, Spinoza, Johann David Michaelis and many other critical thinkers. Gadolin became the most influential guiding figure of his generation in Finnish academia. He went on to become bishop of Turku and in this capacity too he was actively involved in promoting the breakthrough of rationalism in Finland.<sup>46</sup>

Peter Forsskål of Finland laid the foundations for his own academic reputation at the University of Göttingen, where he studied particularly under the guidance of Michaelis. Forsskål developed into a unique and sensitive Enlightenment thinker, whose published writings in Latin launched a fervent attack on Wolffianism and particularly the mandatory adherence to Lutheranism which it maintained. Forsskål's own ideal was the completely free and rational pursuit of scientific knowledge. He regarded the Christian science propagated by Wolffianism to be totally impossible, because Christians were even worse fanatics than the heathens. A critique of religion and society was necessary in order to have freedom of the press, freedom of science and religion and, generally speaking, a less restrictive society where tolerance would prevail. To present his ideas to a broader readership, Forsskål published in 1759 in Stockholm the Swedish-language pamphlet *Tankar om borgerliga friheten* ('Ideas on Civil Liberty'), in which freedom of the press was demanded as an initial step. Led by Nils Wallerius, professor of theology, the Wolffians of Uppsala began a rabid battle of faith against Forsskål, who was now branded as atheist, sceptic and heretic.

The Hat administration banned the pamphlet, but was unsuccessful in confiscating the printed copies. The University of Uppsala strictly prohibited not only Forsskål's works but – to be on the safe side – also works by Michaelis. The latter's theological compendium, which Forsskål particularly admired, was banned from sale in all parts of the realm. Although Carl von Linné defended Forsskål, the latter's career in the Swedish realm had come to an end. He received support from København, where he published the second edition of his main work in Latin. Forsskål joined a Danish expedition to Arabia, where he died in 1763.

<sup>46</sup> Salminen, *Den finländska teologin*, pp. 116f., 119–21.

The Finnish economist, clergyman and a member of the estates Anders Chydenius was inspired by Forsskål's ideas on the freedom of the press. He had studied at Turku (Åbo) University and wrote his thesis on American history. After the Caps had come to power, the overall ideological atmosphere changed quickly and the discontinuation of censorship, which had proven to be ineffective, was demanded in many quarters. Chydenius was the prime mover when the estates approved the act on freedom of the press in 1766, which has been called 'the world's first freedom of information act'. His main work, *Den nationelle winsten* ('National Wealth') in 1765, made him 'the Father of classical economics in Scandinavia'. In it he presented the same ideas as Adam Smith eleven years later in his famous *The Wealth of Nations*. Chydenius even refers to the theory of 'the invisible hand' when speaking about public interest.<sup>47</sup>

Freedom of the press was soon introduced in Denmark. Through a prompt decision made in September 1770, Struensee sought the shock effect of Enlightenment rationalism. In the Swedish realm, the freedom of the press had been implemented in a situation in which a slow and more or less linear development towards rationalism had continued since the beginning of the century. Struensee, who admired Voltaire and planned to have a statue erected in the latter's honour, was not able to achieve the rapid changes that he sought. Despite this, a few pamphlets in Danish and newspaper articles were published within a short time in København, which criticised the church and its teachings in an unprecedented manner. A broad debate ensued in 1771, when an article written under a pseudonym attacked the teachings of the church on hell and original sin. The incipient critique of the church was, however, soon buried during Guldberg's term.<sup>48</sup>

While the theologian Guldberg began to steer Denmark back to its traditional ecclesiastical course, the young Gustav III of Sweden declared himself an admirer of Voltaire and the French Enlightenment in general. Among the members of Porthan's school at the University of Turku, a rational critique of religion soon flourished, being particularly inspired by Voltaire. Its own discipline was that of natural theology. Johan Henric Kellgren, who had studied under Porthan and was later active until 1777 as

47 A. Burius, *Ömhet om friheten. Studier i frihetstidens censurpolitik* (Uppsala, 1984), pp. 262–79; P. Virrankoski, *Anders Chydenius* (Helsinki, 1986), pp. 184–209; Salminen, *Den finländska teologin*, pp. 110–16, 135f.

48 Kornerup, 'Oplysningstiden 1746–1799', pp. 322–7; H. Jørgensen, *Tidsskriftspresen i Danmark indtil 1848* (København, 1961), p. 20; H. Jørgensen, *Da censuren blev opgivet* (København, 1970), p. 64.

a docent at Turku, took Voltaire, La Mettrie, Holbach and Helvetius as his masters. Like these philosophers, he attacked religious fanaticism, superstition in all its varieties and the self-assured sectarianism typical of the common people, which he felt the Lutheran church had adopted in the same way as other churches. The ultimate goals of the critique of religion were the gradual abolition of perennial religious disputes and the birth of a tolerant and pluralistic Enlightenment religion. When Porthan developed his own version of an Enlightenment religion, he also relied on the concepts of Voltaire, Hume and Reimarus. Natural religion, or *religio repurgata*, based on the findings of sciences and arts, with which Porthan wished to replace the positive religions, which had been polluted almost to the core, was simple and common to all religions and all peoples. Not all, however, were conscious of this common faith, because the standard of enlightenment was still too low. Natural religion implied that God exerted his influence only via natural and practical matters. The critique of religion had to eliminate the immense layers of pollution that had accumulated over the centuries on the surface of the positive religions. This pollution included religious errors, lies, misconceptions and abuses, beneath which lay the pure core or natural religion, which the critique of religion was to uncover. As Porthan, in the spirit of the progressive optimism of the Enlightenment, firmly believed that he had discovered mankind's original and long-forgotten faith, which paradoxically was also the religion of the future, he judged it to be sufficient in all respects. On this basis he rejected out of hand both the dogma of the church and the divine authority of the Bible. Professor Frans Michael Franzén, later bishop of Härnösand in Sweden, was the most important among the many biblical critics of the school. Like his models, Lowth and Herder, Franzén, too, focused mainly on the poetic texts of the Old Testament, whose origin and content he analysed with rational arguments. In the same manner as his mentor, Porthan, he bypassed detailed arguments when rejecting dogmatic and exegetic problems.<sup>49</sup>

After Kellgren had given up his academic career in 1777 and moved to Stockholm, he began regularly to publish his own poems and his extremely polemical, and in places passionate, newspaper articles, in which he defended the rationalism of the Enlightenment. His main forum was the newspaper

49 S. Ek, *Kellgren*, 1 (Stockholm, 1965), pp. 71–8; Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria. Den gustavianska tiden*, pp. 177–9; E. Lönnroth, *Den stora rollen. Kung Gustaf III spelad av honom själv* (Stockholm, 1986), pp. 3, 14, 49–51; S. J. Salminen, 'Franzén ja Herderin raamattukritiikki', *Suomen Kirkkohistoriallisen Seuran vuosikirja*, 79 (1990), pp. 74f., 78–87; Salminen, 'Porthan uskontokritiikkona', pp. 93–113.

*Stockholms Posten*, in which he began in 1778 to defend the recently deceased Voltaire against the attacks of opponents within the church. From 1787 onwards he attacked Swedenborgianism, alchemy, mysticism, spiritualism and occultism. He recommended the reading of John Locke, 'the most sensible man ever to walk the earth', as an antidote to this variegated ideological humbug particularly popular among court circles. Kellgren voiced his particular distaste for the helplessly outmoded clerical Latin culture maintained by the University of Uppsala. He wanted to replace this with a modern, bourgeois culture employing the Swedish language. Kellgren himself remained faithful to the natural theology of his early years. On this basis, he outlined a 'moral Catechism of reason' in the 1790s, which was to become the religion of the future for all people on earth, but like many plans of this kind, this scheme also remained incomplete. As a critic with a sharp pen, Kellgren was not long in favour with King Gustav III, who had turned his back on the Enlightenment. The autocrat's new favourites were a few court chaplains such as Uno von Troil, Gustaf Enebom and Israel Geringius, who had received most of their impulses and influences from German neo-theology and were representatives of a formal and dependent theological rationalism. Nils von Rosenstein also remained a favourite of the court until the assassination of Gustav III. In a work published immediately after the death of the king (*Försök til en afhandling om uplysningen*, 1793), von Rosenstein discussed the prerequisites of the Enlightenment with reference to the ideas of Locke and Montesquieu. Enlightened reason was the basic precondition, because only through it could citizens achieve the social preconditions of Enlightenment – a free, democratic form of government and a free economy – and hate the forces that opposed Enlightenment, particularly coercion, oppression and obscurantism – to which the authorities were all too prone to resort. Obscurantism was represented by political and ecclesiastical censorship and the apparently profound occult sciences, which had become increasingly popular as the century drew to a close. The 'darkness of Reuterholm' which prevailed in Sweden made this book, full of genuine Enlightenment rationalism, an overnight sensation. Kellgren praised it as a masterpiece of the Age of Enlightenment, while Reuterholm's attempts to censor it remained fruitless.<sup>50</sup>

50 K. Johannisson, 'Svensk upplysningstid', in B. Lindberg (ed.), *17 uppsatser i svensk idé- och lärdoms historia* (Uppsala, 1980), pp. 178–80; T. T. Segerstedt, *Nils von Rosenstein* (Stockholm, 1981), pp. 212–28; Lindroth, *Svensk lärdoms historia. Den gustavianska tiden*, pp. 179–93; I. Ek and S. Ek, *Kellgren*, 2 (Stockholm, 1980), pp. 247–56.



After the court coup of 1784, the representatives of rationalism also managed to have their voices heard in Denmark. In 1785 Court Chaplain Christian Bastholm, teacher to Crown Prince Frederik, began to campaign for fundamental reform in the Lutheran church. Divine service was to be made 'brief, interesting, encouraging and varied'. It was to provide intellectual stimulus and was to be useful on a practical level. The liturgy, sermons and hymns all needed thorough revision. All dogmatic, historical and moral hymns were to be removed and replaced by ones that were genuinely encouraging and that appealed to the emotions. In a pamphlet published in 1794, Bastholm demanded that the traditional office of the clergy was to be rejected. Pastors were to be replaced by useful teachers of the people, who would spread knowledge of the newest intellectual currents in the towns and practical information, particularly on farming and animal husbandry in the countryside. In a pamphlet on religious enlightenment published in 1796, Bastholm estimated that biblical revelation was necessary only until a religion of pure reason was achieved. He intimated that in reality Jesus was not God, nor had he risen from the dead. Generally speaking, there was no assurance of immortality. Despite this, biblical verbal imagery still had to be taught to the common people.<sup>51</sup>

'Must a Christian teacher lie to the people?', asked the theologian Otto Horrebow in a critical pamphlet published in the same year. He felt that Bastholm was wrong. An end had to be put to lying, and honesty was to be restored. Horrebow himself represented radical rationalism in the theological journal *Jesus og Fornuftten*, which he published between 1796 and 1801. He wished to prove that Jesus was by no means God, but a unique person. Paul, in turn, was a narrow-minded enthusiast and Moses was a demagogue who took the name of God in vain. When theological censorship was restored in Denmark in 1799, there were attempts to discontinue Horrebow's journal, but this was opposed by the faculty of theology of the University of København. At the faculty, Daniel Gotthilf Moldenhawer, a pupil of Herder, and Claus Frees Hornemann, a pupil of Michaelis, represented tolerant, German-influenced theology. Most of the other professors also supported a cautious rationalism. Towards the end of the century, this was also supported by Johan Christian Schönheyder, bishop of Trondheim, in whose writings the influence of Michaelis's biblical criticism was clearly evident.

<sup>51</sup> M. Neiiendam, *Christian Bastholm* (København, 1922), pp. 248–53, 355–8, 367–71.

Peder Hansen, bishop of Kristiansand, was particularly influenced in his rational critique of the Bible by the theology of Johann Gottlieb Töllner.<sup>52</sup>

During the eighteenth century, the Scandinavian countries took different ideological courses as long as most of the available intellectual capacity was used for supporting traditional religious doctrines, orthodoxy and pietism. Currents representing genuine Enlightenment thought changed this situation. As a trend, rationalism progressed at the end of the century along the same lines in Denmark and Norway as in Sweden and Finland, and was significantly instrumental in creating a more tolerant and less uniform intellectual climate in all of Scandinavia.

52 L. Selmer, *Oplysningsmenn i den norske kirke* (Bergen, 1923), pp. 93–149, 164–204; C. Kirchhoff-Larsen, *Den danske presses historie*, 2 (København, 1942), pp. 220–3; Kornerup, 'Oplysningstiden 1746–1799', pp. 415–17, 464; A. Aarflot, *Norsk kirkehistorie*, 2 (Oslo, 1967), pp. 203–8; Banning, 'Det teologiske Fakultet 1732–1830', pp. 310f.

## Cultural Europeanisation, court culture and aristocratic taste, c. 1580–1750

JØRGEN HEIN

Court culture, defined as the organisation and purpose of court life in the widest sense, has not yet been the subject of detailed investigation either at the Danish, Swedish or even Scandinavian level. Even if we occupy ourselves with the uppermost level of society, which has left behind an extraordinarily large but scattered and diffuse amount of source material, in many ways there remains a no-man's land in the space between different topics and traditional scientific subject areas. The older literature, especially from previous centuries, mainly consisted of editions of original sources, and these continue to be a mine of information. These were supplemented by biographies and 'national studies' designed for popular education, many of which gave vent to an aesthetic fascination with the court's colourful displays of splendour and hailed the 'spirit of the age', whether 'renaissance', 'baroque' or 'rococo'.

In complete contrast to this are the structural analyses of the post-war period, which seek to uncover the underlying social and political forces and which take as their explanatory models concepts such as, for example, 'representative public' and 'status consumption'.<sup>1</sup> It could also be added, in a Scandinavian context, that the period 1620–1720 was Sweden's Age of Greatness, for which the Swedish material is both richer and better researched than that from Denmark. Moreover, it should be pointed out that a renewed international interest in Gustav II Adolf and Queen Kristina had already manifested itself by the 1950s, while Christian IV's turn only came in the 1980s.<sup>2</sup>

1 S. Olden-Jørgensen, 'Statsceremoniel, hofkultur og politisk magt i overgangen fra adelsvælde til enevælde 1536–1746', *Fortid og Nutid*, 3 (1996), pp. 1–20.

2 M. Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus: A History of Sweden 1611–1632*, 1–2 (London, 1958, 1968); M. von Platen (ed.), *Queen Christina of Sweden: Documents and Studies*, Nationalmuseum (Stockholm, 1966); M. Conforti and G. Walton (eds.), *Sweden: A Royal Treasury 1550–1700* (Washington, 1988); S. Heiberg (ed.), *Christian IV and Europe: The 19th European Council Exhibition* (Copenhagen, 1988).

Generally speaking, both Denmark and Sweden were involved in general European developments, from the struggle of princely power against the estates and rule by the council to the ancien régime, even if the Swedish autocracy had to give way to a form of constitutional monarchy between 1718 and 1772. The basic requirements for a display of royal power with prestige architecture and refined court ceremonial were therefore identical. From having been peripatetic, the court became settled in one place, and as the monarchy acquired more power, so the armed forces and the civil service became professionalised. In the same way, royal propaganda took the same form in terms of foreign policy, and as rivals in the struggle for supremacy in the Baltic area, Denmark and Sweden made use of the same means to get their message across. Essential elements in the representation of princely power included self-presentation (good manners, clothes and means of transport), residences with costly appurtenances (palaces and art collections), feasts, religious festivals and military show (coronations, cavalcades, tournaments and victory celebrations with the ensuing literary publications). It is not to be wondered at, then, if the two courts' orders of precedence and ceremonial both correspond to the current model as set out in Johann Lünig's authoritative handbook of European court ceremonial from 1720.<sup>3</sup>

Nor does there appear to have been any great difference between the two courts' daily duties and diversions, whether plays or musical entertainments, the informal *Wirtschaften* of the seventeenth century – in which a circle of courtiers were peasants for an evening – or the masquerades of the eighteenth century. Similarly, there is the same tendency towards less alcohol-orientated forms of social intercourse, thanks to new drinks such as tea, coffee and chocolate. Also common to both countries was the concern shown for the upbringing and education of the coming generation, whether in terms of the hopes expressed regarding the abilities and personality of the heir to the throne or for his marriageable sisters, as worthy representatives at foreign courts. The education of the two sexes was clearly differentiated, and intended to prepare them for adult life: the boys went hunting, the girls did embroidery, and the subjects of their drawing lessons were fortifications and flowers respectively.

Common traits are also discernible in the relationship between the centre and the periphery. In both Denmark and Sweden, the court and the capital were the tone-setting fixed points, from which influences spread out to the

3 Johann Lünig, *Theatrum Ceremoniale Historico-Politicum*, 1–2 (Leipzig, 1719–20).

surrounding society like ripples in a pond. At the beginning of the period in question this applied particularly to the importation of artists and craftsmen from southern climes, while at the end of the period it was chiefly with the help of the country's own children, who had now imbibed the skills of the incomers. In parallel with this, the court promoted the latest fashions by directly importing luxury goods from the Continent's metropolises such as Antwerp, Amsterdam, Augsburg, Nuremberg, Hamburg and Paris. An essential part was also played by the internal princely exchange of gifts, especially the 'ambassadorial gifts' of the Great Powers, e.g. the magnificent silver of Augsburg, Venetian glass, Louis XIV's tapestries and Medici furniture with inlaid semi-precious stones (*pietre dure*).

Yet these basic similarities should not be allowed to obscure some striking differences. In the first place, there were differences in the continuity of the respective royal houses.

In Denmark the rulers were the Oldenburgs, one and the same Lutheran family with son succeeding father throughout the period from 1448 onwards. In Sweden, four families succeeded each other: the Vasas (1521–1654), the Palatinate dynasty (1654–1720), the Hessens (1720–51) and the Holstein-Gottorps (1751–1818). Of these, the Vasas split into a Lutheran Swedish line and a Catholic Polish one in the years before 1600, just as Queen Kristina converted to Catholicism in 1654.

In the second place, there were differences in the two countries' constitutions and defence. At the beginning of the period Denmark had a powerful high nobility, not least in the south, in Holstein, which was in an advanced state of development and which the Danish king only had on loan from the Holy Roman emperor. Denmark therefore remained an elective monarchy without a standing army until the introduction of the autocracy in 1660.

In Sweden, on the other hand, the nobility had been weakened after the Stockholm Bloodbath of 1520, as a result of which the country became a hereditary monarchy with an army of peasant soldiers as early as 1540. By contrast, the autocracy only existed from 1680 to 1718, and from 1772 to 1792. In addition, there were differences in the geographical situation of the two countries, and in their natural resources. Roughly speaking, the kingdom of Denmark, which lay in the south-west and was an agricultural country and densely populated, was forced to invest in the navy and a sea-borne expansion, while Sweden, lying to the north-east and thinly populated, had iron-ore deposits which made it possible to manufacture weapons and which encouraged military expansion by land, in the first instance towards the deserted east. The aim for both sides was to secure toll income from trade between

Eastern and Western Europe: in Denmark's case, not only the lucrative toll from the Öresund and North Cape, but also that from the Elbe and the Weser; and in Sweden's case, from cargoes on the rivers Duna, Memel, Vistula and Oder.

A decisive factor in the two countries' struggle for mastery in the Baltic was the warfare of the period 1620–1720, which partly created an internal balance in Scandinavia, and partly drew the Baltic area into European power politics, in that the centre of gravity shifted to Russia and Prussia. In this course of events, the first decisive incident was Denmark's defeat and Sweden's victory in the Thirty Years War, which triggered off two Danish–Swedish wars in 1643–5 and 1657–60. They ended with Denmark giving up what is now southern Sweden, surely the richest third of the Danish monarchy, together with independence for Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp, which became a vassal state of Sweden situated on Denmark's southern border. This inaugurated Sweden's period as a Great Power in the Baltic, which lasted until the Great Northern War of 1700–20, when Denmark eliminated Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp but failed to win back the southern Swedish territories. The Thirty Years War and the Great Northern War are therefore decisive events if one wishes to follow the course of development in Denmark and Sweden.

### From the post-Reformation period to the Thirty Years War (from the 1580s to the 1630s)

For a foreigner around 1580, Denmark must have seemed like the premier power in Scandinavia, favoured by its geographical proximity to the Continent and by the international boom in agricultural products, which had lasted since the 1540s. Since Denmark was an elective monarchy, in which the king's accession charter (*håndfæstning*) guaranteed the nobles' right to administer crown estates, the high nobility benefited more from the ensuing affluence than did the crown. It is with some justification, then, that the end of the sixteenth century has been called the Golden Age of the Danish high nobility, characterised as it was by a lavish lifestyle which stretched from the building of the many still-surviving manor-houses and grave monuments, to clothing and banquets, such as a wedding in 1584 to which 500 guests were invited.<sup>4</sup> To this can be added their sons' lengthy and expensive study-trips to foreign

4 E. Ladewig Petersen, 'Anne Rosenkrans' og Frantz Rantzaus bryllup 1584 – adelig statuskonsumption og social prestige', *Personalthistorisk Tidsskrift*, 1 (1996), pp. 23–34.

universities, which at the same time furthered their cultural interests. These also found expression in the nobles' historical and theological studies, and in the founding of libraries. In sum, this lifestyle of the high nobility bore traces of a 'status-consumption' which confirmed its aristocratic character, but simultaneously led to an over-consumption which, due to the closed nature of the noble estate, it was impossible to cover by the importation of capital from outside. As a consequence, sumptuary laws were introduced as early as the 1570s which, among other things, forbade epitaphs for the nobility and the excessive use of cosmetics by noblewomen.

The Danish monarchy also benefited from the country's economic success, but had to pay reparations for the Northern Seven Years War, so that a policy of promoting royal prestige only began in earnest in the 1580s. The main plank of this was the building of Kronborg Castle, which monitored the collection of the Sound tolls at Helsingør, and was an expression of Denmark's claim of overlordship of the Baltic and the Norwegian Sea. Frederik II however died unexpectedly in 1588, and the members of the high nobility who formed a regency council on behalf of Christian IV had no interest in making propaganda for royalty.

By contrast, neither the Swedish sovereign nor the nobility drew much benefit from the rise in prices of agricultural products, and in fact it was actually this very decade of the 1590s that was marked by the Vasa split into a Protestant branch and a Catholic one which weakened the family and threatened to isolate Sweden in Protestant Northern Europe. If marriages between the royal houses are taken as the criterion of political reputation, it is hardly coincidental that Denmark and Saxony, the principal Lutheran powers after the Reformation, became each other's preferred marriage partners, or that Frederik II's children in the years around 1600 established connections with Scotland-England and with the most important Lutheran powers in north Germany (Saxony, Brandenburg, Brunswick, Holstein, Lübeck), while the Vasas became linked to the leading Calvinist power in Germany, the Palatinate electorate, and Holstein. Denmark's victory in the Kalmar War of 1611–13 resulted in large compensation for the return of the coastal stretch around present-day Göteborg.

A similar picture meets us, accordingly, when we turn to the prestigious palaces or castles which had now become an indispensable setting for royal entertainment. In Denmark three such projects were carried out between 1580 and 1625. The first was Frederik II's Kronborg Castle. This was followed by Christian IV's Frederiksborg, deliberately laid out 35 kilometres north of København like the earlier Escorial or the later Versailles, and

Rosenborg, the little pleasure palace in the park outside the capital with its medieval København Castle.

In comparison, Swedish royalty contented themselves with extending and modernising existing castles like Tre Kronor in Stockholm, Kalmar, Gripsholm and Vadstena. Another characteristic feature is the cultural influences which find expression in the architecture and furnishing of the castles. In Denmark, it almost amounts to a symbiosis with Dutch Renaissance style, which reflects the many immigrant Dutch artists and craftsmen. In Sweden, the architecture seems to have been more German-influenced, but intermixed with gables, portals and internal decoration which exhibit direct impulses from the Italian Renaissance, presumably mediated in the 1570s by way of Johan III's wife, Katharina Jagellonica of Poland, whose mother, Bona Sforza, came from Milan.

Dating from the commencement of the Thirty Years War, Christian IV's Frederiksborg may be summed up as Scandinavia's most advanced statement in the realm of royal self-presentation. Let us therefore follow the visitor on a tour round the attributes of power. In the palace forecourt, he was greeted by a fountain complete with Neptune, a symbol of the Danish king as overlord of the Baltic and the Norwegian Sea, created in Prague by Rudolf II's sculptor Adriaen de Vries. The bridge to the inner palace courtyard was flanked by Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar, and the palace's main façade was decorated with a rich marble gallery, whose figures and reliefs had an ingenious cosmological programme showing the influence of the planets on human life.

In the palace's banqueting hall, a sideboard shone resplendently with magnificent silver, the greater part of which is today in the Kremlin, while the walls were hung with Dutch tapestries portraying the monarch as victor in the Kalmar War. The highpoint was the palace church, which is presented as an imperial chapel or *Kaiserkapelle* whose inlaid silver altar and pulpit provide a counterpart to the silver furniture in the *Reiche Kapelle* in Munich.<sup>5</sup> Art and politics are characteristically united in a relief of Victoria, the goddess of victory, who, instead of the obligatory laurel wreath, extends the imperial Habsburg crown towards Christian IV's oratory, which was ornamented with a religious cycle executed by Dutch artists.

Finally, there was a pavilion in the park called, with affected understatement, *Sparepenge* (Save-Money), where Christian IV, on the model of

<sup>5</sup> H. Johannsen, 'Regna Firmat Pietas. Eine Deutung der Baudekoration der Schlosskirche Christians IV. zu Frederiksborg', *Hafnia: Copenhagen Papers in the History of Art 1974* (1976), pp. 67–140.



Dresden, exhibited riding clothes, magnificent weapons and precious articles. The impression made upon the visitor is conveyed by the tutor of Gustav II Adolf's younger brother, Duke Karl Philip, who wrote in 1617: 'Moreover, as far as curious Paintings are concerned, the same goes for Tapestries, Sculptures, inlaid in thread, hewn out of stone, objects and pieces forged out of Metal, it is almost impossible to describe them.'<sup>6</sup>

A corresponding increase in magnificent display can be seen when turning to royal festivals. As early as 1588, Frederik II's funeral had been made the excuse for a procession with banners and regalia which had Habsburg precedents and was given wider currency in the form of a copper engraving. The next big event was Christian IV's coronation in 1596, where the festivities included fireworks, plays, running at the ring and tournaments. The spectators typically came with ingenious devices of their own or assumed a markedly Lutheran, anti-Catholic or anti-Muslim stance; for example, the king dressed as the pope and his father-in-law as a Turkish prince, or they portrayed mythological motives like virtues and vices and the seven planets. A similar formula can be seen in 1603, when Christian IV and his brother-in-law Duke Johan Adolf of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp received the homage of Hamburg. In this case, the king's display of ingenuity consisted of five carriages, four of which represented the four seasons, while Christian himself sat enthroned as the sun-king on the fifth carriage.

Compared to this aggressive Protestantism and glorification of power, the last great festival held in Christian IV's time, the wedding of Crown Prince Christian and Magdalene Sibylla of Saxony in 1634, sounded a quite different note. The political background was partly Denmark's defeat in the Thirty Years War, and partly the temporary weakening of Sweden's position after the death of Gustav II Adolf in 1632, which enabled Christian IV to gain recognition as a peace-broker with the clear goal of wresting from Sweden the fruits of victory. To this end, the wedding became a large-scale Danish propaganda effort which had as its theme the blessings of peace. Consequently, the earlier Protestant self-assertion was replaced by an almost worldly tone, just as the traditional knightly accomplishments were curtailed. Taking their place were a number of plays, a ballet and a drama, in the form of fireworks, which was of relevance to both parties and which presented the philosophical and allegorical content of the unfolding events to the guests. The festivities associated with this wedding have been called the first genuine

6 S. Lorenbom, *Berättelse om Swea rikes arf-furstes samt hertigens til Södermanland, Nerike och Wermeland, Carl Philips lefwerne och utländska resor* (Stockholm, 1772), p. 47.

festival of Protestant court culture, and it has also been asserted that they agree motivically with the court art of Christian IV's later years, centred around the painter Karel van Mander III, the copperplate engraver Simon de Pas and the composer Heinrich Schütz.<sup>7</sup>

Christian IV cultivated the role of peace-broker until 1643, when the Torstensson War made it unrealistic. Court ballets were popular, especially at Crown Prince Christian's court, and presumably served as models for families in Saxony and Gottorp. The participation of the nobility in the festivities of 1634 involved several members of the high aristocracy, all of whom had long spells of study at foreign universities behind them, who participated in some of the ingenious displays, and many younger nobles who served as courtiers, which presumably reflects the education they received at Sorø, the academy for the sons of the nobility, which had been founded in 1623.

The wedding festivities in 1634 were the last manifestation of Denmark as the leading cultural power in Scandinavia. It is striking that among all the allegorical figures from classical mythology, there was one contribution in which Christian IV and his sons appeared as legendary kings of Denmark. As early as 1514, Saxo's chronicle of the Danes and their deeds from about 1,100 had been published in Latin in Paris, and a Danish translation appeared in 1575. This in itself inspired the forty tapestries of one hundred Danish kings which Frederik II had made for the banqueting hall at Kronborg.

After this tour-de-force, however, legendary history is as good as absent from royal propaganda until 1634, and in 1637 Christian IV set in motion a new series of historical paintings of the fatherland for the banqueting hall at Kronborg. They were also to be engraved in copper and issued with a historical introduction in order to glorify the name of Denmark.

It is tempting to look to Sweden as the inspiration for this. Here, 'Gothicism' and its tenets that the Swedes were successors to the Goths, who with their strength and purity had conquered the Greeks and Romans, had long been an element in the Vasas' ideology along the lines of classical mythology and humanistic teaching about virtue. The brothers Olaus and Johannes Magnus published their historical works in the 1550s, and as early as 1561, the talented Erik XIV derived his impressive regnal number from the ranks of Sweden's legendary kings, at the same time as he had the first four kings represented each on his own tapestry, which thus provided a precedent for Frederik II's series of ancestral portraits at Kronborg.

7 M. R. Wade, *Triumphus Nuptialis Danicus: German Court Culture and Denmark*, Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung, 27 (Wiesbaden, 1996), p. 295.

After Karl IX's assumption of power in 1599, Gothicism received a new lease of life, not least thanks to the king himself. In 1611, at the beginning of the Kalmar War, Karl IX challenged the much younger Christian IV to a duel in the Gothic manner, the outcome of which was to decide the war.<sup>8</sup> Karl IX's initiative has been put down to his age and the awkward situation he was in but, as he was a dazzling proponent of *Realpolitik*, the challenge has alternatively been seen as designed to impress Swedish public opinion. Yet another Nordic touch can be discerned in Karl IX's burial regalia, which was adorned with polished rock crystals, so-called Karelian diamonds.

Similarly, at his coronation pageant in 1617, Gustav II Adolf chose to appear as the legendary King Berik, the founder of the Gothic dominions beyond the Baltic. The parallel with the peace treaty with Russia which had recently been concluded, and which was so advantageous to Sweden, was obvious and, from that point on, Gothicism's ideas about the strength of the argument for waging righteous war crop up in arguments about the expansive foreign policies of the Age of Greatness.

A later example of the use to which festivities were put can be seen at Karl XI's accession to the throne in 1672, which was celebrated with a pageant which has been called the last real tournament in Sweden. The model for this was the pageant held by Louis XIV after the birth of the dauphin in 1662, but with the decisive difference that in Stockholm Karl XI brought on the Goths. The literary monument to Gothicism was Olof Rudbeck's *Atlantica*, written towards the end of the Age of Greatness, while Gustav III's tournaments and knightly games in the 1770s and 1780s can be characterised as the last, lingering romantic echoes of the later Swedish autocracy.

### From the Thirty Years War to the Great Northern War (from the 1630s to 1720/21)

Sweden's Age of Greatness began with Gustav II Adolf's victories on the Continent, which created economic growth and established political and cultural connections with the emerging French autocracy, in that France and Sweden by and large became firm allies until the French Revolution. As a consequence of Gustav II Adolf's early death in 1632 and Queen Kristina's minority and abdication – a course of events which, in a manner of speaking,

8 L. Gustafsson, *Virtus Politica. Politisk etik och natursvärmeri i den tidigare stormaktstidens litteratur* (Stockholm, 1956), pp. 229, 239.

was repeated with Karl X Gustav's death in 1660, when Karl XI was 5 years old – the power of patronage came to reside with the high aristocracy up until the 1660s, broken only by Queen Kristina's short reign from 1644 to 1654, as Karl X Gustav was to a great extent absent in the field from 1655 until his death.

As a result of waging war and becoming involved in diplomatic negotiations, the Swedish nobility now came into contact with the latest trends in Southern Europe. Moreover, they now became characterised by their great mobility, as losses resulting from the wars were compensated by gains: for example, Queen Kristina resorted to naming new counts and barons as a way of exerting political pressure on the old Swedish council aristocracy around Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna. It can be said of both groups that they first and foremost led an exceptionally expensive lifestyle in which consumption in the form of splendid buildings and lavish household arrangements was intended to mark the aristocracy's status in relation to the rest of society. The result was a building boom, although this can also be explained as a much-needed renovation of existing Swedish manor-houses, which in many ways represented a belated version of the building works undertaken by the Danish nobility between 1540 and 1620. But with this difference: the Swedish aristocracy also erected palaces in Stockholm.

At first, the dominant impulses were Dutch and, later, French, on the outer façades as much as – to a lesser degree – in the interiors, and the costly furnishings and generous accommodation were accompanied by opulence in clothes and culinary habits. Added to this were expensive educational trips for their sons as well as lavish funerals and funerary monuments for the dead. This spiral of consumption, which corresponded to the Golden Age of the Danish high nobility and also precipitated sumptuary laws in Sweden, naturally provided business opportunities for merchants and craftsmen and generally created a demand for a labour force. There were severe repercussions, therefore, when the conduct of the war no longer resulted in fresh victories, and the market for agricultural products took a downward turn.

After the Skåne War of 1675–9 between Sweden and Denmark, which ended in a kind of stalemate, the high nobility were forced to return crown lands which they had previously been allotted, and shortly afterwards Karl XI established a *de facto* autocracy. With this, the Swedish aristocracy's most brilliant period came to an end, but its status as the culture-bearing stratum of society and the new Great Power's need to assert itself can be seen in Erik Dahlberg's engraving of the buildings of Sweden's Age of Greatness – *Svecia antiqua et hodierna* – which was designed to show foreigners 'how much that

is great and beautiful can be found in our Fatherland', even if what was shown on paper did not always come to fruition.

Sweden's gains at the Peace of Westphalia and Queen Kristina's coronation in 1650 also of course provided excuses for major festivities. Tellingly, Kristina had herself portrayed as Pallas, protecting Pax and Pietas, indicating that only Sweden's newly won position could ensure peace and Protestantism. For the same reason, the coronation procession went under a Roman triumphal arch, albeit only a wooden one.

Kristina's personality, intellectual and artistic interests, celibacy, conversion to Catholicism and residence in Rome have all fascinated posterity and inspired various interpretations. It can appear paradoxical, then, that Kristina has not left behind more permanent memorials in her native land. Part of the reason, undoubtedly, is the fire at Stockholm Castle in 1697, which led to a great deal being lost. But most important was the fact that, at her departure, Kristina took with her the greater part of the rich booty, especially Emperor Rudolf II's artworks and library, which the Swedes – almost symbolically – had looted in Prague, shortly before the peace settlement in 1648.

As far as Kristina was concerned, economic considerations played a part here, in so far as she later sold most of it, but by her actions she deprived Swedish national identity of the opportunity of lasting cultural influences. The loss was perhaps not catastrophic. Karl X Gustav's campaigns also resulted in booty: in 1655 Warsaw was plundered, in 1657 it was Cracow's turn and in 1657–60 Denmark, e.g. Frederiksborg and Kronborg castles.

During Karl XI's minority the nobility came into focus, symbolised by the inauguration in 1668 of *Riddarhuset* (the House of the Nobility), the nobility's new place of assembly, whose decoration hailed *arte et Marte* (Art and War) as Mother Svea's servants. *Riddarhuset* stands on its own as a joint undertaking: most of the aristocracy's efforts were directed towards their own projects, and two individuals, Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie (1622–86) and Carl Gustav Wrangel (1613–76), deserve to be singled out. Both of them belonged to relatively new families which had worked their way up during Sweden's period of expansion into the Baltic and Poland.

De la Gardie was primarily a diplomat. He led the great diplomatic mission to Paris in 1646 and was for a time Kristina's declared favourite. He married Karl X Gustav's sister and became leader of the regency government during Karl XI's minority. As Sweden's biggest landlord he fulfilled expectations, built a large number of manor-houses and collected artworks, but lost most of them when he was held responsible for Sweden's weakness during the war against Denmark from 1675 to 1679.

More interesting, therefore, is his patronage as leader of the regency, especially his activities as chancellor of Uppsala University, the stronghold of Gothicism. On the one hand, he erected an academy for the sons of the nobility, with instruction in modern languages and knightly sports – an equivalent to the Danish academy at Sorø – and on the other hand, he saw to it that memorials of past times, from runestones through church inventories to medieval manuscripts were declared the property of the crown, and a College of Antiquities was set up to look after and catalogue them, while the clergy were required to send reports there. Finally, de la Gardie bought manuscripts on his own account for the university, including writings in Old Norse from Iceland.

Carl Gustav Wrangel, on the other hand, was primarily a general who distinguished himself particularly against Denmark and Poland in the 1650s. In 1648 he became governor-general of Pomerania and most of his possessions were situated south of the Baltic, but from 1654 he had Skokloster in the vicinity of Stockholm built as his family's main seat, and as his own memorial for posterity. Unfinished inside and never permanently inhabited, by the eighteenth century Skokloster had become, through marriage and inheritance, a place of storage for the best possessions of the Brahe and Bielcke families as well. Accordingly, Skokloster's rich collections of furniture and handicrafts, paintings, books, weapons and tools give a unique insight into the aristocratic culture of the Age of Greatness. Some of these items are the spoils of war, some are gifts, but most of them were purchased. Worthy of special mention are the armoury and the turner's workshop, which not only illustrate the seventeenth century's fascination with technology, but also have pedagogical aspects in that the children's instruction at the lathe was intended to inculcate patience, a desirable trait for future leaders.

If one turns from the regency government to the royal family, the main building of the period is Drottningholm outside Stockholm, built between 1661 and 1682 for the Queen Mother Hedwig Eleonora. The design, the surrounding park and the state apartments, e.g. the queen mother's bedroom, all show the influence of French models, which also find expression in the sun allegories of Karl XI as Phoebus Apollo and Phaeton. The Swedes' political dependence on France, which became uncomfortably obvious during the war with Denmark from 1675 to 1679, strengthened their desire to create a style of their own which could express the singularity of the Swedes or Goths, and the decade of the 1680s sees the emergence of the North Star, 'an unshakeable centre which never declines', as a new symbol.

The main aim of Karl XI and Karl XII during their period of autocratic rule was to modernise the royal palace of Tre Kronor. A first step was the new north wing designed by Nicodemus Tessin the Younger between 1692 and 1695, the walls of which survived the fire of 1697 and were reused, as work began immediately on the new Stockholm Palace. Outwardly, the style was a Roman baroque classicism; in the interior, the models were borrowed from Versailles. After the outbreak of the Great Northern War in 1700, the pace of building was slow, and the defeat at Poltava in 1709 brought it to a standstill.

The conduct of the war and the increasing scarcity of resources are mirrored elsewhere in the art of the court. After Karl XII's victory at Narva in 1700, his mother had her state apartments at Drottningholm repainted. Black and gold, the colours of the dynasty's coat-of-arms, now made way for blue and gold, Sweden's national colours, and from 1706 onwards Karl XII had himself depicted with hair swept back and simply dressed in the ordinary soldier's blue-yellow uniform: a complete break with the traditional portraits of rulers in the French autocracy, and a symbolic model with much wider appeal.<sup>9</sup>

However, the degree to which this expresses a radical change in the way in which the decision-maker saw himself is difficult to judge, for in the years after 1709, Tessin, whose position can be compared to that of Le Brun in France, prepared new plans for the centre of Stockholm. As a counterpart to the palace, a domed church was to be built for coronations and royal funerary monuments, surrounded by squares and buildings, including a large armoury for trophies of war. Tessin's architectonic visions, which were shown to Karl XII in 1718, three months before the king's death and the fall of the Baltic empire, are a fascinating proof of the power of symbols.

Developments in Denmark during the same period were marked by the defeats at the hands of the Swedes and by a reduced economic potential. The immediate effect of the Torstensson War was a strengthening of the nobility, expressed in Frederik III's coronation oath of 1648, which made the nobility constitutionally superior to the king. In the 1650s there are signs that the Danish high nobility felt the need for a visible symbol extending beyond their own estates and churches with noble sepulchres. One example is the so-called council of the realm series from 1657, in which members of the council are depicted in copperplate. Another is an engraving of 1659 showing Hans Lindenov's bier, adorned with the national flag.

9 P. Ericsson, 'Bilden av suveränen', in S. Dahlgren *et al.*, *Makt och Vardag* (Stockholm, 1993), pp. 148–74.

However, these were isolated initiatives, and the Danish nobility as a whole have been characterised as a closed and intellectually backward-looking caste who, however well travelled and educated they may have been, nevertheless were primarily interested in genealogical, historical and theological studies.<sup>10</sup> Among the few exceptions were Corfitz Ulfeldt (1606–64) and Hannibal Sehested (1609–66), both of whom married illegitimate daughters of Christian IV and attained the highest posts in the land: the former as royal steward, the latter as viceroy of Norway. However, Sehested's poisonous reforms in Norway and his support for the old view of Norway as a royal inheritance were seen as posing a threat to fellow members of the noble estate, and as a consequence he was brought down in 1650.

In Corfitz Ulfeldt's case, his boundless corruption and self-promotion as an international aristocrat, e.g. as an ambassador to France and the Netherlands on the lines of Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie's Paris embassy, managed to unite Frederik III and the council against him, so that in 1651 Ulfeldt chose to flee to Sweden. However, the fall from grace of the two sons-in-law meant that the high nobility had thrown away an opportunity for renewal. This is perhaps best exemplified in the council's approval of the war against Sweden in 1657, which led to the loss of what is now southern Sweden.

The consequence of the defeat was the introduction of the autocracy, which ensured the Danish monarch a concentration of power without parallel in Europe. In terms of the Royal Law from the end of the 1660s, the king was only committed to three points: he was to adhere to the Augsburg Confession, he was to preserve the kingdom undivided, and he might not reduce his own autocratic powers. In return he was granted unconditional rights, at least on paper, and consequently the accession of a new monarch in 1670 was exploited as an opportunity to mark the increased status of the monarchy.

These efforts yielded three results. First, a new ceremonial was introduced. Christian V was acclaimed king, on the French model, immediately after his father's death, and the traditional coronation was replaced by an anointing which was of purely religious significance. Whereas previously the leaders of the nobility had placed the crown on the head of the elected king, the autocratic monarch now entered the church with the crown on his head:

<sup>10</sup> S. Heiberg, 'Kongelig reputation og adelig kultur', in C. D. Nielsen (ed.), *Struktur og Funktion. Festschrift for Erling Ladewig Petersen* (Odense, 1994), pp. 187–200; M. Olin, *Det karolinska Porträttet* (Stockholm, 2000).



a symbolic break with French constitutional practice and its later imitations in Sweden, Prussia and Russia.<sup>11</sup> At the same time the ceremony of anointment was moved from the capital, where the coronation procession had been a popular festival, to the royal chapel at Christian IV's palace of Frederiksborg, where entry was reserved for the chosen few.

This exclusivity reflected the other innovation: the setting up of a structured nobility of counts (*grever*) and barons (*friherrer*), whose role was to weaken the old hereditary nobility and to create in their place an economically privileged court nobility appointed by the king. This initiative was accompanied by several new rankings, and the result, in the course of two generations, was to mould society into a hierarchical pyramid, in which the ordinary nobility without official employment ranked under middle-class office-holders, just as certain offices automatically ensured their holders a personal or hereditary noble title.

The third strand in the autocracy's divide-and-rule policy was the system of decorations. The royal family already had the Order of the Elephant, which can be traced back to Christian I's Catholic Order of Mary of 1464. This was 'revived' by Frederik II in 1580 and subsequently conferred at regular intervals. At his coronation in 1648, for example, Frederik III had bestowed this mark of royal favour on no fewer than thirty-two Danish noblemen, but afterwards it was increasingly reserved for foreigners, which meant that there was now a need for a rather less distinguished decoration, primarily for domestic use.

Accordingly, immediately after the birth of the crown prince in the autumn of 1671, the Order of the Dannebrog was awarded for the first time. The symbol chosen was the Danish flag, which according to legend had fallen from heaven during the conquest of Estonia in 1219. It was a brilliant move politically, identifying the autocracy with the nation, and putting Christian V on an equality with Valdemar the Victorious, the greatest of medieval war leaders and lawgivers.

Later, new regulations were enacted for both orders, and on the model of the English Order of the Garter, a chapel dedicated to the order was set up in the palace church at Frederiksborg and the experiment was tried of having annual celebrations of the order. Even if these proved to be too expensive to implement, the Order of the Elephant in particular gained some prestige in

<sup>11</sup> G. Boesen, *Danmarks Riges Regalier* (København, 1986), pp. 109f; H. Villius (ed.), *Karl XII* (Stockholm, 1960), p. 18; I. Polynina and N. Rakhmanov, *The Regalia of the Russian Empire* (Moscow, 1994), pp. 114f.

foreign parts.<sup>12</sup> The contrast with Sweden is quite striking, as most of the Swedish monarchs up to the time of Karl XI also conferred their own orders of chivalry,<sup>13</sup> but not until 1748, when the Baltic empire was no more, and as a result of Adolf Fredrik's accession to the throne, was an order of chivalry instituted, for both civil and military distinction, which Gustav III would later dole out on a large scale. Was this difference between Denmark and Sweden due to the frequent changes of royal dynasty in Sweden, or does it express an animus against the aristocracy of the Age of Greatness?

Daily life under the Danish autocracy became significantly more spartan than Christian V's anointing might lead us to suppose, for the desire for revenge against Sweden and her ally the duke of Holstein-Gottorp necessitated the maintenance of a standing army as well as the expansion of the fleet. Accordingly there was no money for a new residential palace, although several projects were mooted, and even in his secret testament of 1698 to Frederik IV, Christian V named this as one of the most pressing tasks to be undertaken when better times arrived. Instead, the royal family contented themselves with modernising Christian IV's small and homely Rosenborg, which was also done out as a treasure chamber and shown to foreign ambassadors at their *audience particulière*, which, to the surprise of other countries, preceded the official audience at København Castle.<sup>14</sup>

Larger-scale building works were nevertheless undertaken: for example, the new building which that learned and passionate connoisseur of art, Frederik III, initiated to house his library, art gallery and museum of arms and uniforms. The main feature was the library hall, modelled on that of Cardinal Mazarin in Paris, but the art gallery was also worthy of note. Frederik III had obtained the nucleus of it, especially as regards the specimen collection, from the physician and runic researcher Ole Worm, who, as a professor at København University, had utilised many natural objects in his teaching demonstrations.

Worm had built up his collections with considerable help from the burghers of København, the Danish nobility and foreign colleagues. With his purchase of Worm's collections, Frederik III in a manner of speaking took

12 M. Bencard and T. Kaarsted, *Fra korsridder til Ridderkors. Elefantordenens og Dannebrogordenens historie* (Odense, 1993).

13 Conforti and Walton (eds.), *Sweden*, cat. nos. II, 49.

14 J. Hein, 'Das Grüne Kabinett im Schloss Rosenborg – Schatzkammer oder Raritäten-Kabinett', in A. Grote (ed.), *Macrocosmos in Microcosmo. Die Welt in der Stube. Zur Geschichte des Sammelns 1450 bis 1800* (Opladen, 1994), pp. 323–37; P. Nordenval, *Kungliga Serafimerorden 1748–1998* (Stockholm, 1998).

over the role of patron, not uninfluenced by his vassal and co-regent Duke Frederik III of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp (1597–1659), who was married to Marie Elisabeth of Saxony (1610–85). Remaining neutral for as long as possible in the conflict between Denmark and Sweden, and also benefiting from his geographical location due north of the war-torn and starving continent, the duke invested in an embassy to Persia which was intended to secure Denmark's trade with the Orient as well as helping to build up collections and recruit artists and scientists. In particular, the Saxon Adam Olearius's description of the Persian expedition (1639) and his catalogue of the duke's art gallery (1666) – both of which were printed in German and therefore reached a wider public than the Latin publications of the learned class – placed Gottorp on the cultural map and set in motion a competition which grew in intensity as the duchy became politically independent.

Gottorp's prestige in the cultural field presumably goes a long way towards explaining why Christian V – a lover of the great outdoors, a born horseman and a passionate hunter – completed the cultural building project initiated by his learned father in København and had the contents of the Danish art collection published in a Latin catalogue in 1696, with expanded second and third editions in 1699 and 1710. This rivalry between Denmark and Gottorp perhaps also explains the contrast with Stockholm, where the royal art collection, after the departure of Queen Kristina, does not seem to have played the same prominent role in the guided tour of noteworthy objects that was offered to guests. A permanent feature of the tour, appropriately for the Swedish Great Power, was the Royal Armoury, while private art galleries and collections of natural objects are mentioned instead in the university town of Uppsala.<sup>15</sup>

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the Queen Dowager Hedwig Eleonora, who was interested in art and who personified the Swedish royal house during the minority of Karl XI and again during Karl XII's long absences, laid out a treasury in her pleasure palace of Ulriksdal for the display of valuable objects belonging to the royal house. The incentive probably came from her parents, Frederick III and Marie Elisabeth of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp. After the Danish conquest of the duchy during the Great Northern War, the Gottorp collections were taken as trophies of war to København.

15 Staatsarchiv Coburg LA Nr. 1647 in [Hieronimus Brückner], *Reise Diarium oder Beschreibung dessen, was bey der Anno 1670 von Hertzog Albrechts zu Sachsen Gotha Fürstl. Durchl. Nacher Hollstein, Dennemarck und Schweden gethanen Reyse von Tage zu Tage passirt und vorgangen.*

## The eighteenth century

As a result of the peace treaty of 1720, following the end of the Great Northern War, Sweden by and large lost all her Baltic and German possessions (except Swedish-Pomerania north of the river Peene), while Denmark managed to eliminate Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp and secure her southern border. In retrospect, a balance was struck between two roughly equal parts of Scandinavia, both of which were reduced to second-rate powers in the European system of alliances in which Russia, Britain and later Prussia would soon assert themselves as Great Powers alongside France and the Holy Roman Emperor.

For the Swedes, however, their loss of influence represented a blow to their self-image, and their ties to the past remained strong, so that future developments in Sweden were marked by changing constitutions and several wars of revenge. By contrast, the autocracy was preserved in Denmark, which remained neutral and was to enjoy a long period of peace for the remainder of the century.

Despite these superficial differences, the governments of both lands faced the same demands as regards economic and social forces, which is reflected in the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment and conveyed ever greater political importance on the 'third estate'.

In Sweden the peace settlement of 1720 led to the introduction of a form of constitutional monarchy in which continuity was personified by Karl XII's sister Ulrika Eleonora the Younger, wife of the insignificant Frederick of Hesse. As the couple were childless, Adolf Fredrich of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp – husband of the strong-willed and politically active Lovisa Ulrika, a sister of Frederick the Great of Prussia – was chosen as their successor. Accordingly, it was not until the accession of Gustav III in 1772 that Sweden once again had a monarch who had been born and brought up in the country, and this would prove to be a political asset for the monarchy.

The new constitution confirmed the privileged status of the nobility, but could not prevent a gradual economic levelling-out between the estates, and from the 1730s onwards two political groupings emerged, each with its own rudimentary party organisation: the Hats and the Caps. The initiative lay with the Hats, who spoke for the high nobility and held power most of the time. They wanted revenge against Russia, which presupposed a renewal of Sweden's traditional alliance with France, including also the introduction of mercantilism and the setting up of manufactories.

The Caps were founded as their counterpart, and in the 1760s they acted as the mouthpieces of the lower nobility and the burghers. They wanted peace, they were in part pro-British in their orientation, they were against high state taxes and regulations on trade, and during their short period in power in 1766 they forced through the ordinance regarding freedom of the press which, more than anything else, has given this period the name of the Age of Liberty. The complicated course of events, which we will not go into in detail here, was also influenced by bribery from overseas. The decisive factor was that the Age of Liberty promoted open debate, and that the Hats' political and cultural links with France were taken over, and if anything, strengthened, after 1772, when Gustav III introduced a form of autocracy in which the right to declare war and to raise taxes remained with the estates. It was not French cultural ideals but Gustav III's many promotions to the nobility and admissions to burgher status after the war against Russia in 1789 that led to the aristocratic conspiracy which cost him his life in 1792.

The biggest task undertaken during this period was the completion and fitting-out of Stockholm Palace, which lasted from 1727 to the 1770s. The model was the latest French fashion, introduced by imported French artists as well as by a regular stream of Swedes who had been sent on study-trips to Paris, where there was by now a colony of Swedish artists. Moreover, an academy of art on the French model was founded in Stockholm in 1738. Accordingly, hardly any other country had a more direct and fruitful contact with rococo France than Sweden. The result was an original, moderate and charming symbiosis of high quality which permeated art and crafts and spread from the court to the nobility and the bourgeoisie. It is a testament to French ideals that there were already shops in Stockholm around 1750 which could furnish a fashionable home from cellar to attic, just as at the same time Swedish furniture, in full compliance with the doctrines of mercantilism, was exported to the German towns on the Baltic coast and to St Petersburg.

The leading figure behind this consciously organised 'development of products and taste' was Carl Gustav Tessin (1695–1770), the third generation of a dynasty of architects, who functioned as politician, diplomat and arbiter of taste at court. As ambassador to Paris from 1738 to 1741, Tessin put together a collection of paintings and drawings which financial problems forced him to sell in 1749. Thanks to Queen Lovisa Ulrika they ended up with Gustav III and came to form the kernel of the collection in his gallery in Stockholm Palace, which was opened to the public in 1780 as a forerunner of the National Museum of Sweden. Tessin's paintings illustrate both the continuity of ideals and the shift in patronage from the nobility to the royal family.

If we turn to Denmark, circumstances were rather different here and developments took other forms. On the one hand, the peace that followed the Great Northern War in 1720/21, which secured the southern border, was a victory for the autocracy; on the other hand, the autocracy was only unlimited in theory, not in practice, and Frederik IV (1699–1730) was the last king who controlled the reins of power in earnest, while Christian VI (1730–46) became dependent on his ministers. At the same time a deep gulf had developed between the law-making and the sentencing authorities, and by the same token there was a certain degree of public debate about the form of the constitution and its basic tenets. For instance, Ludvig Holberg had expressed the view in his writings on constitutional law that the Danish autocracy was built upon a contract between prince and people.

Nor was there any serious opposition, and even if the autocracy in ideology and ceremonial behaved throughout the century as an autocracy by the grace of God, the monarchy avoided real conflicts in relation to important groups: first of all the estate owners then, later, the burghers. On the other hand, the higher aristocracy actually owed their privileges to the autocracy, and not least that group of leading nobles and internationally orientated excellencies who took responsibility for running the country during the reign of the alcoholic Frederik V (1746–66). The majority of these leading noble families were north German, many having connections with Schleswig and Holstein, and until now their German speech had not been a problem. But when the economic success of the 1760s also reached the bourgeoisie, bringing demands for middle-class freedoms and the abolition of the privileges of the nobility, these were expressed in Danish, and suddenly there emerged the idea of a national identity based on a common language, fatherland and historical past.

This development came about not least because Christian VII (1766–1808) was mentally ill, which meant that others soon came to rule in his name. First was the German Johann Friedrich Struensee, the king's personal physician and the queen's lover, who introduced freedom of the press. After him, following a coup d'état in 1772, came the king's stepmother and half-brother, who mollified the middle classes by becoming demonstratively Danish. Lastly, after yet another coup d'état in 1784, came Christian VII's son, Crown Prince Frederik, who ushered in a period of reform without however being able to resolve the linguistic battle between Danish and German, which was to become a slowly ticking time-bomb under the Danish-Norwegian-German joint monarchy.

For the Danish autocracy too, an up-to-date royal residence was the great aim, which it took generations to realise. The building of Christiansborg in

København began in 1734, the royal family moved in in 1740 and the interior was largely completed when the palace burnt down in 1794, a national catastrophe that would have long-lasting repercussions for Danish identity. The exterior of Christiansborg was modelled on German-Italian architecture, with a dash of French influence, mediated via Munich and Dresden. It reflected Denmark's traditional placing in the European system of alliances as much as the taste of Christian VI and his German-born queen, both of whom, as pietists, were nervous of French frivolity.

From 1740 until 1764, however, Denmark entered into the French system of alliances, and from the 1750s French taste also became dominant in København, symbolised by the recruitment of the architect Nicolas-Henri Jardin and the sculptor Jacques François Saly, who introduced early new classicism. At the same time, an academy of art on the French model was set up. The ostensible motive was the three-hundredth anniversary of the royal family's accession to the throne and the building of a new district with palaces of the nobility, centred around an eight-cornered *place royale* with an equestrian statue of the jovial Frederik V.

The main instigators of the new initiatives were the foreign minister Johann Hartwig Ernst von Bernstorff, formerly ambassador to Paris, and senior court marshal Adam Gottlob Moltke, Frederik V's favourite and indispensable aide. Both Bernstorff and Moltke had their own residences furnished according to French taste, and Bernstorff was also patron of a literary circle including, among others, the German poet Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock; while Moltke assembled a cabinet of objects from the natural world, as well as an art collection. Moreover, he became president of the new Academy of Art and was presumably the prime mover behind the new picture gallery at Christiansborg Palace, which offered limited access to the public from 1766.

They also tried their hand at manufacture; for instance, Moltke was one of the driving forces behind the Nøstetangen glassworks in Norway, whose engraved cups became superb court art. To a lesser degree they also tried to sow in København what Tessin had harvested in Stockholm. This was not without effect there too, but the results only became evident during the favourable trading conditions after 1780, and in Denmark, French ideas of taste met with stronger competition from England and Germany than they did in Sweden.

In retrospect, what strikes one most about developments between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries is the factor of delay. In terms of timing, quality and size, the permanent staff of artists and craftsmen maintained by

royalty and the higher aristocracy were in place at an earlier date in Denmark than in Sweden, but with the advent of Sweden's Baltic empire, the opposite picture emerged, and not until about 1800 can one talk of an approximate balance between the two. Irrespective of period, however, and even today, the spiritual advisors of royalty and the aristocracy appear in unchanged dress. A Danish clergyman wears a fluted ruff round his neck, the fashion that persisted until the 1620s, while his Swedish colleague wears a lace collar, the fashion from the 1620s onwards: two telling statements of national heritage and self-knowledge.



## Architecture, literature and the arts

ALLAN ELLENIUS

### Reformation period and the seventeenth century

A survey of Scandinavian architecture, arts and literature in early modern Europe has to focus mainly on the situation in Sweden and Denmark. Norway and Finland held a fairly modest position during the period under consideration.

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, the church lost its dominant position as a patron of the arts and the Scandinavian countries were exposed to the ideas of the Italian Renaissance, transmitted by artists particularly from the Netherlands. The immigrants were employed by the courts and the nobility for commissions in the field of architecture and the visual arts. Working as free masters, they had no obligations towards the guild system, a situation that was to bring about conflicts in the following century.

The reception of the Renaissance was reflected in the building and decoration of castles and manors. At Gripsholm in Sweden, built in 1537, the general character of the architecture has still much of the medieval tradition, with solid towers and an open court. The interiors testify to the influence of pattern-books used as models. There was also a series of paintings showing the fate of Virginia, the Roman woman, displaying the ideals of virtuous behaviour. Political propaganda at the Vasa court is shown in a number of woodcuts ordered by Gustav Vasa in Antwerp in 1524. At the castle of Kalmar, Hercules made his first appearance in Swedish art as an example of virtue.

In Denmark as in Sweden, the royal commissions set the pace and initiatives were taken by kings such as Frederik II and Christian IV. Hans van Paeschen, Antonius van Opbergen and Hans van Steenwinkel submitted designs in northern Renaissance style; important castles were Kronborg (1574), Frederiksborg (1608) and Rosenborg (1610). The lofty structure of Trinity church in Kristianstad was erected in 1617–28.

In Finland, Renaissance architecture was promoted by Duke Johan of Finland (later King Johan III), when building the castle at Turku (Åbo) in the 1560s, one of several fortifications from the Vasa period. Wooden architecture held a dominant position in Finland and town planning was carried out by using a grid pattern according to international fashion.

Portrait painting was the leading genre in the visual arts. State portraiture as developed by Anthonis Mor is clearly recognisable in the renderings of the founder of the Vasa dynasty, preserved in relief as well as in painting. In Stephen van der Meulen's portrait of Erik XIV, the king appears like the complete courtier as taken from Castiglione's *Il cortegiano*, a book that was also found in his library; splendid clothing and a formalised attitude contribute to the impression of detached grace. This character of style was to remain among royal and aristocratic circles up to the time of Queen Kristina in Sweden. The first equestrian portrait was introduced in the country by Cornelius Arendtz and shows Gustav Adolf during the Thirty Years War (1636).

In Denmark, Christian II had been portrayed by leading foreign artists such as Dürer and Lucas Cranach. Jacob Binck made portraits of royalty in Sweden as well as in Denmark, while portrait painters at the court of Christian IV were Jacob van Doordt and Karel van Mander III.

Closely linked to political developments was sepulchral art and architecture as commissioned by the courts. A monument to the ambitions of the new national state in Sweden was the tomb of Gustav Vasa by Willem Boy for Uppsala Cathedral. The king is shown recumbant together with two of his consorts, and the monument is decorated with coat-of-arms representing the provinces of the country and combined with the coat-of-arms of the realm. Equivalent ones were created in Denmark; Cornelis Floris made tomb sculptures for Frederik I in Schleswig and for Christian III in the cathedral of Roskilde, pantheon of the Danish kings.

Of great importance to the development of art in seventeenth-century Sweden was the rise of the nobility to the summits of power. The dominant position of the estate was to put its stamp on artistic achievements, much in the vein of the idea of conspicuous consumption. Architects were called upon to design palaces in the capital as well as in the countryside. Prominent examples are Skokloster, the residence of Field Marshal Carl Gustav Wrangel and Venngarn, owned by the greatest Maecenas of the time, Count Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie. Leading architects were Jean de la Vallée and Nicodemus Tessin, father and son. Stylistic fashions changed, from late northern Renaissance to classicising and baroque tendencies; the House of the Nobility

in Stockholm, designed by Jost Vingboons in Palladian classicism and furnished with inscriptions and iconological sculptures, is a prominent example, as from the 1660s was the castle of Drottningholm, residence of Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora and designed by Tessin the Elder. A monumental culmination of the building activities in the Caroline era was the castle of Stockholm, a work by Tessin the Younger; the interiors were decorated throughout the eighteenth century. In København, the castle of Charlottenborg was built in Dutch baroque as a residence for the Danish governor of Norway (1672–7). In the early eighteenth century, Italian baroque became the dominating style.

Connected with manors and palaces were sumptuous gardens, noticed by foreign travellers and praised in literary eulogies. Gardening as a token of prestige contained grottoes, fountains, allegorical sculptures, portraits of Roman emperors as reminders of exemplary virtues, and greenhouses displaying exotic fruits. This Italianate kind of gardening was much in favour until new ideas were launched towards the second half of the eighteenth century, when the English garden was introduced in Scandinavia, as a reflection of a new kind of sensibility.

Among the portrait painters during the first half of the seventeenth century was the alderman in the painters' guild in Stockholm, Jacob Elbfas, a representative of late Mannerist painting. A new type of artist arrived, however, acquainted with modern ideas of social emancipation and attracted by the reputation of Queen Kristina as 'the Pallas of the North'. The new style introduced by van Dyck brought about a switch of fashion, as can be seen from works by David Beck and Sébastien Bourdon. In Beck's portrait of the queen from 1650, the setting is a garden in Venetian twilight; movement and a touch of sensualism have replaced the old formulas, and emblematic details are inserted as a reflection of popular novelty in courteous circles.

A conspicuous example of the ambitions of Christian IV was the sculptural decoration of the court at Frederiksborg. Adriaen de Vries, court sculptor to Rudolf II, created the fountain of Neptune (1611–23), intended as a homage to Denmark as a naval power and showing the king as a ruler of the sea. Political ideas also promoted a series of paintings for Kronborg by Gerrit van Honthorst, illustrating episodes in Danish history. The king also had his life and military actions commemorated in woven tapestries.

One of the Danish court painters was Abraham Wuchters, a Dutch artist who kept to his native realism in spite of the new tendencies that had been introduced around the middle of century. He also worked in Sweden but had to quit the field in the early 1660s when David Klöcker (Ehrenstrahl)

returned from his studies in Italy and became the protagonist of a new and colourful style in portrait painting.

While several foreign painters were but short-time visitors Ehrenstrahl remained in Sweden and became the leading painter during the Caroline era. He knew the language of baroque allegory and adapted his ideas to patriotic apotheoses in the House of the Nobility and at the castle of Drottningholm. His portraits cover most of the estates of the realm; state portraits and representations of the royal family do not exclude the remarkable likeness of a peasant, Per Olsson, from 1686, commissioned by the court and made according to the rules of *decorum* but nevertheless a lively characterisation of the model. In his hunting and animal pieces, cherished by the king, he had a forerunner in Govaert Camphuysen, who stayed in the country up to 1663.

The equivalent to Ehrenstrahl in the field of sculpture was Nicolaes Millich, a Flemish artist who created the nine muses and Apollo for Drottningholm castle and also made portraits for royal and aristocratic commissioners.

Still-life painting made a start in Sweden in the Caroline period. Cornelis van der Meulen combined still-life and portrait when rendering the sculptured busts by Millich, showing prematurely deceased princes in the 1680s, together with emblems of transience. He also tried the genre of *tromp l'œil* painting, like Ehrenstrahl; while Johan Johnsen worked in the tradition of Dutch flower and still-life painting and even approached the field of scientific illustration by portraying rare flowers and butterflies. Christian Thum, finally, was an alderman of the guild and made several works in the Dutch *vanitas* tradition, as did van der Meulen.

Portraits of scholars were introduced in the early seventeenth century by Arendt Lamprechtz who painted Johannes Messenius, a professor and historian, combined with attributes of his learned profession. In the 1620s, the antiquarian and mystic Johannes Bureus was represented with concentrated gaze and realistic appearance together with symbols of his eschatological ideas. Ehrenstrahl portrayed Georg Stiernhielm, poet and natural philosopher, in a classical landscape (1663) while Olof Rudbeck, physician and polyhistor, was shown in his library, surrounded by books, an anatomical illustration and astronomical sphere. He was painted by Martin Mijtens the Elder in 1696, who was trained in the Dutch tradition. Interior decoration of the churches offered a rich field for painters and sculptors, from altarpieces and pulpits to epitaphs and portraits of the priesthood.

Ceiling painting was introduced in royal and aristocratic environments, and emblematic imagery inspired by Continental literature affected the decoration; in palace chapels, to take an example, the use of heart symbolism

with roots in Catholic emblem books, was an indication of religious currents alien to the dominance of orthodox Lutheranism.

An important part of the artistic activities of the time was played by the patriotic projects of illustration. In the 1660s, Erik Dahlbergh, quartermaster-general of the Swedish Army, initiated the *Svecia antiqua et hodierna*, a collection of copper engravings that was to show buildings and antiquities of the country in the tradition of topographical predecessors in the Holy Roman Empire. The preparatory drawings of manors, gardens and natural settings have proved invaluable to research in seventeenth-century environments. The Board of Antiquities, founded in 1666, sent out draughtsmen to record the antiquities of the country, inspired by the 'Gothic' legacy. At Uppsala, Olof Rudbeck and his son started projects that aimed at documenting the fauna and flora of regions as far as Lapland. An impressive outcome was the series of more than 200 watercolours carried out around 1700 and showing birds in natural size and portrayed with a painstaking acuity.

Landscape painting made slow progress in the Scandinavian countries, the first example in Sweden having been executed as early as 1535 by Urban Målare and showing a topographical panorama of Stockholm illuminated by a meteorological phenomenon which was interpreted as a portent. The Dutch painter Allaert van Everdingen travelled in the north around 1650 and painted forests and torrents from Norway and Sweden. The birth of a national landscape in Sweden, however, can be traced back to the 1670s, when Ehrenstrahl created the impression of an indigenous sunrise that did more than merely repeat international formulas.

The growing military state of Sweden saw an important upsurge in sepulchral art and architecture. Christian and humanistic ideas combined to endow the monuments with a rhetorical message that was also reflected in orations and academic dissertations on the advantages of virtue. The chapel to Gustav Adolf at the Riddarholm church in Stockholm set the pace in 1633 and was followed by a series of sepulchral monuments to warriors as well as to civil servants. Among the most conspicuous ones were those commemorating Field Marshal Herman Wrangel at Skokloster (1630s), Admiral of the Realm Carl Carlsson Gyllenhielm in Strängnäs (1650s), Chancellor of the Realm Axel Oxenstierna in the church of Jäder (1640s) and the monument to Field Marshal Lars Kagg at Floda, a display of iconological figures completed by Carlo Carove in 1667. Traditional symbols of life and death are abruptly combined with a martial iconography reflecting the profession of the warriors. At Drottningholm, galleries with paintings by Johan Filip Lemke depicted the victories of Karl X and Karl XI.

In the field of Swedish literature, an important beginning was made when Johannes Magnus in his *Historia de omnibus gothorum sveonumque regibus* (1554) erected a genealogical monument to his country, completed by his brother Olaus whose *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (1555) described the life and manners of a people far away in the wilderness of arctic regions. This 'Gothic' tradition was to leave its imprint on patriotic ideas for a long time, particularly in the Age of Greatness when it corresponded to far-reaching political ambitions and Olof Rudbeck published his *Atlantica* (1679–1702) in which he tried to prove that Plato's Atlantis was in fact his own native country. Although it was based on patriotic mythology, this astounding work also contained acute observations of natural phenomena carried out in the vein of Francis Bacon and his principles of scientific acuity.

The 'father of Swedish literature' was Georg Stiernhielm who combined his career as a philosopher in the Stoic tradition with poetic exercises. His masterpiece was *Hercules*, written in Swedish hexameter and published in 1658. The hero at the crossroads represented a piece of humanistic poetry in its own right but was also a pedagogical parable, a kind of moral lesson for the young nobility who had watched the introduction of new social and aesthetic fashions at the time of Queen Kristina. A wealth of Latin poetry was produced in Sweden as well as in Finland, often to congratulate graduates at the universities. In Norway, Peter Dass wrote his *Nordlands Trompet*, describing the people in the north. In the Caroline period, poets such as Gunno Dahlstierna and Christoffer Leijoncrona represented the international baroque, adapted to the Swedish situation. The first piece of lyrical poetry in the country, *Odae sveticae*, was produced by Samuel Columbus in 1674. Famous for his love of freedom and Swedish nature was Lars Wivallius, while Haquin Spegel introduced the genre of hexaameron literature in the country, in Denmark represented by Anders Arrebo and his epic on the Creation. A court theatre was beginning to emerge in Stockholm.

The 'father' of the Finnish written language and literature was the Reformer Mikael Agricola (c. 1510–57). The Reformation emphasised the importance of national language, and a number of vernacular ecclesiastical writings were published, which marked the first golden age of the Finnish national culture. In addition to his *ABC Book* and the large *Biblical Prayer Book*, he translated the New Testament (1548) and a quarter of the Old Testament (1551–2) into Finnish. His successor as a bishop of Turku, Paavali Juusten (c. 1520–75), was a diligent author. He wrote *Catalogus et ordinaria succession episcoporum Finlandensium* and an account of his diplomatic negotiations in Russia 1569–72, which was translated into several languages. The last significant Finnish

churchman of the Reformation period, Ericus Erii Sorolainen (c. 1546–1625), published several works, the most important of them a two-volume collection of sermons based on German sources comprising 2,200 pages in all (1621–5).

Other authors contributed also to the budding renaissance of Finnish literature. Jacobus Petri Finno compiled the first Finnish hymn-book (1583) and a year earlier a collection of songs *Piae cantiones* had been published. Marcus Henri Helsingius published an anti-Calvinist *Elenchus* (1603) and Johannes Messenius wrote the monumental *Scandia illustrata*, a smaller history of Finland and *Chronicon episcoporum per Sveciam, Gothiam et Finlandiam* (1611). In the same year Sigfrid Aronus Forsius, a professor of astronomy who also had a penchant for the neo-Platonic, wrote his *Physica*, which ended up with a hymn to Nature and the Creation.

### The eighteenth century

By the early eighteenth century and the wars of Karl XII, times were not favourable to the arts in Sweden. In portrait-painting, Ehrenstrahl's style survived although reduced to stern formulas through painters such as David von Krafft and Johann David Schwartz. Emigrating pupils of Ehrenstrahl even founded a Swedish school of painting in England (Michael Dahl, Hans Hysing).

Things changed for the better once more when Guillaume Taraval, the French painter, was called on to become a teacher at the new Academy of Art (1735), primarily in order to supply the interiors of the Stockholm palace with decorations. A Danish Academy of Art was inaugurated at Charlottenborg in 1754, due to strong influence from France and with the Swedish painter Carl Gustaf Pilo among the teachers. A modern connoisseur in Sweden was Count Carl Gustaf Tessin who bought paintings from Boucher and Chardi in Paris and also amassed a distinguished collection of drawings. In portraiture, a national tradition was gradually established through names such as Gustaf Lundberg, an expert in pastels, Lorens Pasch the Younger and Alexander Roslin; educated in France, they were busily engaged by both court and aristocracy. State portraits in the time-honoured tradition were made throughout the century, whereas the likenesses of peasants were free from older conventions. In Denmark, Jens Juel was a sensitive portrait and landscape painter; he was a professor at the Academy of Arts in København, an office also held by Nicolai Abildgaard. On the basis of studies in Rome, he became the leading figure of Danish neoclassicism and paved the way for the heyday of Danish painting in the nineteenth century.

In architecture, the baroque tradition was replaced by new inspiration from foreign sources, mostly France. Carl Hårleman introduced the *maison de plaisance*, a type of manor representing a more intimate relation to gardens and natural surroundings, testimonies also to a current change of life and fashion. Hårleman was succeeded by Carl Fredrik Adelcrantz who worked in the same style and designed the Opera House in Stockholm and the picturesque China castle at Drottningholm. Jean Eric Rehn was a versatile designer and architect who took a mediating position, announcing a change to more classicising tendencies. This development was followed up by convinced neoclassical architects such as Erik Palmstedt who designed the theatre at Gripsholm and Louis Jean Desprez who made the designs for the Botanicum at Uppsala, a monument to Linnaeus. Desprez was also a stage designer.

Norwegian architecture had generally suffered from a lack of commissions from the landed gentry. Kristiania had been planned in 1624 according to the geometrical principles that had also been adopted in Swedish town planning around 1650. An example of rococo architecture is the church of Kongsberg 1761, belonging to the domestic wood-building tradition. The diocesan residence in Trondheim (1774–8) is a monumental example of town architecture in the same material. An important architectural enterprise in Finland was Sveaborg in Helsinki, designed as fortifications in 1748 by Augustin Ehrensvärd. Architects such as Palmstedt and Desprez also received commissions in Vaasa (Vasa) and Hämeenlinna (Tavastehus). In København, an octagonal plaza was designed by Nikolai Eigtved, with residences for families belonging to the nobility; in the centre of the plaza was an equestrian monument to Frederik V by Jacques Saly.

Among the artists connected to Gustav III was Johan Tobias Sergel, the sculptor, loyal to the neoclassical movement and a draughtsman of great distinction. Compared to his fellow artists abroad he also displayed a romantic vein which is a recurring trait in his drawings, so often filled with dramatic light and sensuality. His portrait sculpture of the king in Stockholm neatly sums up his own ambitions as well as those of other artists working in the radiance of a monarch who loved the theatre and who was himself a playwright: the attitude of the king is explicitly modelled on Apollo di Belvedere in the Vatican collections which makes the portrait a general homage to the arts and the cultural life of this period.

As has been hinted at, a budding interest in Swedish nature had occasionally appeared in literature and the arts. The first landscape painter of renown was, however, Elias Martin who had studied in France and who spent twelve years in England. His oil paintings have a distinctively romantic flavour,



while his watercolours with motifs from Stockholm and ironworks in central Sweden belong to the topographical tradition. Martin had a keen sense for atmosphere; his handling of light and shade anticipate later trends in landscape painting. A warm sincerity prevails in his religious images, especially his illustrations to the Lord's Prayer.

In the graphic arts, Jean Eric Rehn proved his versatility and even made illustrations for scientific works such as the publications edited by the Royal Academy of Sciences. Per Gustaf Floding linked up with seventeenth-century iconographical traditions when, in a copper engraving, he depicted the four estates of the realm, gathered around King Adolf Fredrik, honoured as a patron of the arts.

Due to the growth of literacy, literature developed significantly in the eighteenth century. From the 1730s, Olof von Dalin became the leading figure of the Swedish literary establishment. With a critical mind he disclaimed the 'Gothic' legacy in his historical writings, wrote tragedies as well as comedies, pastoral poetry and popular songs and edited *Then Swänska Argus*, the first weekly of the country. Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht introduced as a poet a new sensibility and emotional engagement combined with an ardent commitment to the role of women in cultural life. Gustaf Philip Creutz wrote pastoral poetry with a sense for subtle moods and a skilful handling of metrical structure, important also as an example for later writers such as Johan Henrik Kellgren and Bengt Lidner. Kellgren favoured the ideas of the Enlightenment and was a member of the Swedish Academy ever since it was inaugurated by Gustavus III in 1786. A witty critic, he gained an influential position as an arbiter of taste, particularly through his reviews of theatre performances. Lidner indulged in pre-romantic moods of a melodramatic character.

The great name in Danish literature was Ludvig Holberg. After having been a professor of Latin eloquence and history he developed, as a characteristic trait, his sceptical rationalism. He wrote twenty-five comedies in the Danish language, with moralising ambitions and coloured by his ironic wit. In Finland Henrik Gabriel Porthan, a professor at Turku, held a prominent position by publishing *De poesi Fennica* (1766–78), *Dissertatio historiam Bibliothecae Regiae Academiae Aboensis* (1772–87) and *De scepticismo historica* (1792). He is also known as 'the father of Finnish history'.

Emanuel Swedenborg belonged to those Swedish writers and intellectuals who exerted an influence outside the boundaries of the realm. By combining platonism, private dreams and Rudbeckian fantasies with eighteenth-century rationalism he created an interpretation of the Bible and a visionary world of great originality.

Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) shared with Swedenborg the training in empirical sciences but never surrendered to mysticism. Travelling in the Swedish provinces in order to discover natural resources, he wrote down his observations with the acuity of a naturalist; but he also described the natural settings in a way that can be seen as a kind of factual poetry. His commitment to nature has made an impact on the feeling for nature in his country ever since and has contributed to what has often been mentioned as a characteristic of the Swedish mentality.

A most original achievement, finally, is connected with the name of Carl Michael Bellman. He primarily produced parodical collections of songs based on the ceremonies in a fictitious order of fellow-drinkers. He created an impression of extreme spontaneity by using elements such as dialogues and the interplay of changing characters. A positive attitude to life and a sombre consciousness of death mingle in his songs and make them a landmark in Swedish literature.

## Music at the Danish and Swedish courts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

JOHN BERGSAGEL

HAM.: *The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;  
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.*

HOR.: *Is it a custom?*

HAM.: *Ay, marry is't:  
But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.*

W. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act 1, Sc. 4

It has been discussed whether *Hamlet*, written in c. 1600, reveals actual knowledge of the customs of the Danish court, in this case in residence at the castle of Kronborg in Helsingør (Elsinore), which, it is pointed out, had a few years previously, in 1585 and 1586, in the last years of Frederik II, been visited by Shakespeare's fellow actors Will Kempe, George Bryan and Thomas Pope.<sup>1</sup> If so, its few references to music, such as the above, are a quite inadequate representation of the richness of its musical life, especially as it was in Shakespeare's day at the court of Christian IV (1588–1648). Trumpets and drums were, of course, traditionally the essential visual and auditory expression of princely magnificence in both peace and war,<sup>2</sup> but during the latter part of the fifteenth and throughout the sixteenth century music's role in the life of the court was considerably increased.

<sup>1</sup> For example, P. Honan, *Shakespeare. A Life* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 281f.

<sup>2</sup> O. Kongsted, 'Den verdslige "rex splendens". Musikken som repræsentativ kunst ved Christian IVs hof', in S. Ellehøj (ed.), *Christian IVs Verden* (København, 1988), pp. 433–64.

When Christian I made his 'pilgrimage' to Rome in 1474, he came to an Italy that was experiencing a dynamic musical development. At the court of his brother-in-law Lodovico Gonzaga in Mantua, as well as that of Galeazzo Maria Sforza at Milan, where he also was an honoured guest, brilliant chapels were in the process of being established, competing with each other for the services of the best singers and composers of the time, especially those imported from northern France and the Netherlands. At Rome, Pope Sixtus IV had just founded the famous Sistine Chapel and if the Danish king did in fact accept the pressing invitation of the king of Naples – the only king on the Italian peninsula – he would have experienced there one of the important musical centres of the period.

Such exposure to the best in modern music and the example of enthusiasm with which it was cultivated at the Italian Renaissance courts must have made an impression on Christian I, but with what result is not apparent. The first evidence of a body of singers, a *kantori*, at the Danish court is a list of payments to eighteen singers headed by a 'Herr Conrad', recently identified as Conrad Rein of Nürnberg (c. 1475–c. 1522), dated 1519 during the reign of Christian II (1513–23). Our first knowledge of the repertoire of the chapel is from two manuscript collections in the Royal Library in København, Gl. kgl. Samling 1872, 40 and 1873, 40, dated 1541 and 1556 respectively<sup>3</sup> – that is, from the reign of Christian III (1534–59). A large part of the contents of the two collections was taken over from the pre-Reformation Catholic tradition, represented by such excellent composers as Josquin des Prez, Heinrich Isaac, Jean Mouton, Antoine Brumel and Heinrich Finck. Even with the liberality that characterised the Reformation's art-loving humanists, however, it is doubtful that some of these compositions can have been used in the church services of Christian III's Lutheran court. The German compositions by, for example, Johann Walter and the three Kugelman brothers, on the other hand, are very much the expression of the new ideals of church music which followed with the Lutheran Reformation, officially accepted for Denmark-Norway in 1536 and in the same year also for Sweden-Finland. The music authorised by Frederik II (1559–88) for use in the parish churches of Denmark-Norway was printed in two well-edited books: a hymn-book, *Den danske Psalmebog* (1569), edited by Hans Thomissøn, and a *Graduale* (1573), edited by Niels Jespersøn, with the music of the liturgy. The bishop of Holár, Gudbrandur Thorlaksson, published *Ein ny Psalma Bok* (1589) and

<sup>3</sup> See H. Glahn (ed.), *Music from the Time of Christian III, Dania Sonans*, 4–5 (København, 1978, 1986).

*Grallari* (Gradual, 1594) in Icelandic on his own press. Music was not printed in the Swedish and Finnish hymn-books before the authorised editions of 1697 and 1702 respectively, at which time, in 1699, Thomissøn's hymn-book and Jespersen's *Graduale* were replaced in Denmark-Norway by a new hymn-book, *Den forordnede ny Kirke-Salmebog*, and a new Gradual, both edited by Bishop Thomas Kingo, a distinguished poet. These were long in use, especially in Norway. Though not a hymn-book, a collection of 'songs for church and school', edited by the Swedish-Finnish Theodoricus Petri and published under the name *Piae cantiones* in Greifswald in 1582 (and a second revised and enlarged edition in Rostock 1625), is of considerable historical importance.<sup>4</sup>

When Frederik II died in 1588 his chapel consisted of forty-seven members organised in three groups: fifteen trumpeters, twenty-three singers and nine instrumentalists. This establishment was taken over by his successor, his 11-year-old son, Christian IV, who began at once to evince the passionate interest in music that during his reign was to make the Danish court chapel one of the most brilliant amongst the princely courts of Europe in the late Renaissance.<sup>5</sup> He attracted leading musicians from various parts of Europe – from the Netherlands, England, the Holy Roman Empire, Italy and Poland – and by the time of his coronation in 1596 his chapel had increased to seventy-one members. His most notable acquisition in these early years was no doubt the internationally famous English lutanist and composer John Dowland (1563–1626), who served at the Danish court from 1598 to 1606. With a view to improving the standard of his native music he also began in 1599 to finance study tours abroad for several of his most talented young Danish musicians. Chief among these were Melchior Borchgrevinck (d. 1632), Mogens Pedersøn (c. 1583–1623) and Hans Nielsen (c. 1580–c. 1626), all of whom were sent to Venice to study with Giovanni Gabrieli, organist and composer of St Mark's in that city. On his return to København, Melchior Borchgrevinck published a two-volume collection of Danish and Italian madrigals, *Giardino novo* (1605–6),<sup>6</sup> while Hans Nielsen (alias Giovanni Fonteijo) and Mogens Pedersøn

4 *Piae Cantiones*, rev. and ed. G. R. Woodward, Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society (London, 1910); facs. edn *Documenta musicae Fennicae*, 10 (Helsingfors, 1967).

5 See A. Hammerich, *Musikken ved Christian den Fjerdes Hof* (København, 1892); J. Bergsagel, 'Christian IV', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 7th edn, 2000); N. Krabbe, *Træk af Musiklivet i Danmark på Christian IV's Tid* (København, 1988); N. Schiørring, *Musikkens Historie i Danmark*, 1 (København, 1977); S. Heiberg, *Christian IV and Europe: The 19th Art Exhibition of the Council of Europe, Denmark 1988* (København, 1988).

6 See Henrik Glahn et al. (eds.), *20 italienske madrigaler fra Melchior Borchgrevincks Giardino Novo*, 1–2 (København, 1605–6; Egtved, 1983).

(alias Magno Petreo) published collections of their own madrigals in Venice (1606 and 1608 respectively),<sup>7</sup> apparently as a kind of graduation exercise on the completion of their studies with Giovanni Gabrieli. The Italian madrigal thus came to enjoy a late flowering in Denmark – though not in Danish – in the early years of the seventeenth century.

At the beginning of the Kalmar War in 1611 Christian IV reduced his chapel and sent four of his best musicians, Mogens Pedersøn, Hans Brachrogge (d. c. 1638), Martinus Otto (d. 1620) and Jacob Ørn (d. c. 1653), to his sister, Queen Anne, in England, where they remained for three years. A number of madrigals and a few instrumental pieces by Danish composers have survived in English manuscripts as evidence of their visit.<sup>8</sup> In Denmark, however, it is an unfortunate fact that, though a fair amount of music by musicians associated with the brilliant court of Christian IV is known, no musical sources deriving directly from the chapel appear to have survived.<sup>9</sup> The music contained in *Pratum spirituale* (1620),<sup>10</sup> a substantial collection of church music by Mogens Pedersøn, who was assistant director of the royal chapel from 1618 until his death in 1623, would no doubt have been sung in the chapel, but in his preface the composer recommends it as material for the musical training of young people in the Latin schools, and hence by implication for use in the churches of the larger market towns in which the singing was led by students from the Latin schools. Indeed, most of the pieces in *Pratum spirituale* are polyphonic elaborations of hymn tunes and service music contained in the music books authorised for use in the churches of Denmark-Norway. It is obvious, too, that as a commercial enterprise Pedersøn's publication would have found its logical market in schools and parish churches.

The death of Mogens Pedersøn occurred as the royal chapel entered upon a period of decline which reflected Christian IV's reverses in the Thirty Years War. Nevertheless, for the wedding of his son, the 'elected prince' (that is, elected to succeed to the throne in due course as Christian V), to Magdalena Sibylla of Saxony in October 1634, Christian IV mounted a celebration

7 See J. P. Jacobsen (ed.), *Dania Sonans*, 2–3: *Madrigaler fra Christian IV's tid* (Egtved, 1967–9).

8 J. Bergsagel, 'Danish Musicians in England: Newly-discovered Instrumental Music', *Dansk Årbog for Musikforskning*, 7 (1973–6), pp. 9–21.

9 It has, however, been suggested that two incomplete sets of manuscript part-books preserved in the library of Herlufsholm School in southern Sjælland (now in the University Library of Southern Denmark in Odense) may have derived from the royal chapel during the reign of Christian IV. See J. Bergsagel, 'Foreign Music and Musicians in Denmark during the Reign of Christian IV', in A. Ø. Jensen and O. Kongsted (eds.), *Heinrich Schütz und die Musik in Dänemark zur Zeit Christians IV* (København, 1989), pp. 19–24.

10 See K. Jeppesen (ed.), *Dania Sonans*, 1: *Værker af Mogens Pedersøn* (København, 1933).

(*det store Bilager*) that was to restore the reputation of his court for magnificence. Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672), the greatest composer of the Lutheran world at that time, was brought from the court of Saxony to direct the music and distinguished musicians were imported to supplement the royal chapel.<sup>11</sup> It may have been expected that Schütz, who had composed the first German opera, *Dafne*, in 1627, would now introduce the new form in Denmark, but there is no evidence of his having done so. Indeed, though illustrated descriptions of the great celebration exist,<sup>12</sup> together with the texts of various of the events, which included ballets, pageants, processions and plays, the music that was directly associated with the festivities – with the exception of a single little canzonette – has not survived. Nevertheless, as a by-product of these celebrations, music can be identified which was composed by some of the excellent musicians who were assembled in København for this extravagant occasion and another, when Schütz returned to supervise the music at the more modest weddings of the twin princesses, Hedvig and Christiane, in 1642 and of prince Frederik (the later Frederik III) in 1643.<sup>13</sup>

After his marriage the ‘elected prince’, who had inherited his father’s love of music, maintained a chapel at his palace in Nykøbing, on the island of Falster, which included such good musicians as Jacob Foucart (d. 1641), Gabriel Voigtländer (d. 1643) and Matthias Weckmann (1619–74), a pupil of Schütz. The prince was never to be elected, however, as he died in 1647, the year before his father, and in 1648 the succession passed to his younger brother, Frederik III (1648–70). The music for the coronation of Frederik III was directed by Jacob Ørn as the culmination of thirty-five years of service in the chapel of Christian IV. He was retired the following year and died in 1653, the last of the outstanding Danish musicians from the chapel’s ‘good old days’.

In 1521 Sweden broke out of the Kalmar Union, which since 1397 had joined all the Scandinavian countries under the Danish crown, and in 1523 Gustav Vasa was elected king (reigning until 1560). He established a court in Stockholm and in 1554 each of his four sons was given a duchy and a

11 A. Ø. Jensen and O. Kongsted (eds.), *Heinrich Schütz und die Musik in Dänemark zur Zeit Christians IV* (København, 1989).

12 C. Ogier, *Ephemerides sive iter danicum svecium polonicum* (Paris, 1656); J. J. Holst, *Regiae Nuptiae* (København, 1637); J. J. Holst, *Triumphus Nuptialis* (København, 1648); see J. Clausen and P. F. Rist (eds.), *Memoirer og Breve*, 20 (København, 1914).

13 See, for example, H. Schütz’s *Anderer Theil kleiner geistlichen Concerten* (1639) and *Symphoniarum Sacrarum*, 2 (1647), and pieces reconstructed in H. Glahn and S. Sørensen (eds.), *The Clausholm Fragments* (København, 1974), which in addition to music by Schütz included music by J. R. Radeck (d. 1662), Melchior Schildt (1592–1667) and Heinrich Scheidemann (1596–1663), among others.

palace. Gustav Vasa and in particular his eldest son, Erik (later Erik XIV, 1560–8), were apparently musically talented and at all of these courts music was undoubtedly practised, but at none of them, not even at the royal palace in Stockholm, does there appear to have been a formal, salaried, musical establishment consisting of singers and instrumentalists in addition to the essential trumpeters and drummers.<sup>14</sup>

Such a chapel, under the leadership of a director of music, who was responsible for the artistic and economic administration of music at the court in all its forms, was established at the Swedish court by Gustav II Adolf (1611–32) in 1620, evidently in connection with his marriage to Maria Eleonora, the daughter of the Elector of Brandenburg. The court in Berlin enjoyed a rich musical life and the Swedish king was apparently determined that the young queen should not find Stockholm deficient in this respect. The new chapel consisted of twenty-three singers and instrumentalists, of whom several, including the director (*kapellmästare*), Bartholomeus Schultze (Praetorius) (c. 1590–1623), were directly taken there from the Elector of Brandenburg's chapel, as the latter was preparing to go to war and wished to reduce his chapel expenses. In addition there was a new 'German trumpet corps', as well as a small group of the existing Swedish players, *spellmän*, who remained on the payroll as a separate group until 1636.

The organist of the chapel was Andreas Düben (c. 1597–1662), like most of the members of the chapel a German, who had come to Stockholm in 1620 after six years of study with the famous Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck in Amsterdam. In Sweden he founded a dynasty of musicians that was to dominate Swedish musical life into the eighteenth century. In addition to being organist to the court and from 1640 until his death in 1662 director of the royal chapel, in 1625 he also became organist of the German church. The German settlement in Stockholm had been granted the privilege of maintaining a German-language church by Johan III (1568–92) in the late sixteenth century. The music-loving congregation appointed a succession of excellent organists, bought and copied a large repertoire of music and made the German church a centre of musical activity in the city parallel to the chapel

<sup>14</sup> T. Norlind and E. Trobäck, *Kungl. Hovkapellets Historia 1526–1926 (Minneskrift)* (Stockholm, 1926); C.-A. Moberg, 'Från kyrko-och hovmusik till offentlig koncert. Studier i Stormaktstidens svenska musikhistoria', *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift*, 1942:5 (Uppsala, 1942); L. Jonsson et al. (eds.), *Musiken i Sverige, 1: Från forntid till Stormaktstidens slut 1720* (Stockholm, 1994); K. Hedell, *Musiklivet vid de svenska Vasahoven, med fokus på Erik XIV:s hov (1560–68)*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Musicologica Upsaliensia, Nova Series, 20 (Uppsala, 2001).



at the royal court.<sup>15</sup> A third centre of music-making was the cathedral, *Storkyrkan*, and in 1650 Andreas Düben became organist here as well. As director of the royal chapel, organist to the court and organist of both the German church and the cathedral, his position in Swedish musical life was absolute. In these and other positions he was succeeded by his sons and grandsons and the music collected and copied by the Düben family, in particular by Andreas's son, Gustav (c. 1628–90), is a principal source not only of music at the Swedish court but of European music from the 1640s until well into the eighteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

Gustav Adolf was succeeded in 1632 by his 6-year-old daughter Kristina (1632–54, until 1644 under a regency), the last and in some ways most remarkable member of the Vasa dynasty, who was to earn for herself a special place in the history of music.<sup>17</sup> It is interesting to observe that at the same time as the Danish court was enjoying the presence of the greatest German musician of the period, the Swedish court turned towards France for new cultural impulses. In 1637 a French dancing master, Antoine de Beaulieu, was brought to Stockholm, where his teaching was so successful that the following year he was able to stage a ballet for the young queen's birthday. In 1644 the queen came of age and one of her first acts was to dispatch an embassy to the court of Versailles, which returned in 1646 with six string players and a singer, who were engaged as an ensemble separate from the German and Swedish musicians of the royal chapel. In the same year a special hall was built for the performance of ballet. When the philosopher Descartes arrived at the Swedish court in the autumn of 1649 as mentor to the intellectually ambitious young queen, his first assignment was the preparation of the scenario for a ballet *La Naissance de la paix*, which was performed in December 1649.

Though the texts and programmes of the ballets were usually printed, the music to which they were danced is not known, though it may be assumed that the volume of 200 French dance movements copied in the 1650s in the Düben collection represents music played by the French ensemble. Similarly, the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* by Gustav Düben, which was copied in 1651, is

15 The music library of the German Church is now in the library of the Musical Academy in Stockholm.

16 The 'Düben Collection' was deposited with the library of Uppsala University in 1732. See B. Grusnick, 'Die Dübensammlung. Ein Versuch ihrer chronologischen Ordnung', *Svensk Tidskrift för musikkforskning*, 46 (1964), pp. 27–82; 48 (1966), pp. 63–186.

17 See J. Bergsagel, 'Christina', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians; Cristina di Svezia e la musica*, Atti dei convegni Lincei, 138 (Rome, 1998), which includes: J. Bergsagel, 'Music at the Swedish Court of Queen Christina', pp. 9–20.

assumed to have been sung at the coronation of Queen Kristina on 20 October 1650, and thus seems to be the only music that can be connected with the elaborate celebrations that took place on that occasion.

Soon after the coronation had taken place the French musicians were incorporated into the Swedish-German court chapel under Andreas Düben and in 1652 the musical life of the court was further enlarged by the engagement of an entire troupe of Italian musicians under the leadership of Vincenzo Albrici (1631–96). Contemporary accounts refer to their performances of ‘comedies’, but what these may have been is not known and the music has not survived. There is no record of the production of anything that might be considered a real opera. The republican English government of Oliver Cromwell was represented at the court of Sweden during the years 1653–4 by the music-loving Bulstrode Whitelocke, who brought his own musicians from England. He admired the music at the Swedish court and entertained the queen in turn with English music. A collection of suites by Benjamin Rogers (1614–98)<sup>18</sup> in the Uppsala University Library and a collection of Italian music inscribed at Uppsala, 21 March 1653, now in the library of Christ Church, Oxford, probably testify to the love of music shared by the English ambassador and the Swedish queen.

Queen Kristina abdicated her throne in 1654. She was received into the Catholic church and settled in Rome, where she continued her active engagement in music and other cultural interests until her death in 1689. Her successors on the throne of Sweden, Karl X Gustav (1654–60) and Karl XI (1660–97, until 1672 under a regency), did not share her interest in music, though Karl XI’s queen, the Danish princess Ulrika Eleonora, was the centre of a circle of culturally interested and talented aristocratic women who cultivated poetry, literature, drama and music, especially in admiration of French models. The continuity of the chapel was maintained, though often with difficulty, by the Düben family: Gustav Düben succeeded his father, Andreas, in 1662 and was himself succeeded by his sons Gustav the Younger (1690–8) and Anders (Andreas the Younger) (1698–1726). Noteworthy among the older Gustav Düben’s compositions are his settings in expressive monody of Samuel Columbus’s collection of poems *Odae sveticæ* (1674), which are important to the establishment of Swedish solo song. The most significant composer of music for the court in this period was Christian Geist

<sup>18</sup> It was at Cromwell’s request that Rogers in 1653 was granted the Bachelor of Music degree by Cambridge University. He was later organist at Magdalen College, Oxford, and was granted Doctor of Music by Oxford University in 1669.

(c. 1650–1711), who came from Germany in 1670 and was a singer and organist in the chapel until 1679, when he went as organist to the German church in Göteborg. In 1684 he moved to København, where he was organist in several of the leading city churches until his death in 1711. He is represented in the Düben collection by some sixty compositions.<sup>19</sup>

In Denmark, Frederik III (reigned 1648–70) was sufficiently his father's son to be willing to pay an unusually high salary to secure the services of Kaspar Förster the Younger (1616–73) as master of the royal chapel in 1652. Förster was born in Danzig but trained at the court in Warsaw under Marco Scacchi and, it is thought, under Carissimi in Rome. He reorganised the chapel along Italian lines, imported numerous Italian musicians to København and in general exerted a strong Italian influence on music in Northern Europe – on the great Danish composer Dietrich Buxtehude (1637–1708) in Lübeck, for instance. Frederik III's queen, Sofie Amalie, however, preferred the culture of the court of Versailles, so Förster had to share the musical platform at the Danish court with French musicians imported by the queen. Unfortunately, none of this music seems to have survived the castle fire in 1794; most of what we know of Förster's music, and much of Buxtehude's, is fortunately preserved in the Düben collection. Förster's service as master of the chapel is divided into two periods, 1652–6 and 1661–8, interrupted by reductions in the chapel due to the war with Sweden. One of Christian V's economies during his reign (1670–99) was to avoid appointing a master of the chapel, allowing the duties to be shared by other less well-paid members of the band, such as the leader of the French violins, Gaspard Besson, and the Danish instrumentalist and composer Poul Christian Schindler (1648–1740). The latter deserves credit for having composed the first full-length opera to be performed in Denmark, *Der vereinigte Götterstreit*. The performance of this work, which, despite the French influence at court obviously took its inspiration from the German opera at Hamburg, was in celebration of the king's birthday on 15 April 1689 and took place in a wooden opera house raised for the occasion near Amalienborg palace. At the repeat performance on 19 April the decorations tragically caught fire and the opera house and palace burned, killing some 200 of the audience, including Schindler's wife and daughter, as well as the distinguished organist Johann Lorentz the Younger, his wife and grandchildren. Schindler's music was also lost and no attempt was made to repeat the operatic experiment during the remainder of Christian V's reign.

19 L. Berglund, *Studier i Christian Geists vokalmusik*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Musicologica Upsaliensia, Nova Series, 21 (Uppsala, 2002).

## Music in Scandinavia in the eighteenth century

JOHN BERGSAGEL

Whether or not the Italian musicians led by Vincenzo Albrici (1631–96), brought to Stockholm by Queen Kristina in 1652 and often referred to as an opera troupe, ever performed an opera in Sweden is unknown, but an opera (in German) by a Danish composer, Poul Christian Schindler (1648–1740), was performed in København in 1689.<sup>1</sup> Due to the tragic circumstances that ensued, the experiment was not followed up during the reign of Christian V, but in 1703 Frederik IV (reigned 1699–1730), who had developed a taste for opera in both Paris and Venice, engaged an Italian violinist and composer, Bartolomeo Bernardi (c. 1660–1732), whose operas (now lost) were performed in the autumn of that year in a new public opera house erected by the king. The new theatre was also used by the French theatrical company that had, with interruptions, played for the Danish court since 1682, but neither Italian opera nor French theatre was rewarded with sufficient public support to sustain a public theatre in København at that time. Bernardi accordingly left Denmark in 1705 and the theatre building was soon converted to other purposes.<sup>2</sup> The king, who was not prepared to forego his theatrical entertainments, had instead a well-equipped theatre built in København Palace in 1710 and in that year Bernardi returned to Denmark to be installed as director of music to the court until his death in 1732. In this capacity Bernardi conducted, among other things, music to accompany the performances of the French players, but little is heard of further operatic activity until the visit to the court in 1721–2 of a German opera company from Hamburg led by Johann Kayser (c. 1688–1766), which featured especially works by the Hamburg composer Reinhard Keiser (1674–1739).

The visit of the German opera company was neither profitable nor of long duration but it set in motion a chain of activity that came to have far-reaching

1 See above, p. 626.

2 It is now the seat of the District Court of eastern Denmark.

consequences for the social and cultural environment of the Danish capital. To accommodate the German company the king dismissed the long-resident French theatrical troupe from the court theatre. Some of the French actors then left Denmark, but others of the company, such as Etienne Cation and especially René Magnon de Montaigu, who by this time had been in Denmark some thirty-five years, preferred to remain and to try once again to interest the citizens of København in the art of the theatre. Cation got permission and financial assistance from the king to build a theatre and Montaigu was granted a licence to present theatrical performances 'in the Danish language'. French plays, especially those of Molière, were translated into Danish. Ludvig Holberg (1684–1754), a professor at the university, who had recently demonstrated a rich talent for comic satire in a lengthy poetic narrative, *Peder Paars*, was persuaded to try his hand at writing comedies. This initiated what Holberg called his period of 'poetic frenzy', between 1722 and 1728, when the great fire in København closed the theatre, during which he wrote some twenty-eight comedies, many of which are still played to appreciative audiences in Scandinavia to this day.

The music for these performances was provided by the authorised 'town musician' (*stadsmusikant*), an ancient institution that in the period from the middle of the seventeenth century until about 1800 was at its most developed and best organised in Denmark, when nearly thirty town musicians throughout the country were licensed to provide music for weddings and other civic events, to teach music and train assistants.<sup>3</sup> The town musician in København in the years 1710–24 was Jost Heinrich Beckstedt (d. 1724), a highly competent and active musician, as was Andreas Berg (1686–1764), who married his widow and succeeded to his office 1725–64. Providing music for the theatre, which came to include other forms of entertainment, such as masquerades and assemblies at which the citizens of København were first introduced to the relatively new institution of public concerts, in addition to his other obligations, kept the town musician busily occupied and required a large staff of assistants. Andreas Berg had between twelve and fourteen apprentices and boys to instruct and provide with food and lodging, of whom one of the ablest was his stepson, Ditlev Beckstedt (1720–91), who subsequently had a career as violinist in the court orchestra and organist of one of the city churches.

Another of Andreas Berg's talented apprentices was the young Norwegian Johan Daniel Berlin (1714–87), who came to København from Trondheim in

3 J. H. Koudal, *For Borgere og Bønder. Stadsmusikantvæsenet i Danmark 1660–1800* (København, 2000).

1730. He returned to Trondheim in 1737 to become, at the age of 23, the town musician in that city, where he also became organist of the cathedral in 1741. He was a man of many talents and interests: he composed music, designed and built instruments, wrote scientific papers on various subjects and in 1744 published the first textbook on elementary music theory to be printed in the Danish-Norwegian language.<sup>4</sup> In Kristiania (now Oslo), Georg von Bertouch (1688–1743), the German-born military governor of Akershus castle from 1719, was also a trained musician and composer, friend of Johann Mattheson and intimate of the Bach family, who undoubtedly exerted an important influence on the musical life of the Norwegian capital. He arranged for the Danish organist Johan Frederik Clasen to be brought from Hamburg to be organist of Our Saviour's Church in Kristiania in 1720 and both Bertouch and Clasen contributed music to the celebrations attending the visit to Kristiania in 1733 of Christian VI, who had succeeded to the throne of Denmark-Norway in 1730.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the influence of French culture was felt in Stockholm, as in København, through the activities of French theatrical companies, such as that of Claude de Rosidor during the years 1699–1706, while at the Swedish court the north German musical tradition continued under the direction of yet another member of the Düben family, Anders von Düben (1673–1738). Though the last years of Sweden's Age of Greatness were more concerned with foreign than with domestic affairs, Karl XII (1697–1718) nevertheless in 1712 took an initiative, on the recommendation of the director of court music, that was to give Swedish music a new beginning in the Age of Liberty. In the midst of other worries, while in far-away Turkey he signed an order giving Johan Helmich Roman (1694–1758), who had joined the court orchestra only the year before, permission to travel abroad 'to perfect himself in his art'. Young Roman was a talented violinist and oboist and was to prove himself a fine composer; from about 1715 to 1721 he lived in England, where he studied, it is thought, with the learned Johann Christoph Pepusch and came to know such distinguished musicians as Giovanni Batista Bononcini, Attilio Ariosti, Francesco Geminiani and, above all, Georg Friedrich Händel. On his return to Sweden he was made deputy director and from 1727 to 1745 director of court music, where he improved standards of performance and organised in 1731 the first public concerts, for which he translated Händel's *Brockes-Passion* into Swedish. These

4 K. Michelsen (ed.), *Johan Daniel Berlin 1714–1787. Universalgeniet i Trondheim* (Trondheim, 1987).

achievements, together with his linguistic studies (for which he was elected to the Swedish Academy in 1740) and efforts to gain acceptance for Swedish as a language suitable for church music, and above all the excellence of his compositions – which include the orchestral *Drottningholmsmusiquen* (1744) and a Swedish Mass (1751–2) for soloists, chorus and orchestra – earned him subsequent recognition as ‘the father of Swedish music’.<sup>5</sup>

In Denmark the reign of Christian VI (1730–46) was marked by an increasingly strict pietism, which culminated in a total ban on theatrical entertainments. When Bernardi died in 1732 no successor as director of the court music was appointed until 1740, when the need to celebrate a number of royal occasions led to the appointment of the German Johann Adolph Scheibe (1708–76). Public concerts, which both Holberg and Johan Helmich Roman had experienced in England in the early years of the eighteenth century, began to flourish throughout Scandinavia in these years – especially in København, perhaps due to the ban on theatrical performances. The repertoire that was introduced at these concerts was beyond the capacity of the town musicians alone, for which reason organisations of amateurs came into existence to cultivate the new music and before long Scheibe, like his Swedish colleague, Roman, together with musicians from the court orchestra, began to take an active part in the musical life of the city as well as of the court. One of the first and most successful of these musical clubs in København was *Det musikalske Societet* (the Musical Society), formed in 1744, which was led by the talented amateur violinist and composer, Johan Erasmus Iversen (1713–55).<sup>6</sup> Ludvig Holberg, himself a talented amateur, was an active member of the Musical Society and here he enjoyed the company of Scheibe, who subsequently wrote a biographical memoir of him. Another professional musician associated with the Musical Society was Carl August Thielo (1702–63), who wrote the textbook of instruction in music that was required by the Society’s regulations. This book, *Tanker og Regler fra Grunden af om Musiken* (‘Thoughts and Rules Providing an Introduction to Music’), was published in 1746, the first book on music to be published in København.

The pietistic Christian VI died in 1746 and Thielo, supported by Holberg, who briefly took up playwriting again, applied to his theatre-loving successor, Frederik V (1746–66), for the royal privilege to revive the Danish

5 I. Bengtsson, *J. H. Roman och hans instrumentalmusik. Käll- och stilkritiska studier* (Uppsala 1955).

6 Other musical societies of note include *Harmonien* (1765) in Bergen, which still exists as the city’s symphony orchestra; *Utile Dulci* (1766) in Stockholm; *Liebhaverselskabet* (1768) in Trondheim; and *Aurora-seura (Aurorasällskapet)* (1773) in Turku (Åbo).

theatre, *Den danske Skueplads*. His application was successful and already in 1748 a theatre building was erected on Kongens Nytorv (the King's New Square), near the place where the present Royal Theatre, built in 1878, now stands. Thielo was soon obliged to hand over the direction of the theatre to others, but he continued to be associated with its musical affairs as advisor, arranger, copyist and composer. Between 1751 and 1754 he published four collections of theatre music from the first period of *Syngespil* (plays with music) and opera in Danish under the title *De oder, som paa den Danske Skue-Plads udi København ere blevne opførte* ('The Odes which Have Been Performed in the Danish Theatre in København').<sup>7</sup> Included in these collections are some theatre songs (the only surviving vocal music) by the Norwegian 'violinist extraordinary' to the court, Johan Henrik Freithoff (1713–67), who had come to København in late 1743 or early 1744 after extensive travels in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

The French and German theatre companies were also revived and especially the excellent French company led by Pierre de Launai provided the Danish theatre with stiff competition until it moved in 1753 to Stockholm, where it promptly ousted the Swedish theatre company (sometimes called *Kongliga Svenska Skådeplatsen*), which had performed plays and *sångspel* in Swedish since 1737. Even more critical, however, was the competition of an Italian opera company led by Pietro Mingotti (c. 1702–59), which, at the invitation of Frederik's English-born queen Louise, arrived in København in December 1747 for the first of several seasons. On this initial occasion the conductor and composer was Paolo Scalabrini (1713–?1806), who chose to remain in København when the company departed at the end of the season. Scheibe, who had let his aversion to Italian opera be known, was relieved of his position as director of court music and the Italian was installed in his place. For Mingotti's next season Scalabrini's successor as director was Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–87), whose developing theory of opera may have been influenced at just this time by contact with Scheibe in København. On this occasion the company carried Italian opera further into Scandinavia when it accompanied King Frederik to Kristiania on his official visit to Norway in 1749. After Gluck, Mingotti introduced another talented Italian composer and conductor, Giuseppe Sarti (1729–1802), who in 1755 succeeded Scalabrini as director of music at the Danish court and remained an influential factor in Danish musical life for twenty years. Despite its undoubted artistic success at

<sup>7</sup> Reprinted in 1755 as *Musikalske comodiestykker* ('Pieces from the Musical Comedies'), 2–3, with a fourth volume in 1761.



the court, however, Italian opera was still unable sufficiently to appeal to a general public to enable his enterprise to succeed financially and in 1755 Mingotti was obliged to go into bankruptcy. In the same year members of the company travelled to Stockholm at the invitation of Lovisa Ulrika, queen of the German-born Adolf Fredrik, king of Sweden 1751–71. Among them was yet another of Mingotti's gifted composer-conductors, Francesco Antonio Baldasare Uttini (1723–95), who emulated the success of his colleagues in Denmark by being appointed personal director of music to the Swedish queen. He settled in Stockholm and in 1767 succeeded Per Brant (1713–67) as director of the royal chapel.

If the time was not yet ripe for full acceptance of Italian opera in the northern countries, by contributing settings of texts in the vernacular to entertainments in Danish and Swedish in addition to their Italian operatic pieces, the three Italians, Scalabrini, Sarti and Uttini, during their many years in Scandinavia paved the way for the establishment of national opera in the Scandinavian countries. Thus in 1756 Sarti provided music for *Gram og Signe*, an opera composed to the first original libretto in Danish on a national subject (taken from the medieval Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus) by Niels Krog Bredal, a young Norwegian living in København. Another Norwegian prominent in the København literary scene, Johan Herman Wessel (1742–85), provided Scalabrini with a text of a different kind, a comic parody of both French tragedy and Italian opera, *Kierlighed uden Strømper* ('Love without Stockings'), that had great success in 1773. In the same year Uttini's *Thetis och Pelée*, the first grand opera in Swedish, based on a French play reworked by the theatre-loving Gustav III (1771–92), was performed. The new king, who had received the news of his succession to the Swedish throne during a theatrical performance in Paris, at once took a number of initiatives, such as founding the *Musikalska Akademien* (Swedish Royal Academy of Music, 1771) and the Royal Opera in Stockholm (1773), which contributed to a renewal of Swedish cultural life that has been designated the 'Gustavian period'. At the opera, to meet the requirements of grand opera the royal chapel was installed as the theatre orchestra. With *Birger Jarl och Mechthild* (1774), again to a story by the king (adapted from Voltaire), Uttini, with the collaboration of Hinrich Philip Johnsen (1717–79), began the tradition of national-historical operas, which were encouraged by Gustav III for political purposes. It is noteworthy that the first history of music in Swedish, Abraham Hülphers *Historisk Afhandling om Musik och Instrumenter* ('Historical Dissertation on Music and Instruments') (Vesterås, 1773), appeared in this atmosphere of historical consciousness.

The assassination of Gustav III in 1792 was made the subject of a French grand opera by Auber in 1833, but with Verdi's famous treatment of the same subject in *Un ballo in maschera* (1859) the Swedish king has come to be enduringly associated with Italian opera. Nevertheless, it was to German, not Italian composers that he turned for the realisation of his operatic ambitions. In 1777 he recruited from Dresden Johann Gottlieb Naumann (1741–1801), whose *Gustaf Wasa*, composed in 1786, was for a time regarded as the Swedish national opera. Johann Martin Kraus (1756–92) came to Stockholm in 1778 and ten years later succeeded Uttini as director of court music. With the addition of Johann Christian Friedrich Haeffner (1759–1833), who succeeded Kraus as conductor of the Royal Orchestra in 1792, and Georg Joseph (Abbé) Vogler (1749–1814),<sup>8</sup> Stockholm was able to enjoy a brilliant musical environment in the last years of the century. A valuable contribution to this environment was made by two native composers, Johan Wikmanson (1753–1800), a pupil of Kraus, particularly noteworthy for his fine string quartets, and Bernhard Henrik Crusell (1775–1838), who as a young boy came to Stockholm from Finland as clarinettist in a military band. Crusell studied composition with Vogler, was made a court musician in 1793 and enjoyed a distinguished career as a virtuoso player on his instrument; he is perhaps the most notable 'Swedish' composer of the early nineteenth century.

In København, King Frederik V gave the new theatre in Kongens Nytorv to the city, but managing a theatre proved too much for the city magistrates and in 1770 it reverted to the king, now Christian VII (reigned 1766–1808, from 1784 under the regency of the crown prince, later Frederik VI), who leased it to Sarti on condition that he performed Danish plays and Italian operas and Italian intermezzi for the court in the summer. It became now the Royal Theatre, but nothing on the theatre stage could match the real-life drama of the rise and fall of Struensee, the sick king's German doctor who usurped his power and seduced his queen, that was unfolded to the public view outside the theatre and reached its gruesome climax in 1772. In the wake of the palace revolution institutions were examined and reorganised and when the French troupe, which had been installed in the court theatre by Christian VII in 1767, was removed in 1773, the orchestra of the royal chapel,

8 This is, of course, the *Abt Vogler* of Robert Browning's well-known poem. See T. Betzwieser and S. Leopold (eds.), *Abbé Vogler. Ein Mannheimer im europäischen Kontext*, Internationales Colloquium, Heidelberg 1999 (Frankfurt a.M., 2003), which includes an essay on Vogler and Denmark by Heinrich Schwab: 'Gegen niemand ist noch so viel geschrieben worden, als gegen Vogler. Zum Auftreten von Georg Joseph Vogler im dänischen Gesamtstaat', pp. 313–40.

which had accompanied its *opéras-comiques*, was placed at the disposition of the Royal Theatre, as it is to this day. In 1775 Sarti was dismissed, to be succeeded by Scalabrini, and at the close of the season in 1778 the Italian opera company too was sent away. The emphasis now was to be on Danish *syngespil* and Danish opera and thus Scalabrini, before he left Denmark in 1781, was witness to the birth of Danish romantic opera with the performances in 1779 and 1780 respectively of *Balders død* ('The Death of Balder'), on a subject from Norse mythology, and *Fiskerne* ('The Fishermen'), on a contemporary subject from everyday life demonstrating the natural nobility of humble people. Both of these were plays by Johannes Ewald (1743–81), one of the finest poets of the time, with music composed by Johann Ernst Hartmann (1726–93), who had been brought to Denmark from the court at Plön to strengthen Sarti's opera orchestra and in 1767 had succeeded Freithoff as first court violinist.<sup>9</sup>

It was therefore perhaps as a gesture in the direction of national self-sufficiency that the Norwegian Israel Gottlob Wernicke (1755–1836) was appointed to succeed Scalabrini as director of court music in 1781. He was an excellent musician but proved unsuited to the post of director and in 1785 it was decided to bring Naumann from Stockholm to reorganise the Royal Chapel, as he had done so successfully in Sweden, and to lay the foundation for a Danish opera. The achievements of his six-month stay in København, which included an opera in Danish, *Orpheus og Eurydike* (1786), won such general approval that an attempt was made to keep him as music director, but without success. Instead, at Naumann's suggestion, Johann Abraham Peter Schulz (1747–1800) was brought from Germany in 1787. He was forced by ill-health to retire after only eight years, but in that time the congenial Schulz exerted an influence on all aspects of musical life, as conductor, composer and educator, that made København a city of European importance in the last years of the eighteenth century. The century ended and the new century began with the gifted Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761–1817).<sup>10</sup> He too was from Germany, but came to København as a young man from Kiel, then under the Danish crown, in 1784. He distinguished himself as a pianist and composer, but when his ambitious opera *Holger Danske* (which despite its title is not on a national-historical

<sup>9</sup> The operas have been edited and provided with valuable introductory essays by J. Mulvad in *Dania Sonans*, 6–7 (København, 1980, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> H. W. Schwab, *Friedrich Ludwig Aemilius Kunzen (1761–1817). Stationen seines Lebens und Wirkens*, Schriften der Schleswig-Holsteinischen Landesbibliothek, 21 (Heide in Holstein, 1995).

subject) fell victim to an anti-opera campaign in 1789, he left København. When he was recalled to replace Schulz in 1795, it was thus as one already familiar with the situation, almost as a half-Dane, that he took up his position. Among his contributions to Danish musical life were pioneering performances of Mozart's operas at the Royal Theatre – even before Mozart's widow, Constanze, settled for a time in København in 1810 as the wife of the Danish diplomat Georg Nissen<sup>11</sup> – and a recommendation for the establishment of a music collection at the Royal Library for purposes of scholarly study.<sup>12</sup> During Kunzen's absence the 15-year-old Christoph Ernst Friedrich Weyse (1774–1842) had come to København from Altona, in the farthest corner of the Danish possessions in north Germany, to study with Johann Abraham Peter Schulz. He remained in Denmark all his life, was a brilliant pianist, made his living as an organist and, in 1819, after the death of Kunzen, he was appointed composer to the court, with the obligation to compose cantatas for official occasions and operas and *syngespil* for the Royal Theatre. He was the most important musical figure in Denmark in the first half of the nineteenth century, especially after the death of Friedrich Daniel Rudolph Kuhlau (1786–1832), who came to Denmark in 1810, and he is credited with having laid the foundation of a Danish national style in music. It is above all as a composer of songs that he is remembered today.

It is evident that in the second half of the eighteenth century musical activity moved increasingly – with royal assistance – out of the privacy of the court to satisfy the interest of a growing public. In addition to the professional and semi-professional entertainments offered by theatres and concert societies, a developing industry of instrument-making and music publishing encouraged the cultivation of music in the home. In Sweden, for example, Hinrich Philip Johnsen's *24 oder af våra bästa poeters arbeten* ('24 Odes from the Works of our Best Poets') was published in Stockholm in 1754. Many of the numerous (an estimated *c.* 1700) poems of Carl Michael Bellman (1740–95), for which he skilfully adapted melodies from a variety of sources (not all of which have been identified), continue to enjoy an enduring popularity. Best known are the two collections, *Fredmans Epistlar* and *Fredmans Sånger*, comprising together 147 songs, that were published in Stockholm in 1790 and 1791 respectively, by the first Swedish music publisher, Olof Åhlström (1756–1835), who had also arranged the melodies for piano. In København, the collections

<sup>11</sup> C. E. Hatting, *Mozart og Danmark* (København, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> H. W. Schwab, 'F. L. Æ. Kunzen, der Hofkapellmeister und die Königlische Bibliothek', *Fund og Forskning*, 34 (1995), pp. 159–78.

published by Thielo in the 1750s, mentioned above, were an early attempt to create a home market. In 1787 Søren Sønnichsen (1765–1826), who had already in 1785 published a collection of songs by Haydn, was granted a royal privilege to print music. He published a number of the Royal Theatre's productions, *syngespil* by Schulz and Kunzen and ballets by Claus Schall (1757–1835), for example, as well as works by foreign composers, but he also published a music periodical, *Apollo* (1795–1808), which provided a regular supply of various kinds of music for home performance. Though the songs in the third volume of Schulz's *Lieder im Volkston* were composed in København, like the first two it was published in Berlin (1782, 1785, 1790). They nevertheless achieved wide popularity in Denmark and influenced the style of the Danish *romance*, such as those by his pupil Weyse.

In the nature of things, the conditions for this development were initially limited to the cities of royal residence – that is, København and Stockholm. In the nineteenth century, however, social and economic changes created, in connection with urbanisation, the conditions necessary for a similar cultivation of music elsewhere in Scandinavia, as a consequence of which Norway, Finland and Iceland came in that century to assume roles of greater prominence in the history of music.<sup>13</sup> In Turku (Åbo), for example, the Musical Society of the *Aurora-seura* (*Aurora Sällskapet*), founded 1773, was followed in 1790 by *Turun Soitannollinen Seura* (Turku Musical Society), the oldest of its kind in Finland.

<sup>13</sup> For a brief survey of music in Scandinavia in the nineteenth century see J. Bergsagel, 'Scandinavia: Unity in Diversity', *The Late Romantic Era*, ed. J. Samson, *Man & Music*, 7 (London, 1991), pp. 250–65.



PART V

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POLITICAL STRUCTURES AND FOREIGN  
POLICY





## Constitution and politics

PANU PULMA

### The Age of Liberty

In 1709 Sweden's status as a leading power in Northern Europe collapsed at the battle of Poltava. Finland, forming the eastern half of the Swedish realm, remained under Russian occupation until the Treaty of Uusikauunki (Nystad) in 1721. The attempt of King Karl XII to restore military might through a second invasion of Norway in the autumn of 1718 ended in catastrophe with the death of the king on the field of battle on 30 November. The situation was now open for the factions within the privy council that had already begun to prepare to usurp power while the king had been in Turkey.<sup>1</sup>

The *riksdag* (diet) was assembled, duly electing Princess Ulrika Eleonora, the younger sister of King Karl, to the throne on 23 January 1719. A month later the new Instrument of Government was ratified. Ulrika Eleonora's proposal of a dual regency including the royal spouse, Prince Frederick of Hessen, was rejected, but this did not prevent the queen from campaigning for her husband's cause, with French support, after the *riksdag* had convened. The privy council laid down unequivocal conditions: Frederick could have the crown, if the queen were to abdicate in his favour and the prince were to accept the conditions laid down for him. On 24 March 1720 the *riksdag* and the privy council elected Fredrik I to be king of Sweden. At the same time a revised Instrument of Government was issued, containing new restrictions on royal authority in addition to previous ones. This marked the beginning of the period known as the 'Age of Liberty' characterised by the power of the estates in Sweden (1719–72).

<sup>1</sup> See D. Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period: The Baltic World 1492–1772* (London, 1990), pp. 305–22 and notes.

The Instruments of Government laid down in 1719 and 1720 reflected a new constitutional concept, unlike the Instrument of Government of 1634, which had not been ratified by the king. During the Age of Liberty constitutional legislation was regarded as including the *Riksdag* Act of 1723, the Act on Freedom of the Press laid down in 1766, privileges of the nobility and the clergy revised in the 1720s and formal assurances given by the sovereign. The political system of the period was a blend of arguments about natural and contractual rights derived from European constitutional law mixed with concepts derived from the Swedish heritage and underlining continuity.<sup>2</sup> Royal authority and power came directly from the people themselves, whose sovereignty was represented by the estates assembled at the diet (*riksdag*). The Instrument of Government strove to establish a state of equilibrium in which the monarchist ('Royal Highness'), aristocratic ('the power of the council') and democratic ('freedom of the estates') elements placed limitations on each other. The king was able to wield power only in the council and through it, but not in opposition to it. The king had two votes in the council, which meant that the decision rested with him only when the vote was even.

The limited degree of royal power in Sweden was in itself exceptional in Europe, but even more exceptional was the political subjection of the privy council to the *riksdag*. A special feature of the Swedish political system was the broad social basis of the *riksdag* itself. As noted by M. F. Metcalf, the inherent clumsiness of the four-estate system did not prevent the Swedish *riksdag* from being clearly superior to its contemporaries abroad with regard to the extent of representation and its power over legislation, taxation and foreign policy.<sup>3</sup>

The estates of the realm – the nobility, clergy, burghers and peasantry – assembled at the *riksdag* on a regular basis, in principle every three years. Both the privy council and the estates were entitled to present motions. The motions (complaints) of the estates were formulated according to what was presented by electoral districts or individual members of the *riksdag*. A complex and extensive system of select committees was responsible for preparing matters to be ruled upon, and the proposals of the committees were passed or rejected separately within each estate assembled at the *riksdag*.

2 M. F. Metcalf, 'Parliamentary Sovereignty and Royal Reaction, 1719–1809', in M. F. Metcalf (ed.), *The Riksdag: A History of the Swedish Parliament* (Stockholm, 1987), pp. 124f.

3 Metcalf, 'Parliamentary Sovereignty and Royal Reaction, 1719–1809', p. 125.

## From the rule of the nobility to political crisis

The political system of the Swedish realm was dominated by the nobility. The focus of power was in the privy council, and the aristocracy played a decisive role in the *riksdag*. The highest posts in the realm were the sole prerogative of the nobility, and non-nobles who had risen high enough in the hierarchies of government were usually raised to the nobility. The aristocratic nature of the political system was, however, relative, since this estate lacked unity. Political propaganda and competition for the support of the lower estates were hard and harsh. Russia, France and England openly engaged in bribery and support for the various 'parties' that emerged.<sup>4</sup>

The political system of the Age of Liberty created the preconditions for the formation of party political groupings. In the early 1730s, the undermined position of Chancellery President Arvid Horn strengthened the opposition, which obtained a majority at the *riksdag* of 1738–9 through propaganda, bribery and even threats. The opposition, wearing the symbol of freedom – the hat – derisively called Horn and his supporters 'night caps', which led to the use of the partisan terms, Hats and Caps. Struggles between these parties were regarded as one of the main reasons why the political system of the Age of Liberty collapsed in 1772, and its specific nature has been the subject of much debate. On the one hand, experts have stressed the emergence of political parties and their activities as a normal aspect of the parliamentary rule of the estates, with positive repercussions for the development of public political life especially after the granting of freedom of the press in 1766. But it also has been pointed out that the political parties restricted their work to the *riksdag* alone, at least before 1766 and that they lacked established forms of action and distinct political agendas, apart from the use of bribery and coercion.<sup>5</sup> It must be underlined that the differences among the Hats and the Caps specifically culminated in foreign policy and perhaps the general Francophile tendencies of the Hats. However, distinctions both along the lines of estate and tangible economic interests were more important in the practical functioning of the *riksdag* than partisan divisions. The emergence of political groups centred on personages and power at the *riksdag* is more

4 See e.g. M. F. Metcalf, *Russia, England and Swedish Party Politics 1762–1766: The Interplay between Great Power Diplomacy and Domestic Politics* (Stockholm, 1977); M. Roberts, *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1967), pp. 286–347.

5 Differences of views in the interpretations of the parties are crystallised in comparing Metcalf (ed.), *The Riksdag*, pp. 128–32, 162–4 and M. Roberts, *The Age of Liberty: Sweden 1719–1772* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 111–85.

readily interpreted as a patron–client relationship than from the perspective of so-called modern politics. Peter Burke’s observations of the Tories and Whigs of England are well suited to Sweden’s Hats and Caps: ‘What really mattered was “faction”, in other words a group of clients around a patron, a group united not by an ideology or a programme but by a common relationship to a leader.’<sup>6</sup>

### The rule of the Hats and its consequences

Victory for the Hats came in 1738–9 when the *riksdag*, and its Secret Committee in particular, supported an alliance with France. Horn and his supporters were expelled from the privy council. This demonstration of power on the part of the *riksdag* marked a clear turning towards a ‘parliamentary rule of the estates’ and the political cliché of the ‘estates in power’ began to be reality. The rule of the Hats continued until 1765, and Swedish politics of the period was characterised by an active foreign policy and particularly by the expanding economic role of the state. The strictly protectionistic trade policies of the period were reinforced through financial support by the state for domestic industries, the launching of an extensive land reform in the 1750s (re-parcelling of properties), and by making the demographic policies of the realm more effective. An aspect of the development of mercantilist control over society was the introduction in 1749 of Europe’s first uniform and comprehensive statistical corpus of demographic information.

The foreign policies of the Hats resulted in a war of retaliation against Russia (1741–3). The war was an absolute catastrophe from its very beginning, and the Russians soon reoccupied Finland. Empress Elisabeth I of Russia issued a manifesto in this connection, promising Finland an independent role. Though purely propagandistic in nature, this move added yet another dimension to the scepticism of the Finns regarding the ability of Sweden to defend the eastern half of its realm.

The war led to an internal crisis within the political system, with far-reaching consequences. At the *riksdag* that assembled in 1742 the Caps had a small majority, obtained by admitting the peasantry for the first (and last) time to the Secret Committee. General Lewenhaupt and Lieutenant-General Buddenbrock, who had led the military campaign, were condemned and executed. In the spring of 1743 suspicion and dissatisfaction that had brewed

6 P. Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 73.

for long erupted in a peasant uprising in Dalarna. Some 4,500 farmers, miners and soldiers revolted and marched on Stockholm, where it was feared the poor of the city would join the rebels. There was already reason to fear the attitudes of the lower bourgeoisie of Stockholm, as Christopher Springer, a member of the *riksdag*, had only recently put forth his thesis of the so-called principality theory, whereby a member of the diet was bound only by the wishes and will of his electors, who should be entitled to expel him if he did not follow their instructions.

The system, however, weathered the crisis. In June 1743, the army put down the rebels after a brief conflict. Six of the leaders were executed. The principality theory was condemned at the *riksdag* of 1746–7 and Springer himself was imprisoned. The demands of the Dalarna rebels were not only practical and local in nature but also political, concerning as they did the succession to the throne. Queen Ulrika Eleonora had died childless in November 1741, and officer circles, among others, regarded her 13-year-old nephew Duke Karl Peter Ulrik of Holstein-Gottorp as a candidate for the throne who should be taken seriously. The duke's mother was Anna Petrowna, daughter of Peter the Great of Russia and Empress Catherine I. Empress Elisabeth hastened to invite Karl Peter Ulrik to St Petersburg and appointed him heir to the throne. The empress appointed as her candidate for the Swedish crown Adolf Fredrik, ducal bishop of Lübeck, whose support was strengthened by her promise to return to Sweden most of the conquered areas of Finland should Adolf Fredrik be elected to the throne. Adolf Fredrik also had the support of Great Britain. On 23 June 1743, the estates of Sweden elected Adolf Fredrik as heir to the throne and on 8 August peace was finally concluded between Sweden and Russia. The Russians retreated from Finland, and the river Kymijoki became the new eastern border of Sweden. Adolf Fredrik arrived in Sweden and married Lovisa Ulrika, sister of Frederick II of Prussia in 1744. Fredrik I of Sweden died in 1751, marking the beginning of Adolf Fredrik's 20-year reign. The succession of Adolf Fredrik had no bearing on the position of the ruler. The Hats clearly dominated the situation and the privy council did not offer any opportunities to increase royal power. Queen Lovisa Ulrika, however, had ambitions of her own that were nevertheless thwarted in a hopeless coup attempt in 1756. The king was replaced by a stamped signature, with which the privy council could ratify its rulings, if the king himself declined to affix his signature to them.

The Hats had a stronger grip on power than ever before, which resulted in new endeavours in foreign policy. Already in 1747 Sweden had deliberately begun to improve its defences along the eastern border, and the massive

fortress of Sveaborg, the ‘Gibraltar of the North’, came under construction on islands off Helsinki. Work on fortifications was begun in various parts of the country, and the fleet was renewed and strengthened. Sweden in the Age of Liberty was a markedly militaristic state, devoting one-third of her budget to military expenditure even in normal years.

There appeared to be some returns for these investments in 1757 when Sweden decided to join France and Austria in their anti-Prussian coalition. The Swedish territory of Pomerania was a good base for operations, and, enticed by French subsidies, the Hat government decided to let Swedish troops encroach on German territory. Military action was ultimately on a small scale, and the results were even less impressive, but the costs of the war led to heavy inflation and a crisis in the state economy. The Hats, now divided among themselves, managed to obtain only a small majority at the diet of 1760–2.

The heightening of conflict among the estates, however, soon led to a distinct Cap majority at the *riksdag* of 1765–6. Anti-aristocratic, anti-bureaucratic and even anti-mercantilist sentiments now prevailed and eyes began to turn towards Britain instead of France. One signal of these attitudes was the Freedom of Press Act laid down in 1766, which was given the status of constitutional legislation. The Finnish clergyman and economist Anders Chydenius became one of the leading ideologues of the new forces by publishing a number of booklets demanding freedom of trade and labour among other things. There were improvements to the position of the landless population, and freedom of personal mobility was increased. The trading monopoly of Stockholm collapsed when the towns on the Gulf of Bothnia were permitted to engage directly in foreign trade.

Conflicts within society sharpened when the Hats again succeeded in gaining a majority at the *riksdag* of 1769–70. Attacks on the ‘aristocratic bureaucracy’ and oligarchy became more heated, and a confirmation of the privileges of the non-aristocratic estates was demanded. A particular source of bitterness was seen in the privileges of the nobility that had been laid down in 1723, ensuring the exclusive access of members of the nobility to all highest state posts. The political struggle had now become a social conflict, involving the ‘perennial’ privileges of the estates and the bases of the hierarchy of various groups in society.<sup>7</sup>

7 On the Nordic radicalism of the 1760s, see H. A. Barton, *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era 1765–1815* (Minneapolis, 1985), pp. 47–86.

## The restoration of autocracy

King Adolf Fredrik died on 12 February 1772. At the time Crown Prince Gustav (1746–92) was visiting Paris, and he as the new king immediately entered into a subsidy agreement with France, a country which he deeply admired. The *riksdag* assembled to hear the ruler's assurances of intent; the Hats formed the majority of the estate of the nobility, while the Caps dominated the lower estates. The king's efforts to achieve conciliation among the parties were rejected, and the Caps went on to launch heated attacks against the privileges of the nobility and bureaucratic rule.

King Gustav III was extremely popular, and royalist sympathies flourished among those who had tired of the disputes of party politics. The partition of Poland was cited as a cautionary example of where deepening internal strife could lead. France lent its support to plans for an autocratic coup, prepared primarily among military officers of the *Svenska Botten* club under the direction of the Finnish-born Colonel Jakob Magnus Sprengtporten.<sup>8</sup> In May 1772 King Gustav III approved the plan for a coup d'état, whereby the first rising would be the Finnish garrisons under the command of Sprengtporten, with Sveaborg as the main locus.

The rebellion, however, was launched on 2 August 1772 by troops under Johan Christopher Toll in Skåne. The king himself took action at the critical moment. On 21 August the estates were summoned to a *plenum plenorum*, the privy council was placed under arrest, and troops loyal to the king in Stockholm aimed the cannon of the royal palace towards the Hall of the Realm, where the members of the *riksdag* awaited the king's speech. Gustav III read a draft for an Instrument of Government, which the stupefied members accepted there and then. The so-called Fundamental Acts, which had been in force before the 1680s were reinstated. The rule of the estates had come to an end.

The new constitution signified a restoration of autocracy. The realm was ruled by the king and no one else. The privy council and the main government departments were responsible to the king alone. Decisions concerning foreign policy were also a matter for the king, although truces, peace treaties and alliances required that the position of the privy council be heard. Offensive war, however, could be declared only with the approval of the estates.

<sup>8</sup> Barton, *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era*, pp. 98–102; Kirby, *Northern Europe in the Early Modern Period*, pp. 384–6.

Although King Gustav had attacked oligarchy and aristocracy in his coup rhetoric, an immediate result of the coup was to ensure the position of the aristocracy. This became bitterly evident to the hundreds of tenant farmers on nobility-owned property who, citing the king's words, rose in 1772–3 in various parts of Sweden and Finland to demand improvements to their own position. Gustav III ruled as an enlightened despot, permitting freedom of religion (1781), reforming the penal code and the judiciary, expanding the freedom of livelihood and instituting a more effective administration for the realm. Nevertheless, in 1774 a new act on the freedom of the press was issued which removed the constitutional guarantee of press freedom established in 1766.

The 'Gustavian' era was also a time when the arts, sciences and French court culture flourished. In the 1770s the nobility could well be satisfied with its king, while the farmers and peasants saw cause for complaint in the prohibition of the private distillation of spirits, now a crown monopoly, and the discontinuation of the sale of crown-owned farms and holdings. The clergy, in turn, was annoyed by King Gustav's liberal religious policies, permitting, for example, Jews in 1782 to settle in three towns of the realm and to establish their own synagogues.

The aristocratic officer corps in Finland was concerned about the king's defensive programme of national defence, requiring the retreat of troops into the central parts of Finland, to a line running between the towns of Helsinki and Hämeenlinna (Tavastehus). In the 1780s an aristocratic opposition emerged in Finland, led by Georg Magnus Sprengtporten, who with his circle engaged in agitation against the king and speculation over the possible independence of Finland under Russian protection. Sprengtporten and his circle caused unrest by spreading suspicious rumours that the king planned to exchange Finland for Norway. Russia, in turn, used the separatist group to serve her own goals, and Sprengtporten himself moved to Russia in 1786. The dreams of Sprengtporten and his cohorts were a blend of Enlightenment ideals, the goals of the American Revolutionary War and the political aspirations of the nobility to make Finland a constitutional aristocratic and autonomous nation.

### Revolution à la Suédoise

When war broke out between Russia and Turkey in 1787, King Gustav III felt that his own position was so strong as to permit the implementation of a programme of expansion in foreign policies. In defiance of the instrument of government, the king attacked Russia in 1788. The offensive was



unsuccessful and short-lived, and opposition flared up among the officer corps. A number of separatist Finnish officers drafted the so-called Liikala note addressed to Empress Catherine II, underlining the illegal nature of the war and their own desire for peace. The signatories proposed negotiations and expressed their wish that the borders of 1721 be reinstated. King Gustav responded by demanding a pledge of loyalty from his officers. In reply he received the so-called Anjala Letter of Confederacy, signed by 112 officers and supported by many more. This document cited the illegal nature of the war, losses and the necessity of peace negotiations. King Gustav's future now lay in the balance.

The king was saved by Denmark's declaration of assistance to the Russians. King Gustav quickly returned to Sweden and, utilising the traditional anti-Danish and anti-aristocratic sentiments of the populace, mobilised popular defence. Denmark gave way under resistance and pressure from Great Britain, and hostilities soon ended in October 1789. The opposition was thus weakened, and the king summoned the *riksdag* to assemble.

The *riksdag* of 1789 can be described as 'revolution à la Suédoise'. Anti-aristocratic sentiments abounded among the lower estates, and the representatives of the nobility were disunited. King Gustav made the lower estates adopt the Charter of Union and Assurance, which interfered with the privileges of estates. This document entailed, on the one hand, a marked bolstering of royal authority and, on the other hand, decisive improvements to the social standing of the non-noble estates.

The expansion of royal rights and prerogatives was balanced by a declaration of the rights of the commoners. The non-noble estates were now entitled to obtain land exempted from rent and taxes in lieu of service to the crown (*frälsejord*); the right of the farmers and peasants to purchase crown-owned land was ensured, and total rights of inheritance were assured. The urban burghers were also granted assurances of specific rights enjoyed by the towns. A process of socio-economic development that had slowly progressed over several decades was now officially endorsed and given a legal basis.

The war against Russia ended in 1790 without victory for either side, but the French Revolution and its repercussions left Gustav III with no respite. The bitterness of the aristocratic opposition towards the crown was fanned by the slogans of liberty and equality of the French Revolution, and the ideological atmosphere took a radical turn. The anti-monarchistic mood of the radical opposition culminated in the assassination of Gustav III at the Stockholm Opera House on 16 March 1792.

## Gustav IV Adolf (1792–1809)

The only son of Gustav III was 13 when his father died. Until 1796 Sweden was governed by a regency led by Baron Gustaf Adolf Reuterholm, an ‘anti-Gustavian’ politician, who had been thoroughly shocked by the French Revolution. Upon gaining the throne, the 18-year-old king first dismissed Reuterholm, making it clear to all concerned that he intended to rule independently. The policies pursued by Gustav IV Adolf were marked by thrift, social conservatism and an emphasis on the legitimisation of issues. Particularly after a period spent with his parents-in-law in Bavaria in 1803, the legalism of this religiously minded monarch developed in a hysterical anti-French and anti-Bonapartist direction, with fatal repercussions for both Sweden and the king himself.

Sweden’s participation in the Napoleonic Wars resulted in financial crisis. Lack of success on the battlefield was taken out on the army, which the king humiliated by publicly demoting military units. After the Russians had taken Finland in the autumn of 1808 and come as far as the Åhvenanmaa (the Åland islands), opposition to the king peaked among the officer corps. The opposition was supported by the highest elements of the state bureaucracy, whose counsel the king had refused. The planning of a coup d’état was taken charge of by Lieutenant-Colonel Georg Adlersparre, who led rebel troops towards Stockholm in March 1809. The king sought the support of royalist elements in Skåne, and the nation was under the threat of civil war.

The coup was carried to completion by the top level of the bureaucracy, upon whose orders King Gustav IV Adolf was arrested on 13 March 1809. With the consent of the leading officials, Duke Karl, the king’s uncle, declared himself governor of the realm, and the leadership was concentrated in the hands of a council consisting of former royal counsellors. The estates were convened to make the final break with the Gustavian system of government. This system had foundered on a straightforward coup d’état, whose underlying reasons were primarily rooted in foreign policy and related to the personality of the king himself. In keeping with his character, the king soon accepted his fate, signing the act of abdication on 29 March. By December he had moved to exile in Central Europe.<sup>9</sup>

Conquered by the Russians in 1808, Finland received assurances from Tsar Alexander I that the country would be governed according to ‘Gustavian’

<sup>9</sup> See Barton, *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era*, pp. 255–310; D. Kirby, *The Baltic World 1772–1993: Europe’s Northern Periphery in an Age of Change* (London, 1995), pp. 30–45.

constitutional legislation. At the same time, Sweden made a complete break with the heritage of the eighteenth century. Following a heated political struggle the new rulers reached agreement on crowning Duke Karl and striving towards co-operation with France. Before the coronation Sweden was to have a new instrument of government, the drafting of which was entrusted to the constitutional committee of the *riksdag*. On 6 June 1809 the duke expressed his approval of the new Instrument of Government, after which he was crowned King Karl XIII of Sweden.

The Instrument of Government was a compromise, in which the Gustavians and radicals had to accept the formulations of the moderate majority. The predominant aspect was a striving towards a division of political power and a balance of the authorities and institutions wielding power. In these respects, the models of the Age of Liberty and the Gustavian Era were both cautionary examples.

Executive power rested solely with the monarch, who appointed the privy council, ruled on peace treaties and alliances, and also appointed the highest state officials. The principle was ratified whereby civil servants could not be dismissed from their posts – with the exception of the highest official positions of trust. The estates were entitled to inspect the counsel given to the king by the privy council with reference to the minutes of the council's sessions.

### The Bernadotte era

In the Treaty of Hamina (Fredrikshamn) signed in September 1809, Sweden ceded to Russia its eastern half, which had been an integral part of the realm since the thirteenth century. As during the reign of King Gustav III, Sweden had had its eyes on Norway throughout the Napoleonic Wars. Following the loss of Finland, Norway became the chief objective and goal of Sweden's foreign policies. Accordingly, the insurgents placed their hopes on Prince Christian August of Augustenborg, the commander-in-chief of the Norwegian troops. In January 1810 Christian August was adopted as heir to the Swedish throne under the name of Karl August, but no later than May he died of what was apparently a heart attack. It was rumoured that the crown prince was poisoned, and suspicion centred on the leading 'Gustavians', who had campaigned for King Gustav IV Adolf's son Gustav to become heir apparent.

The funeral of Crown Prince Karl August became a political scandal: unhindered by guards a mob tore Axel von Fersen the Younger – one of the leading 'Gustavians' – from the cortege and killed him. Regardless of

whether this was a premeditated crime or a spontaneous outburst of rage, it was nevertheless an indication of the ever-present possibility of violence. Steps were now taken to obtain a new heir who would also have the blessing of Napoleon. The choice fell on the 47-year-old Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, duke of Ponte-Corvo, and brother-in-law of King Joseph of Spain. It was hoped that Bernadotte would serve Sweden as a strong leader.

Consequently, in 1810 the *riksdag*, acting with French support, elected Bernadotte, despite his Catholic faith. Following the approval of Napoleon, on 21 August 1810 Sweden was given a new crown prince, whom King Karl XIII adopted under the name of Karl Johan. In late 1811 Karl Johan took charge, and in accordance with the wishes of many, Sweden disunited and cornered, now had a leader who both dared to lead and was able to do so.

## Central authorities and local communities

### *An agrarian society*

Eighteenth-century Scandinavia consisted of two kingdoms both of which were agrarian in nature. Around the beginning of the century Denmark had a population of around 1.2 million; this figure grew to around 1.8 million by the close of the eighteenth century. During this century the population of Sweden grew to approximately 3 million. The rapid growth of population had significant effects on economic and societal development. An exception was Iceland, whose population had been limited by natural catastrophes. Around 1800 Iceland had only some 50,000 inhabitants, the same figure as a century earlier.

Most of Scandinavia, however, was sparsely settled. Population density in Denmark, southern Sweden, south Norway and south-west Finland was close to Central European figures, but most of northern Scandinavia was the territory of the small nomadic Sami (Lapp) population, whose position, particularly in Finnish Lapland, deteriorated in the eighteenth century as the result of increased colonisation. The Sami of the fell regions of Sweden and Norway had access to considerably larger grazing and hunting areas. Iceland was settled only along the coasts.

The regions governed by the authorities in København and Stockholm were large. The distance from Vardøhus in northern Norway to Altona on the southern edge of Denmark was as long as from the latter to Tunisia. Norway and Sweden, however, had better communications with the capitals than the large inland areas of Finland. Water routes were faster and more

serviceable than communication by land in the eighteenth century and, since the population of northern Sweden was also concentrated in the coastal regions, it had closer contacts with the central parts of the realm than most of Finland. In the latter region the settlers of the inland areas were in a peripheral position both geographically and by virtue of their language.

Approximately 80 per cent of the Danes, and 90 per cent of all Swedes, Norwegians and Finns earned their livelihood in agriculture. Farms worked by individual families were the predominant system. The organisation of agriculture, and, accordingly, the social and legal status of the rural population varied greatly. Denmark was clearly a region of manorial agriculture following the Central European pattern. Some 20 per cent of all land in Denmark was in the possession of the crown, leaving roughly 4 per cent to freehold farmers and around 65 per cent to manorial landlords of the nobility or other classes. The 700 manors of Denmark constituted a marked judicial and administrative legal sphere, with which crown administration had few opportunities to interfere. The owners of the manors were responsible for collecting taxes from their tenants and for their conscription (*stavnshånd*, 1733). They were also entitled to limit the tenants' right to move and to demand from the latter labour services, or *corvée* (*hoveri*), without limitations.

In Norway, the manorial system existed in only a small area around the Oslo Fiord. At the beginning of the eighteenth century most of Norway's peasantry were tenant farmers, but the growth of the free farmer, or freeholder, class was one of the most significant changes to occur in Norway during that century.

There were large numbers of manors in Skåne and mid Sweden as well as in south-western Finland, but in Sweden their tenants' (*frälsebönder*) obligations to provide labour services were limited, and the landlords lacked specific administrative or judicial rights. During the eighteenth century, the main portion of the peasantry consisted of so-called crown farmers (*kronobönder*), but by the close of the century the proportion of freehold farmers with hereditary property (*skattebönder*) had significantly increased. In both the Swedish realm and Norway the financial burdens on the peasantry included the maintenance of troops (*indelningsverk*), while in Denmark appointing men to military service was the prerogative of the owners of the manors. There was no military system in Iceland.

Population growth in the eighteenth century in all parts of the Nordic region also caused the increase of the landless population of tenant farmers, cotters, lodgers and labourers. The consolidation of the economic and social position of the peasantry partly resulted from differentiation and proletarianisation of the

rural population. The landless rural dwellers were a labour reserve for the landlords and freeholders, as well as for the towns and the mining industry.

In European terms the urban system of the Scandinavian countries was still at a low level. The only major cities were the capitals: København (around 90,000 inhabitants) and Stockholm (around 75,000 inhabitants). Other leading centres of trade and commerce were Göteborg, Turku (Åbo), Christiania and Bergen, with 5,000–15,000 inhabitants. The mercantilistic trade policies of the eighteenth century favoured a few prominent centres, particularly capital cities. As a group the urban burghers were small in number and relatively weak in terms of economic position. Along with the burghers, the middle classes included the non-aristocratic owners of sawmills, ironworks and mines in the rural areas, and the increasing lower echelons of the civil service in the capitals.

### Two systems of administration

The Oldenburg dynasty of Denmark ruled over a conglomerate state typical of the period in accordance with the *Kongelov* (the Royal Law) of 1665 in a more autocratic manner than any other European rulers. Denmark was possibly under the highest degree of absolutism in all Europe. After the implementation of the *Kongelov* of 1665, there were no privileged meetings of the estates in any part of the realm that would have placed limitations on autocratic rule by the king. Denmark was unitary and governed in a more centralised manner than any other contemporary conglomerate state (e.g. Prussia, Austria). Accordingly, the Danish system has also been described as 'bureaucratic absolutism'.<sup>10</sup> Owing to its centralised character, Denmark was regarded as a highly modern state during the eighteenth century.

Denmark, however, was not uniform. Norway, Iceland and the Føroyar Islands were governed according to separate Norwegian law (*Norske Lov*, 1667); the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein had separate legislation and administration, and Denmark also had a number of transoceanic trading sites and colonies, the largest being Greenland. Denmark thus consisted of areas governed under different laws, although, in principle, all inhabitants of the realm had the same political status.

Sweden presented a different situation. With the exception of Swedish Pomerania and the town of Wismar, governed under German law and with

<sup>10</sup> H. Gustafsson, *Political Interaction in the Old Regime: Central Power and Local Society in Eighteenth-century Nordic States* (Lund, 1994), p. 47.

the aid of the *Landtag* of Pomerania, the whole realm had uniform legislation and centralised administration. It was not until the end of the reign of Gustav IV Adolf that Swedish law was implemented in Pomerania. The official language of the realm was Swedish, but there was also a significant Finnish-speaking population. Finland, however, had no separate administrative status, and it had never formed its own political entity in the same way as Norway, which had been an independent kingdom until 1380. Despite this, Finland was understood to be a separate entity within the realm, being called from time to time a duchy or grand duchy. Moreover, a separate governor-general for Finland was appointed for the period 1747–53. For the Finnish-speaking peasantry, the language difference in particular was a problem, because Swedish was the language of administration. The Finnish-speaking peasants also had difficulties in the *riksdag*, although the secretaries of the estate of the peasantry usually spoke Finnish. In Finland, as in Norway, the Reformation had emphasised the national language. Soon, however, the consequent policy of the Stockholm government in favour of Swedish had pushed aside the use of Finnish. Most of the Finnish members of the ‘higher’ estates spoke Swedish, but official acts and decrees only became available in Finnish translation on a piecemeal basis for the peasant representatives.

The political system of the so-called Age of Liberty (1719–72) relied on the political power of the *riksdag* or diet, consisting of four estates. From a European perspective, this system, known as ‘parliamentary rule by the estates’ or even as the ‘autocracy of the estates’, was unique. Similar systems of government by representation were to be found only in the Netherlands and Great Britain, but nowhere else had royal authority sunk to such a low level or had farmers and peasants similar rights to participate in the political process. In the eyes of contemporaries, this system was on the one hand outmoded, and even harmful, because decision-making in foreign policy under the rule of the estates was slow, explicit and susceptible to external influences. On the other hand, European observers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau were interested in the Swedes’ broad rights of participation in the political process and the ‘republicanism’ inherent in the system.<sup>11</sup>

Both systems of government, the Danish *Kongelov* of 1665 and Sweden’s Instrument of Government of 1720, had as their core concept the definition of the constitution as a contract or agreement between the people and the ruler.

<sup>11</sup> Metcalf, ‘Parliamentary Sovereignty and Royal Reaction, 1719–1809’, p. 124.

The *Kongelov* did not seek justification for autocracy in theological arguments. It was primarily a 'contractual law' from which followed the equal rights of the people as subjects of their king. The only limitations placed upon the ruler by the *Kongelov* were to preserve the Lutheran faith and an injunction against sharing power or dividing the realm. According to the Instrument of Government of 1720, the Swedish king was required to declare his aversion to despotism. The Instrument laid down the limitations and forms of governing in detail.

The rule of the estates in Sweden relied on the privileges of the estates, which had been laid down in the early 1720s for the nobility and the clergy. The content of specific political rights depended on one's estate; the nobility had by law the sole right to the highest official posts in the realm and it was also given over-representation in the main organs of state administration. The officer corps was predominantly of noble birth, which meant that the army provided the nobility with an especially influential channel for action and political pressure. The officer corps formed a strong social group in the same manner as the clergy or the burghers of the towns. Eighteenth-century Sweden can well be described as a network of various interest groups and their special rights.

### Administration and subjects under two political systems

The political system formed an essential distinction between the two Scandinavian kingdoms in terms of the opportunities of the subjects for political influence. In this respect the Danish autocracy offered hardly any possibilities, while the Swedish system was based on broad political participation.

Also the system of government administration was important with regard to the opportunities of the subject to influence matters. The objectives of administration were to implement the decisions of higher authorities and to gauge the reactions prompted by these decisions. In both countries government administration was not only executive in nature; it also had the role of a political feeler reacting to local moods and passing signals from the local level to higher levels.

At the highest levels of government the administrative structures of both kingdoms were similar, being modelled on one another. The system was based on government boards operating in specific areas of competence and expertise. Denmark had six central government boards, or offices, of which the most important ones were the Danish chancery (*Danske Kancelli*) responsible for internal affairs, and the exchequer (*Rentekammer*) in charge of state



finances. The German chancery (*Tyske Kancelli*) was responsible for preparing foreign policy, and there were government boards for the army and the navy. The board of trade (*Kommercekollegium*) was established in 1735. The supreme court (*Højesteret*) represented the highest judicial authority, belonging to the king.

The specialisation of central administration in Sweden was taken slightly further and was laid down in the 1720 Instrument of Government. Sweden thus had eleven government boards, including three regional courts of appeal. The key authority was the chancery board (*Kanslikollegium*) which prepared all matters going before the privy council (king in council). State finances were managed by three units: the board for public lands and funds (*Kammarkollegium*) was responsible for crown property and tax collection; the board of the exchequer (*Statskontor*) prepared the budget (*Stat*); and the chancery audit board (*Kammarrevision*) supervised the use of state funds. There were also separate administrative boards for the army, navy, trade and mining. In both Sweden and Denmark the mining industry was of essential importance to the economy and its administration was specialised to a considerable degree. In the Danish realm, mining administration was, however, concentrated under the aegis of the chief mining office (*Oberbergamt*) operating at Kongsberg in Norway. In this respect it had the role of a regional administrative organ.

The Danish and Swedish realms differed most distinctly from each other at the level of regional administration. Different administrative structures had been developed for Denmark, Norway and Iceland. The main difference in comparison with the simple, centralised system of Sweden was that in the kingdom of Denmark regional administration was partly based on the overlapping roles of ecclesiastical and secular administration. This made the system more complex and also less distinct, because in many cases the so-called diocesan governor was also the county governor of his own area of residence.

In the areas ruled by the Oldenburg dynasty overlapping civil and diocesan administration also blurred the boundaries of ecclesiastical and secular administration, unlike in Sweden where the diocesan administration led by the diocesan chapter and the local bishop was clearly distinct from state administration. In the Swedish system the relationship of the governors and the bishops was usually laid down separately in cases involving matters within the competence of both parties (e.g. the administration of poor-houses). In Denmark the head of the church was in principle the bishop of Sjælland and in Sweden the archbishop of Uppsala. Swedish ecclesiastical administration, however, was more independent and during the Age of

Liberty the estate of the clergy assembled at the *riksdag* took upon itself the role of the highest ecclesiastical body in the realm. On the one hand, this underlined the independence of the church and its clergy and, on the other hand, it clearly bound them to the existing political system.

Local government was of great importance for the populace. In this respect, Denmark clearly differed from the other Nordic countries. Danish local administration (*herredsfogeder*) did not extend to the manorial properties. The independence of the manors in secular, ecclesiastical and judicial administration was an essential limitation to the authority of the crown. Most of the subjects of the king of Denmark were more the subjects of the manorial landlords than of the Danish state.

Local administration in Norway also differed from the Swedish system. As in Denmark, the Norwegian bailiffs (advocates) were also judges in courts operating in their own areas. In Sweden, the judiciary was kept distinctly and absolutely separate from civil administration. The judges, however, also chaired meetings where peasants elected by the parishes convened to appoint representatives to the *riksdag* and on official complaints to the diet.

Local self-government was perhaps the most important feature of the Swedish administrative system. This, however, was implemented in ecclesiastical parish administration and not through civil administration. The parishioners were traditionally required to take responsibility for their church and the economy of the congregation.

For these purposes they elected their own officers and maintained parish meetings as specific decision-making institutions. In the Privileges of the Clergy laid down in 1723 the vicars were required to hold parish meetings at least twice a year. During the eighteenth century this institution developed into an increasingly important agency of local administration, responsible for schools, care for the poor and other issues. The parish meetings were also the basic-level organisation that participated in the election of members of the *riksdag* by appointing representatives to regional assemblies of electors.

With the exception of patronage congregations maintained by the nobility, where the appointment of clergymen was the sole prerogative of the holders of the rights of patronage, the election of clergymen was a matter of self-government at the parish level. The relationship of the clergy and the parishioners was thus close, and as late as the eighteenth century it still had marked features of traditional mutual loyalty. As the role of parish administration grew into local self-government the relationship between the clergy and the local land-owning population changed, as the farmers took on a greater role as local decision-makers. At the same time local

government became relatively more independent from state administration.<sup>12</sup> Both trends serve to explain the growing importance of the farmer class in society during the eighteenth century.

The Danish realm had no corresponding system of local self-government. In Norway, however, the parishes were more distinctly an institution uniting the ranks of the commoners than in Denmark, where peasant self-government in the manorial regions operated at the village and hamlet level. This was a functional solution, where the needs of manorial administration laid down the limits of self-government. The clergy of the Danish realm had fewer political and administrative responsibilities than in Sweden, but their rights were also fewer.

A similar difference can be seen in the towns and cities, which had a broader and institutionally better defined system of self-government in Sweden than in Denmark. Although the burgomasters who headed the Swedish towns were officials appointed by the king, they were nominated for appointment through elections, and the burgomasters exercised power together with councillors (*rådmän*) elected by the burghers. The political influence of the burghers was also expanded by general assemblies of burghers, and the elected posts of aldermen (*de äldste*) required by legislation laid down in 1758. Also in this respect Norway was a kind of intermediary model, where the influence of the local burghers was increased by the 'elected ones' (*de eligierte*), monitoring the interests of the urban bourgeoisie in town administration, which in other respects was solidly in the hands of state officials.

### The bureaucracy

The administrative apparatus of both Denmark and Sweden expanded during the eighteenth century. With the exception of the customs service, which was leased to a private organisation in Sweden and operated by the urban burghers in Norway, administration or the collection of taxes was not based on feudal concepts of fiefdom or leaseholds. As noted by Harald Gustafsson this implied that in the eighteenth century both states had an administrative apparatus which can only be described as advanced by contemporary European standards:

Centralisation, demarcated spheres of competence, regulation and control were highly developed. Compared with the unwieldy French central

12 P. Pulma, *Fattigvård i frihetstidens Finland* (Helsingfors, 1985).

administration with all its councils and large farmed-out sectors, or with the English nobles and gentlemen serving as amateur officials at the local level, the Nordic administrations were highly streamlined and professional. Even compared with the famous Prussian administration, the Nordic systems show fewer deviations and farmed revenues, less duplication of authority and delegated power.<sup>13</sup>

From the perspective of the Weberian bureaucratic ideal, however, Sweden was a step ahead, because its system of administration was regionally more uniform, more distinctly differentiated with regard to function and based on more exhaustive and more impersonally drafted instructions. Denmark, with its manorial system, was clearly an exception to the general principle of administration.

In the Danish autocracy, the civil service and the leading bureaucrats of the government departments in København had a great deal of political influence. The top echelons of the bureaucracy had close links with the landed aristocracy, which impeded the implementation of land reform in the eighteenth century. The highest bureaucrats, however, appear to have represented the 'interests of the state' in many important economic issues, such as conflicts over the right to distil spirits or the trading monopoly concerning Iceland.

Where the central government departments had a pronounced role in Denmark, the focus of power in Norway and Iceland was on the regional level. Particularly in Norway, the role and activities of the civil servants were of importance. They took the initiative in many issues and formulated solutions in disputes to be forwarded to København, but also retarded and even sabotaged the implementation of orders and directives from the central level, if these were regarded as contrary to local interests.

The association of the Norwegian bureaucracy with local elite bodies and thereby with local interests was clearly evident. In Norway, civil servants took upon themselves a kind of aristocratic role and were also actively involved in middle-class means of livelihood, particularly in the lumber and mining industry (as also the Swedish nobility). State officials' links with economic interests were also common in Denmark and Iceland, and their position in the processes of decision-making and administration provided them with significant means for also furthering their own interests, because they had control of communications and the providing of

<sup>13</sup> Gustafsson, *Political Interaction in the Old Regime*, p. 125.

information within the administrative apparatus. This gave the Norwegian civil servants in particular a degree of leeway vis-à-vis the central administration. This was clearly evident in forestry policies, in which connection the Norwegian civil service in collusion with local communities effectively torpedoed any attempts to change the system that spelt advantages for those involved at the local level. Both Iceland and Norway provide examples of how local officials, for example, refused to co-operate with supervisors sent from København and made it impossible for the latter to carry out their work.

There is no doubt that the political influence of the top-level bureaucrats of Sweden's government department was equal to that of their Danish colleagues. Also in Sweden the upper hierarchy of the civil service took on an important role in areas of importance to the economy of state, e.g. in mining and trade policies. The *riksdag* had a dual role with regard to the bureaucracy. On the one hand it offered the aristocratic top-level bureaucrats a significant channel of influence, but on the other hand the efforts of the estates to monitor and control the administrative apparatus implied a need to negotiate and accept compromises.

In Sweden, the role of the regional and local officials was to some degree more limited than in the Danish realm, apparently resulting from more distinctly outlined tasks and stricter control. The chancellor of justice elected by the estates monitored – though at times only in principle – the administrative apparatus from the beginning of the 1750s. For example, an inspection tour undertaken in 1750–1 led to a number of indictments for misuse of official position and negligence, particularly in the collection of taxes. The highest posts, from governor upwards, were reserved for the nobility, but local officials were only rarely recruited directly from the local elite. A circulation of office was maintained. The local officials were appointed by the provincial governor, and although it is evident that local officials came to be recruited from the local elite, their mutual links appear to have been weaker in Sweden than, for example, in Norway. The independent status of both regional and local officials appears, however, to have been of a similar nature in both kingdoms: the further the distance from the capital, the larger the degree of leeway and the greater the opportunities for misuse.

### Who had a say in affairs?

A systematic comparative analysis of decision-making processes in eighteenth-century Sweden and Denmark was carried out by the joint Nordic research

project 'Central Power and Local Societies'.<sup>14</sup> This project focused on the political influence of various groups in society, as well as the opportunities open to administration and the influencing of administration. Comparisons outlined both self-evident differences and surprising similarities between the two otherwise different political systems.

Particularly in connection with issues of major economic importance such as the mining industry, a decisive role lay with the entrepreneurs themselves and their organisations along with the influence of the central government departments. In matters pertaining to industrial facilities, mines and trade the farmers and peasants had few opportunities to influence the decision-making process. It should be noted, however, that decisions were strongly influenced and shaped by conflicts among various elite groups. For example, the burghers of the towns often resisted schemes by noblemen or officers for establishing sawmills in the countryside and used a great deal of funds and effort to influence the rulings and decisions of the central government departments.

Local conflicts were particularly important in Sweden, where the granting of permission for industrial enterprises required hearing the views of the local populace and those whose privileges could be assumed to be affected. The complex process of decision-making involving, through the local courts, both the peasantry and other groups, could often last for years, because the *riksdag* could also intervene in such matters. The process also demonstrated the importance of the Swedish judiciary in other than purely legal matters.

The more peripheral an issue was regarded to be in terms of the national interest, the greater were the opportunities of the local communities to safeguard their own interest and the less interest the state had in how the matter was dealt with. This was particularly evident in care provided for the poor. Swedish ecclesiastical legislation and the instructions of the authorities required the parishes to establish hospices for the indigent. These regulations, however, were generally circumvented, and the greater the distance from the centres of authority the less the interest of even the bureaucratic apparatus in pressuring the parishes to abide by the law.

In Sweden there was a significant and problematic principle coming between the law and its implementation, namely the right to self-government granted to the parishes, which also permitted decisions and solutions straying from the letter of the law. As a rule, in the parishes where members of the

<sup>14</sup> Gustafsson, *Political Interaction in the Old Regime* is the report of this research project, describing its methods and the research carried out in connection with it.

nobility and other upper-class persons had little influence the clergy usually complied with the wishes of the peasants, which commonly meant bypassing acts and statutes. This was particularly evident in the eastern and northern regions of Finland.<sup>15</sup>

The opportunities of the farmers and peasants to influence official decision-making were naturally more limited than among the more privileged groups higher in the social hierarchy. This was particularly evident in Denmark, where the peasantry was directly subjugated to the manorial landowners, which in turn limited the former group's decision-making opportunities at the village and hamlet levels. In similar fashion, the rights of the tenant farmers (*frälsebönder*) of Sweden were more limited, as they were not entitled to elect members to the *riksdag*. Moreover, their opportunities to influence local government were also more constrained. The stronger the manorial system, the more limited the opportunities of both the peasantry and the crown to influence matters at the local level.

Although the political orientation of the majority of Sweden's farmers and peasants in the eighteenth century can be described as defensive in combating the demands of other groups and the state, the activity, consciousness and political weight of the group clearly increased. This could be seen in the aftermath of the Dalarna peasant revolt, and the conflicts among the estates that culminated in the 1760s served to strengthen the position of the peasantry. Involvement in the political life of the *riksdag*, the utilisation of the diet to serve local and estate-related interests, and increased political consciousness and experience gained through increasingly important local government made at least the elite of the Swedish and Finnish peasantry politically aware and helped this group to move beyond defending purely local and concrete interests. The political activity of the Swedish farmers and peasants was more clearly a common and nationwide phenomenon than among their counterparts in the Danish realm.

In so far as the political role of the Swedish and Finnish peasantry can be described as exceptionally prominent in the European context, the farmers and peasants of Norway clearly occupy a position between Denmark and Sweden. The decision-making process in Norway was even in other respects more varied, involving a larger number of active participants than in Denmark or Iceland. The position of Norway's freehold farmers (*odalbönder*) was strengthened, and this group had significant forestry and trade interests

<sup>15</sup> Pulma, *Fattigvård i frihetstidens Finland*, pp. 243–53.

particularly in southern and central Norway. The administrative apparatus, which was anchored to the local communities in many ways, had to take into consideration the interests of a population that was far more heterogeneous than in Denmark.

Unlike their counterparts in Sweden and Finland, the Norwegian peasants did not have legal political channels at its disposal. This was the source of a distinction among these political cultures. Except for the war years of 1741–2 and unrest in connection with the coup d'état of King Gustav III (1772–3) the Swedish and Finnish peasantry relied on formal political and administrative channels of influence. The political culture in question was markedly legalistic in nature.

### The restless Norwegians

The Norwegian peasantry had to make do with the opportunities provided by the country's system of administration. All subjects of the king of Denmark were entitled to appeal about their problems to the monarch, and this institutionalised right of supplication was eagerly used by the Norwegians. It was, however, forbidden to make such application in matters that had already been ruled upon, but this regulation was not always followed, and the government departments of Denmark could also revoke earlier decisions and rulings. While mining entrepreneurs, burghers, civil servants and officers had access to other, unofficial channels of influence, the peasantry had to make do with official supplication. If this led to no results, the Norwegians in particular were prone to invoke illegal means of pressure.

A typical example of how the Norwegian peasantry acted was a protest in 1725 among the farmers of Nedenes in southern Norway, who took up arms and marched on the town of Arendal, demanding the right to trade freely in lumber and other goods with skippers. In 1723 the provincial governor had forbidden such direct trade with ships' masters. This decision had been taken following demands by the burghers of the town and had been preceded by an array of petitions and supplications both in favour of the ruling and against it. The farmers were incredulous and demanded that the local bailiff read the ruling to them. When this had been done, the armed peasants and skippers who had forced themselves into the bailiff's house calmed down and left.

In 1752 the peasants of Arendal rebelled again, also this time over conflicts of interest between them and the local merchants which had been administratively resolved in favour of the latter. The rising, involving several hundred insurgents, died out in a few days, and its leaders were punished,



but in 1756 the rights of the peasantry of the region were expanded through official rulings. In the 1760s peasants in western Norway rebelled against a new tax, and some 2,000 armed inhabitants of the coastal areas assembled in Bergen. Soldiers were brought from Denmark to quell the rebellion, since the authorities could not trust Norwegian troops. In practice, the new tax remained uncollected, and in 1772 it was revoked completely in Norway. In Denmark, where there were no uprisings, the tax was collected even in later years. The most extensive and politically significant uprising occurred in Norway in the 1780s, when rebels under the leadership of Christian Lofthuus again assembled in southern Norway to resist high prices demanded by merchants and tax collection by local officials.

It was typical of the Norwegian revolts that they were often preceded by attempts to bring about change through official administrative channels. It was only when this course failed that other action was taken, although even the actual uprisings followed quite moderate forms. The revolts were regionally limited and lacked any broader political goals.

### The central authorities and the local community in comparison

A comparison of political and administrative possibilities and means of influencing decisions clearly shows how the Swedish system in the Age of Liberty offered greater opportunities in this respect. Political participation and mobilisation were core rights for all the estates. Especially in the 1760s, when the public exposure of issues grew as a result of the discontinuation of censorship, the political influence of the so-called middle class also grew. A similar emergence of 'public opinion' occurred in Denmark in the 1760s. In this respect, the Danish system was 'politicised' from above. Denmark's urban bourgeoisie and educated classes, particularly in København, engaged in extensive journalistic and organisational political activities on the national level. This added to the political weight of the middle class, although the political system did not provide any direct channels of influence.

The administrative apparatus of Sweden was stronger than that of Denmark-Norway and its grasp extended deeper into the local communities. In both systems the economic and social structures of the communities had a great influence on both the efficiency of administration and opportunities to influence matters. In simplified terms, the stronger the position of the upper classes at the local level, the more effectively could the central authorities realise their aims. The examples of Sweden and

Norway show that in regions where the peasantry had a strong position in society, this group could successfully use available opportunities to safeguard and further their own interests.

The relationship of centre and periphery also influenced the relations between the central authorities and the local communities. The distance of Iceland from the seat of power in København left the island almost completely under the control of local officials, while in Norway the strength of the bureaucracy was undermined by the marked and often conflicting interests of the peasants, mining entrepreneurs and burghers engaged in trade and commerce. Denmark, in turn, housed a 'federation' of 700 manors forming a solid wall of resistance against the central authorities and their attempts at interference. The manorial landlords had considerable influence over central government administration, but on the other hand the strong bourgeoisie of København was a political counterweight to the rural aristocracy, and government administration had to take the interests of the former into account.

In the Swedish realm the relationship of centre and periphery also entailed the influences of social structure. In the central regions like southern Sweden, the environs of Stockholm and southern Finland government administration was strongest, because the elite closest to it also governed the processes of decision-making in the local communities. The grasp of the central authorities diminished the further one went north or east. On the other hand the peasantry of the Finnish-speaking areas had poorer opportunities to present their case because of the language barrier, although in local issues the Finnish peasants had a strong independent role.

Eighteenth-century Scandinavia had no uniform political or administrative system. The Danish autocracy, in theory one of the strongest of its type in all Europe, primarily had to rely on a bureaucracy whose forms and spheres of operation differed considerably from the rest of Europe for both institutional and socio-economic reasons. Depending on attendant circumstances, the opportunities for the subject to influence decisions also differed, but, with the exception of Denmark's tenant farmers, administration and the processes of decision-making could not function without providing various interest groups with opportunities to influence the course of affairs. Danish absolutism was in fact administratively flexible.

In Sweden the rule of the estates and the bodies of local self-government gave the subjects – except for women and the rural and urban proletariat – incomparably broader opportunities to influence decisions, and these were duly used. Administration was uniform throughout the realm. It operated

more or less predictably but also rigidly. The local communities and various interest groups had at their disposal several institutionalised channels for presenting their case. The hierarchy of the system ensured that the central administration and the elite groups associated with it had overwhelming opportunities to influence matters. But when the *riksdag* also addressed administrative issues it became a source of chaotic unpredictability. The estates could now alter any and all administrative rulings and decisions.

Politics at the level of the *riksdag* made decisions a matter of alliances and trades, which eroded their predictability, and, most importantly, made the whole process of decision-making extremely long-winded. The bureaucratisation of society had possibly proceeded further in Sweden than in any other European country. This trend, however, was offset by a strong political culture relying on a system of four estates and local government which assisted administrative stability. This structure could not be broken down even by King Gustav III. At the *riksdag* of 1789 the king had to 'sell' the basis of aristocratic power to the lower estates in order to expand his own rights as a ruler. The 'Swedish revolution' of 1789 was largely contingent upon the conditions created by the political system and social developments of the Age of Liberty.

### The loss of Finland

The Treaty of Tilsit signed by France and Russia in 1807 required Portugal, Denmark and Sweden to be forced into the Continental System aimed against Great Britain, should the latter not agree to peace. Sweden was about to remain isolated as Denmark had signed a treaty with France in October of the same year. In September Sweden had already lost Pomerania when Gustav IV Adolf had defiantly revoked a truce with France in July. To the Swedish king Napoleon was the Apocalyptic Beast incarnate, with whom even negotiations were an unacceptable suggestion. Sweden's foreign policy was losing its grasp on reality.

Russia began to prepare for war and Sweden was under the threat of conflict on two fronts, which the nation's 66,000-strong army could not manage. On 21 February 1808 Russia presented an ultimatum to Sweden, and Russian troops crossed the borders of the realm on the same day. Denmark, with French troops on her soil, declared war on Sweden on 14 March. Gustav IV Adolf regarded the Danish attack on southern Sweden as a greater danger and a more important factor in view of the interest of Great Britain in the situation. The king's advisors argued for a concentration of

troops against the Russian attack in the east, but the king dreamed of an Anglo-Swedish attack on Norway. Developments in the north were, however, of little interest to Britain, whose main focus was now on Spain.<sup>16</sup> English troops landed in Göteborg in May, but they left already in June.

Sweden's plan for military action in Finland was based on the controlled retreat of her troops to the west coast and the fortresses of Svartholma (Loviisa) and Sveaborg (Helsinki) to await spring and the arrival of reinforcements from Sweden. The Russians began their attack with a well-trained army of 24,000 men facing some 20,000 men and officers mainly accustomed to peacetime conditions and lacking experience of the battlefield. The rapid retreat, however, reinforced rather than eroded the pessimism and defeatism already prevalent among the aristocratic officers. The fortress of Sveaborg, with some 7,000 soldiers and 2,000 cannons and a crucial factor in the defence of Finland, surrendered in May without firing a shot.

During the summer of 1808 the Swedish troops scored some minor victories, but invasion attempts on the coast of south-western Finland failed miserably. By September the number of Russian troops had grown to over 50,000 and the Swedes had clearly lost the conflict. Peasant guerrilla troops carried on resistance in eastern Finland, but the truce signed in November required the Finnish and Swedish troops, suffering from hunger and disease, to retreat to positions north of the river Kymijoki. Finland had been lost, and only King Gustav IV Adolf believed that it could be reconquered. The noose around Stockholm tightened in March 1809, when the Russians occupied the Ahvenanmaa (the Åland islands) and landed at Umeå on the Swedish mainland. Sweden officially surrendered on 25 March 1809.

Russia had begun the conflict as a means of bringing pressure upon Sweden, but already on 28 March Emperor Alexander I declared that Finland had been annexed to Russia. The intention of the victors was to make the conquest a permanent state of affairs, which required the rapid pacification of the country. The Russians brought with them a top level of civil administration for Finland, including a number of men belonging to the circle around Georg Magnus Sprengtporten, who was now one of the emperor's closest advisors. Sprengtporten played a major role in creating the autonomous status of Finland. The so-called pacification policies were effectively implemented. Most of the civil service remained at their posts and the clergy and nobility readily adapted to a situation which had been anticipated for

<sup>16</sup> Barton, *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era*, pp. 267–99.

decades. As early as May 1808 the Academy (University) of Turku (Åbo) and the Turku Court of Appeal pledged allegiance to the emperor, and were soon followed by other official bodies. A Finnish delegation was invited to St Petersburg to prepare and define Finland's new status within the Russian empire. In December 1808 it was laid down that matters pertaining to Finland were to be presented to the ruler independently of the Russian ministers, and in January 1809 the estates of Finland were summoned to convene at Porvoo in March.

At this so-called Porvoo Diet, Alexander I raised the Autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland to a position among the nations under his rule. In accordance with the dynastic heritage, the emperor pledged to rule over his new subjects with due respect for their faith and legal system. The Gustavian legislation laid down under Swedish rule posed no problems for imperial rule, and the official presentation of Finnish affairs to the emperor was placed in the hands of a secretary of state for Finland instead of the Russian senate. The Finnish army was disbanded for a period of fifty years, and collected taxes were decreed to be used solely in Finland. A governing council (from 1816 the imperial senate of Finland) was established for the purposes of domestic administration. Under the direction of this body, the nation's bureaucratic elite ruled until the 1860s without the diet being assembled even once. The emperor was represented in Finland by a governor-general. Georg Magnus Sprengtporten was the first to hold this post.

The new situation and its realities were ratified in the Peace of Hamina on 17 September 1809. Sweden ceded Finland and Ahvenanmaa as well as areas of northern Finland between the rivers Kymijoki and Torniojoki (Torneålv) which had traditionally been under Swedish rule. Sweden also lost some 800,000 subjects, most of whom were Finnish-speakers. In 1811, when Russia returned to Finland parts of southeastern Finland occupied in the eighteenth century (so-called Old Finland), the country's population grew to over 1 million.

In December 1809 Sweden and Denmark signed peace accords, and agreement was reached with France in January 1810. There was no compensation for the delayed participation in the Continental System, but Pomerania north of the river Peene was returned to Sweden. In June 1810 Sweden broke off diplomatic relations with Great Britain, and declared war in November. In August 1810 Jean Baptiste Bernadotte was elected heir apparent of Sweden as Prince Karl Johan, and he arrived in the country in October of the same year. Those looking to France now had their French-born king, and those desiring order had a strong leader.

## Sweden and the Battle of the Nations

King Karl Johan's policies, however, did not accommodate France as much as Napoleon had wished. On the contrary, the king immediately adopted his new role as monarch and made the welfare and success of Sweden his main concern. It was through this that he hoped to gain more than the crown alone. The first objective was naturally Norway.

In January 1812 Napoleon tried to push Sweden to take a more active anti-British role by sending French troops into Pomerania, but Sweden reacted in a completely different way. Karl Johan instituted negotiations with both Russia and England, offering them an alliance. For England, the price demanded by Sweden – subsidies and possession of Norway – was too high, but the Treaty of Örebro in 1812 nevertheless brought an end to hostilities between Sweden, England and Russia. Karl Johan made more progress with Russia. In the Treaty of St Petersburg, Sweden acknowledged the loss of Finland, while Russia pledged to support Swedish claims to Norway, with military means if necessary. If Denmark agreed to cede Norway, it would be recompensed with German territories, but if King Frederik VI refused, Sweden would be entitled to invade Sjælland.

After having ensured his own position and having reinforced the army, Karl Johan rushed to meet again with Alexander I, this time in Turku in August 1812. The emperor needed support against Napoleon's onslaught, but the price demanded by Karl Johan, all of Finland or at least Ahvenanmaa, was too high. It was agreed that Russia would post 25,000 soldiers in Skåne to help Swedish troops in an invasion of Sjælland. When Russia's military situation deteriorated, this agreement survived only on paper.

During the winter of 1812–13 the interests of Sweden and Great Britain had begun to converge, and in March 1813 an Anglo-Swedish treaty was signed under which Sweden agreed to send 30,000 soldiers to the Continent. England in turn undertook to provide naval, diplomatic and military support for the invasion of Norway. King Karl Johan, who had taken command of the Swedish troops, participated in the Trachenberg summit in Silesia in July 1813 together with Alexander I and Frederick Wilhelm of Prussia. Great Britain and Austria sent observers to the meeting. In the war plan approved by the summit King Karl Johan was appointed commander-in-chief of a joint Prussian, Swedish and Russian army. To the dismay of Sweden, her plans regarding Norway were postponed.

After the negotiations at Trachenberg, Sweden became a fully fledged participant in Europe's major test of strength. King Karl Johan, however, was

cautious and spared his troops. The forces of the alliance now went from one victory to another, and their campaign culminated at the Battle of the Nations at Leipzig on 16–19 October. Karl Johan's sparing use of his own troops proved to be unacceptable to his allies: of total losses of 54,000 men the number of Swedes was only 180. In negotiations following these events, Prussia and Russia could no longer accept that Sweden be given the role of a major European power, as proposed by England.

Dissatisfaction grew among the allies in the autumn, when King Karl Johan directed an attack with 60,000 men against Denmark instead of Holland as planned. The Swedish wedge separated the French and Danish forces, and in December the Swedes took Lübeck. Denmark was now isolated, and in January 1814 Frederik VI agreed to the armistice terms in Kiel. Denmark now promised to cede Norway to Sweden, to form a united kingdom. In return, Denmark was entitled to keep the possessions of the Føroyar, traditionally connected to Norway, Iceland, Greenland and the Swedish territories in Pomerania.

The main objectives of Sweden's foreign policies had now been achieved. It only remained to fulfil obligations towards the alliance and to realise King Karl Johan's personal ambitions. Swedish troops were sent into Belgium, and Karl Johan began to establish contacts with liberal circles in France in order to influence attitudes in favour of his possible ascension to the throne of France. Of the allies, however, only Russia supported Karl Johan, and Louis XVIII took the throne. Sweden and France concluded a peace treaty in May 1814.

### The struggle over Norway

Denmark and the Norwegians were more than aware of Sweden's aims of cutting up the kingdom of the Oldenburg dynasty.<sup>17</sup> There was hardly any desire in Norway to become a Swedish subject, but the late eighteenth century had witnessed a growth of Norwegian attitudes laying the basis for separatism. Frederik VI planned on obviating Sweden's schemes by reinforcing resistance in Norway. The task of mobilising resistance was left to Crown Prince Christian Frederik of Denmark, who was also supreme governor of Norway. The king of Denmark provided support by clandestinely shipping large amounts of grain to Norway throughout the spring of 1814.

17 K. Mykland, *Kampen om Norge 1784–1814*, in K. Mykland (ed.), *Norges historie*, 9 (Oslo, 1978), pp. 216–33.

When Christian Frederik received royal orders in February 1814 to cede Norway to the rule of the king of Sweden, leading Norwegians and the supreme governor took matters into their own hands. On 21 February mine owners, leading merchants, top-level bureaucrats and officers of the Norwegian elite assembled to draft the guidelines for a future instrument of government and central administration and to begin preparations for an assembly (*riksforsamling*) to lay down a constitution. A diplomatic campaign, albeit with meagre results, was launched to promote Norwegian independence. During the spring of 1814, Norwegians in many places pledged their allegiance to the Prince-Regent Christian Frederik and elected representatives to the planned constitutional assembly. In this process, awareness of Norwegian independence grew and established a suitable mood for the coming assembly. When representatives from various parts of the country convened at Eidsvold, the supporters of independence had a majority, but there were also those who wished to keep Norway connected to Denmark, and also those who regarded the federation with Sweden as inevitable.

On 17 May 1814, the *riksforsamling* assembled at Eidsvold approved a constitution for Norway that was one of the most radical of its kind at the time. Modelling theirs on the French constitution of 1791, the Norwegians made the single-chamber *storting* the nation's main political institution. The members of this representative body were appointed through general elections, where suffrage, however, was strictly limited to males meeting certain property qualifications. The new constitution was aimed at reducing both aristocratic and monopolistic privileges within the economy. General, though limited, suffrage was aimed at soliciting the support of the strongest elements of the farmer class for the independence front, which largely relied on civil servants. The Eidsvold constitution has been termed a constitution of the 'third estate', or even of the civil service.

On the agenda of the *riksforsamling*, the constitution was followed by the election of the king. It was clear to all concerned that Christian Frederik, who had led Norway since the spring and had proved to be a skilled politician, was to be elected Norway's hereditary monarch. The constitution gave him a strong position in the administration and an independent role in foreign policy. The situation, however, was deteriorating. The war in Europe had ended, and Karl Johan of Sweden began to demand what had been promised to him.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Barton, *Scandinavia in the Revolutionary Era*, pp. 311–58, provides a concise overview of the political developments in Northern Europe between 1800 and 1815.



King Frederik VI was forced to end shipments of foodstuffs to Norway, which was placed under an international embargo. The allies of Sweden sent commissioners to Norway to persuade the Norwegians to give in.

In July 1814, King Karl Johan of Sweden sent over 45,000 soldiers to the Swedish–Norwegian border. There they faced some 30,000 Norwegian troops whose equipment, training and experience clearly lagged behind the Swedes. In addition, Sweden had complete naval control of the situation. The Swedes soon advanced to the river Glommen and the Norwegians, whose military co-ordination was poor, retreated with little resistance. In August, Christian Frederik accepted King Karl Johan's offer of an armistice. The fact that the popular and trusted King Christian Frederik gave up the struggle so soon led to a widespread confusion and bitterness in Norway. These attitudes marked the views of posterity regarding this first king of Norway in post-medieval times.

The Moss agreement between the monarchs also provoked consternation in Sweden. King Karl Johan had quickly ended military operations that had started successfully in addition to endorsing the Eidsvold constitution, except for the changes required by the union of Sweden and Norway. The *storting* convened for extraordinary sessions, and on 10 October 1814 King Christian Frederik announced his abdication. This was followed by amendments to the constitution, which involved at times heated negotiations between the Swedish commissioners and Norwegian politicians as well as diplomatic tests of strength. The amendments were finished by 13 October, when the *storting* elected Karl XIII to the throne of Norway; the real king was Crown Prince Karl Johan (later Karl XIV Johan).

The *storting* had more powers in legal matters than the Swedish *riksdag*, and it convened more often, but on the other hand the Eidsvold constitution gave the monarch greater independence and leeway in matters of foreign policy. The Norwegians had managed to retain domestic independence in union with their 'arch-enemy', Sweden, after having demonstrated their active desire for independence. Finland had achieved the same as a result of the actions of its own 'arch-enemy', Russia, although through occupation. The restructuring of the Danish and Swedish realms as a result of the Napoleonic Wars thus created two states as new political entities. The birth of both was influenced less by internal factors than by relations of power in international politics and the aims of rulers to further their own dynastic and political aims.

## Denmark in the Napoleonic Wars, 1807–14

OLE FELDBÆK

The attempts by Denmark and Sweden to implement an offensive policy of neutrality were brought to an end in 1801 when both countries were forced to give up the most important principles of neutrality that they had struggled to uphold. Their forced adherence to the British–Russian convention of 17 June 1801, however, did not imply a decline in their exploitation of neutrality in the last years of peace up to 1807.

Denmark learned the lesson of her defeat and, on the political front, operated a consistent policy of neutrality. This meant a consistent refusal to take part in the war against France. When the warfare in Germany approached the southern border of Denmark, the greater part of the army was stationed in Holstein. And in the spring of 1807 the crown prince refrained from fitting out the squadron which normally guaranteed the neutrality of the state, in order to avoid provoking Great Britain.

Sweden's policy after 1801 was more complex, among other things as a result of Gustav IV Adolf's strong emotional engagement with events on the Continent. In the summer of 1801 he had made a vain attempt to obtain political support from Prussia and France for a conquest of Norway. He participated passionately in the legitimate princes' declaration of open enmity to Napoleon, who in 1804 had himself crowned emperor. And in October 1805 he declared war on Napoleon and allied himself with Austria and Great Britain in the Third Coalition. When Napoleon and Tsar Alexander made peace in 1807, the king was at the head of a strong army in Swedish Pomerania. At that point in time, events had developed extremely quickly. With Nelson's victory at Trafalgar in 1805, the French and Spanish fleets had in real terms been sidelined for the rest of the war. On the Continent, Napoleon had defeated his opponents one by one: Austria in 1805 at Ulm and Austerlitz, and Prussia in 1806 at Jena and Auerstedt. From his headquarters in Berlin the emperor had issued his decree ordaining a blockade of French-occupied European ports against British shipping (the Continental

System), which in economic terms was intended to force Britain to her knees. It was an economic declaration of war which Britain responded to in January 1807 by forbidding neutral vessels to enter harbours to which British ships had no access. It was a total economic war which brought the last of the neutral seafaring nations – Denmark, Sweden and Portugal – into the focus of international politics.

In 1807 Napoleon pursued the weakened Russian army eastwards. In February he was the victor at Eylau. And on 14 June he scored a decisive victory against the tsar at Friedland, only 100 kilometres from the Russian border. Ten days later the two autocrats met on a raft on the Niemen, where they agreed on the terms of the peace treaty which they later drew up at Tilsit on 7 July. What this meant for Scandinavia in concrete terms was that the tsar and Napoleon together agreed to force Denmark and Norway to join the Continental System and take part in the war against Britain. The advantage to the tsar was that he now had a free hand to conquer Finland from Sweden.

### The outbreak of war in 1807

Throughout the spring of 1807 the British cabinet had followed developments in Northern Europe with some concern. Their fear was that Napoleon might gain control over the Danish fleet – a well-equipped and well-manned force of eighteen ships-of-the-line and sixteen frigates. Their concern was partly that it could bar British traders from access to the Baltic and cut Britain off from grain and vital naval stores; and partly that it would increase the danger of an invasion of the British Isles. On the 13 July – three days after Canning received the famous secret reports that the tsar and Napoleon were preparing a maritime league, to include Denmark and Sweden – the cabinet reached their decision to move against Denmark. The Danes would have to either enter into an alliance with Britain, thereby putting their fleet under British command, or hand over their fleet as a pledge for their neutrality. This demand would be backed up by a strong fleet with a landing party of 16,000 men, supplemented by 10,000 men from the Hanoverian Legion, who at that point in time were based on Rügen. Included in the calculations was the consideration that a speedy and decisive demonstration of force against Denmark would warn the tsar not to ally himself too closely to Napoleon.

The assault on Denmark has always been condemned in ethical terms, even by the British public. But in 1807 it was *Britannia contra mundum*. And the attack was to be perhaps the most successful combined operation in the

history of warfare. In the first days of August, Admiral Gambier's fleet blockaded Sjælland in order to prevent the transfer of troops from Holstein to defend the capital. The crown prince, in his capacity as regent, absolutely refused to countenance Britain's demands and when on 16 August British troops then landed on Sjælland, immediately north of København, his response was a declaration of war on Britain.

The British then invested København from both land and sea. The peasant militias were scattered by Sir Arthur Wellesley, whereupon General Cathcart demanded that København's commandant deliver up the Danish fleet on the terms that had been offered. The demand was turned down, and several sorties were made from the Danish side in an attempt to destroy the British batteries. But in vain. And on the evening of 2 September the British began three nights of bombardment with mortars and the new Congreve rockets – the first terror bombardment of civilian targets in the history of warfare. Parts of the capital were set on fire, and under pressure from the inhabitants the commandant of the city abandoned his hopeless resistance. The first point in the terms of capitulation was the delivery of the whole fleet and all its supplies – but now as property of the British. The British undertook to evacuate Sjælland within six weeks. And on 20 October they sailed away. With them they took a fully equipped fleet of fifteen ships-of-the-line, fifteen frigates and seven brigs, together with a number of smaller vessels. Moreover, a ship-of-the-line in dock and three on the stocks were destroyed.

The attack on Denmark in 1807 showed that the relationship between the two Scandinavian states could in future change radically in connection with the gigantic clash between France and Britain. Thus, the British cabinet considered maintaining their occupation of Sjælland on account of the island's strategic position beside the Baltic Straits, possibly with the support of Swedish troops whom Gustav IV Adolf offered to put at their disposal. The project had to be abandoned, however, as Britain could not spare troops from the campaign in Portugal and Spain. But a whole new kind of threat was introduced. At the end of September, in a last attempt to force Denmark to participate in the war on Britain's side, the British foreign minister openly threatened that Sweden would otherwise, and with British support, occupy Sjælland and København and take over Norway.

Having lost her fleet, Denmark could not effectively oppose Swedish attempts to take over Norway. Napoleon was the only person who could – and who wished – to guarantee the territorial integrity of the Danish state and win Denmark compensation and the return of her fleet, after Britain was conquered. Denmark, accordingly, did not really have any choice.

On 31 October 1807 a Danish–French alliance-cum-treaty was signed at Fontainebleau. Napoleon hereby promised Denmark military assistance in the event of her being attacked, compensation for her fleet and a guarantee of the territorial integrity of the state. For her part Denmark undertook to participate fully in the Continental System and, together with France and Russia, to declare war on Sweden and force the Swedes to join it.

The war would last for almost seven years, and had a devastating effect on the state and the community. The Danish flag was banished from the oceans, and shipping became confined to risky voyaging in home waters, where British warships and privateers held sway for most of the year. Expectations of Continental markets for Danish industrial products were dashed. Napoleon reserved such markets for French industry. And the unrestricted printing of paper money to finance the war led to severe inflation which hit large sections of the population hard. For Norway, which depended on significant amounts of grain, especially from Jylland and the duchies, the British blockade spelled famine. Occasionally, however, some foreign voyages could be prosecuted under cover of British and French licences, including contacts with the North Atlantic possessions of Greenland, the Føroyar and Iceland.

In any event Frederik VI remained Napoleon's most faithful ally right to the bitter end in 1814, the year of defeat. However, this was not due to any thirst for revenge on Britain or a misplaced sense of honour towards France. It had to do with Denmark's geopolitical situation and the king's chief goal: retaining Norway. A break with Napoleon would result in an immediate occupation of Holstein, Schleswig and Jylland. Norway would be forced, through lack of grain, to submit to Sweden. And without the fleet the Danish islands would be defenceless against a British and Swedish invasion and occupation. As long as this continued to be Denmark's strategic situation, the king turned down every appeal to him to break with Napoleon and join his enemies.

## The war

Denmark's war with Sweden became inevitable when Gustav IV Adolf turned down the demand from the tsar and Napoleon that Denmark join in the Continental System and the war against Great Britain. Denmark declared war on 29 February 1808. Minor encounters took place along the southern part of the border between Norway and Sweden. However, an invasion of Sweden from Norway could only take place in connection with a

landing in Skåne. In order to support this attack over the Öresund, a Franco-Spanish auxiliary corps under Marshal Bernadotte moved into Jylland and over to Fyn and Sjælland. However, the freezing-over of the Danish straits, which Napoleon had read about in his books of military history as a young officer cadet, did not take place, and the British fleet was present in Danish waters in the early spring. Likewise, in March 1808 British ships-of-the-line destroyed the last surviving Danish battleship, which had been stationed in Norway when the British attacked København, and which had been intended to protect the transport of French and Spanish troops to Sjælland.

In the summer of 1808, the Spanish troops rebelled. They wanted to return to Spain to fight Napoleon, and in August 1808 the British fleet succeeded in evacuating most of the Spanish regiments under general Pedro la Romana and transporting them home, without Marshal Bernadotte and his French officers being able to stop them.

Under the influence of the imminent peace treaty between Sweden and Russia, whereby Sweden was to hand over the whole of Finland and Ahvenanmaa (the Åland islands) to the tsar, an armistice was concluded along the Norwegian–Swedish border, and on 10 December 1809 Denmark and Sweden signed a treaty at Jönköping which preserved the status quo.

Denmark's primary task as Napoleon's ally was not however to wage war against Sweden but, on the contrary, to hinder Britain from carrying on her Baltic trade through the Danish straits by means of a contribution to the war in the shape, partly of privateers, and partly of a large number of gunboats which could operate both under sail and with oars, and which were built at a fast rate as substitutes for the lost fleet.

The conduct of the privateer war united patriotism with the opportunity to get rich quick. And the investments were modest: small, fast trading vessels fitted out with a few cannons together with cutlasses and pistols for the crew. The booty consisted of lone trading-ships which did not dream of defending themselves; and the field of operations was mainly the Öresund and Skagerak. The contribution made by Norwegian privateers appeared less than profitable from an economic point of view, and there is no evidence of better results from the contribution of Danish privateers; among other reasons, because a number of these privateers were captured by British ones with much more fire-power, and by British warships.

The struggle for control of the Danish straits was nevertheless in essence a struggle between the British navy and the Danish gunboats. Vice-Admiral Sir James Saumarez was commander of the British Baltic fleet from 1808 to 1812, with his flag hoisted on the three-decker *Victory*. His task was partly to be

Britain's political representative at important negotiations with Sweden and Russia, and partly to secure unhindered passage for Britain's Baltic sea-trade through the Danish straits. Throughout the war the British fleet was present in Danish waters from early March to late November – and in the Kattegat from time to time right up to the beginning of January. When the Danes removed their buoys and extinguished their beacons, the British stationed armed light brigs and frigates at Skagen and opposite the islands of Læsø and Anholt. And when the light frigate at Anholt ran ashore in January 1809, they occupied the island in May of that year; the 35-metre-high lighthouse was rebuilt as the fortified Fort York, and the island was formally inducted into the Royal Navy as *HMS Anholt*. A Danish attempt in 1811 to win the island back was repulsed.

In trials of strength with the Danish gunboats the British quickly learned from experience. The Öresund had from olden times provided passage for Britain's sea trade in the Baltic. The waters were, however, extremely narrow, and in a calm the convoys were vulnerable to sudden attack. Accordingly, as early as 1809 the British fleet started directing convoys through the Great Belt. And they were organised with extraordinary professionalism. Ingoing convoys assembled opposite Göteborg and outgoing ones in Hanö bay opposite the east coast of Skåne. They sailed for eight out of the twelve months of the year. And they were large convoys that the British ships-of-the-line, frigates and brigs protected: typically 150 ships, but from time to time as many as 500. The passage through the Danish straits tied up significant British naval resources. But it was necessary, for it was sales of British and foreign goods in the Baltic ports which financed the war that Britain and its allies were waging against Napoleon. And it was from the Baltic that the fleet obtained strategically important wares such as ships' timbers, cordage, sailcloth, tar and pitch, along with another commodity that was just as important strategically: grain.

The Danish gunboats and war-brigs which operated out of the Norwegian archipelago seized a number of ships which had been separated from the rest of the convoy during a calm. The largest single seizure was of a whole convoy of 150 ships on their way from Göteborg to British ports after the Norwegian war-brigs had enticed the British warships away from the convoy. And during the war Danish gunboats and brigs captured ten small British men-of-war. There are no statistics for the convoys. But there is no doubt that the Royal Navy was quite capable of protecting the vital British Baltic trade which Napoleon had ordered to be brought to a standstill.

## The dissolution of the state

The Peace of Hamina (Fredrikshamn) in 1809 had brought about a whole new situation in Scandinavia. The tsar's annexation of the whole of Finland had made Russia's Eternal Alliance of 1773 with Denmark politically meaningless. Henceforward, on the contrary, it was in the tsar's interests that Sweden should seek compensation for the loss of Finland by annexing Norway. The Russian negotiators had also advised Sweden to undertake this. And Frederik VI's reaction had been to ally himself all the more closely with Napoleon.

In Tilsit Russia had been the loser. In the years following the tension between the two autocrats had grown. And it became clear early in 1812 that Napoleon was getting ready to attack Russia.

In March 1812, in the political lead-up to military action, Denmark renewed the 1807 Treaty of Fontainebleau, now promising in addition to put a strong army corps at Napoleon's disposal – not in Russia, but in the whole of northern Germany between the Oder and the Zuider Zee, in order to protect the emperor's northern flank. Sweden was also preparing for the mighty clash of arms. And the reward demanded for his help by the new occupant of the throne, Karl Johan – Napoleon's former Marshal Bernadotte – was Norway. During the negotiations in St Petersburg in April the tsar promised that Russian troops together with the Swedes would attack Sjælland and force Frederik VI to hand over Norway. In return, Karl Johan would then operate on the Continent at the head of a Swedish corps, attacking Napoleon's rear. The agreement was renewed in August during a face-to-face meeting between the tsar and the crown prince at Turku (Åbo). In July 1812 Britain concluded a peace with Sweden – a formal armistice having been in operation since 1810. Not until March 1813, however, did Britain join the Swedish–Russian negotiations about the conquest of Norway.

In June 1812 Napoleon crossed the Niemen. Frederik VI was expecting a swift victory. His foreign minister, on the other hand, anticipated the emperor's downfall. And Baron Rosenkrantz therefore begged the king to exploit the fact that there were no regular French troops in Germany at that time who could attack Denmark and occupy the Jylland peninsula. Only by breaking with Napoleon could the king save the state from dissolution. The king, however, retained his belief in Napoleon's invincibility. When Napoleon, on his return to Paris, enquired through official channels whether or not the king was still his ally, the reply was therefore an unqualified 'yes'.



Frederik VI's overall objective throughout the war had been to hold on to Norway. He was therefore willing to break with Napoleon in so far as the allies were prepared to guarantee him Norway. And for several days in the spring of 1813, when it seemed that the tsar intended to break his promise to Sweden, the king in fact allowed Danish troops to fight side by side with the Russians against the French in northern Germany. Russia and Britain, however, had more use for Karl Johan than for Frederik VI in the struggle against Napoleon. The attempt to break with the emperor therefore remained an isolated incident which nevertheless testifies to a degree of flexibility in the king's foreign policy. But the retention of Norway was beyond doubt Frederik VI's *conditio sine qua non*.

Frederik VI therefore allied himself all the more closely to Napoleon. In May 1813 he sent the heir to the throne, Prince Christian Frederik, to Norway as governor and military commander-in-chief. His express task was to strengthen the Norwegians' loyalty to the king. But Norway's fate would be decided on the Continent.

During those same days in December 1812 when the pathetic remnants of *La Grande Armée* were fleeing over the ice of the Niemen, pursued by the tsar's Cossacks, Sweden and Russia had demanded that Denmark hand over Norway in return for territorial compensation in northern Germany. It was for this reason that Frederik VI, immediately afterwards, had so unambiguously reaffirmed his alliance with Napoleon. During the futile peace negotiations that spring between Napoleon and Russia and Prussia, mediated by Austria, both parties prepared for the coming military confrontation. With the treaty of 10 July 1813 Frederik VI bound himself to Napoleon. The two parties guaranteed each other's territorial integrity, and the king promised that, on the resumption of hostilities, he would declare war on Sweden, Russia and Prussia and would place an army corps of 12,000 men at the emperor's disposal in north Germany all the way up to the Vistula.

War was resumed in August 1813. The Danish corps marched into Mecklenburg. On 3 September Frederik VI declared war on Sweden and, on 20 October, on Russia and Prussia too.

The day before, Napoleon was comprehensively defeated at the battle of Leipzig, and the three allied armies chased the fleeing French forces westwards towards the Rhine. Karl Johan was commander-in-chief of the northern army, and chose to exploit the disunity among the allied forces by acting on his own behalf and forcing Denmark to hand over Norway. The French troops entrenched themselves in Hamburg, and the Danish corps retreated back into Holstein where they were surrounded in the fortress of Rendsborg.

On 15 December, in his headquarters in Kiel, Karl Johan accepted an armistice which ended on 5 January 1814. His demand was for the handing over of Norway in return for Swedish Pomerania. The Danes' military situation was hopeless. The army corps in Rendsborg only had food for a few weeks. Holstein and Schleswig were occupied. Jylland lay open to invasion. Norway was threatened by famine. And in the spring, Fyn and Sjælland would be defenceless against invasion. Faced with this situation, Frederik VI capitulated. On 7 January he gave his negotiator in Kiel full authority to conclude peace on terms with Sweden.

The peace was concluded in Kiel on 14 January 1814 with Sweden and with Britain, which at the same time guaranteed a peace agreement with Russia and Prussia. Denmark's occupied colonies were returned to her, but not her navy nor the captured merchant ships; and Britain retained the island of Helgoland which it had occupied at the outbreak of the war. In the peace agreement with Sweden, Denmark surrendered Norway and as compensation received Swedish Pomerania – which at the final peace agreement was transferred to Prussia on condition that Denmark received the duchy of Lauenburg and a monetary sum in compensation. Norway was defined unambiguously as mainland Norway, and Frederik VI released the Norwegians from their oath of allegiance. The actual wording of the surrender was formulated by Karl Johan, who emphasised that Norway was not being integrated with Sweden but had been handed over to the Swedish king as a kingdom in union with Sweden. During the negotiations the crown prince was heavily pressurised by the allies to continue the pursuit of Napoleon. The Danish negotiator used this fact to extort a few concessions; most notably, the unambiguous confirmation that the handing over of Norway did not include Greenland, the Føroyar and Iceland.

King Frederik VI expected – like Karl Johan and the Great Powers – that the Norwegians would offer resistance. Throughout the spring he secretly supplied them with grain, until in May 1814 Sweden and the Great Powers forced him to cut off aid. From this point on, the union was, both militarily and politically, a matter of Sweden and Norway.

PART VI

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THE NEW ECONOMIC ORDER



## Scandinavia between the Congress of Vienna and the Paris Commune

TORKEL JANSSON

After considering the upheavals which the Scandinavian countries experienced during in the years 1809–14, it is both natural and necessary to remind ourselves of the problems that now confronted these ancient but territorially restructured lands. In 1833, the Swedish bishop Esaias Tegnér wrote in a national report on the question of poor relief that the effects of ‘peace, vaccine and potatoes’ were making themselves felt. His words throw into sharp relief what the rest of this volume is really about, namely, the search throughout the Scandinavian region for new ideas and principles to deal with a demographic explosion of a hitherto unprecedented nature at a time when the economic, social and political order of *l’ancien régime* no longer sufficed. The territorial frontiers between states had been radically redrawn in Scandinavia in the latter stages of the Napoleonic Wars, and the new elites that sustained the state, regardless of whether they were conservative or more liberal in outlook, were confronted everywhere with similar problems. The major question which they had to address was how and where within the boundaries of their countries the growing population was to be provided for.

The most striking feature about the economy was that in both the countryside and the towns it began during this period to shake off the virtually static nature which had characterised it for so long. The Danish agricultural reforms of the late eighteenth century created in the long term a group of freeholding farmers (*gårdmænd*) who had been emancipated from the trammels of manorial collectivism and who would eventually come to work together within the framework of an agricultural co-operative movement. The various Swedish initiatives to dismantle the closed structures in place in the towns and to overcome the effects of excessive parcelisation of the land by amalgamating the scattered holdings of the farmers into cohesive agricultural units (*skifte*) represent a corresponding attempt to break down the old, corporative order. Urban growth, both in the Nordic region itself and in the countries surrounding it, created a bigger market for agricultural

products. This led already in the early nineteenth century not only to a strengthening of the position of freeholding farmers but also to clear tendencies towards large-scale agriculture, which were reinforced by an enclosure movement and based on the employment of casual, landless labour – a development that in its turn reduced the number of tenants and crofters.

The traditional structures in the towns proved no more adequate than those in the countryside. The urban elites were no more capable than the old village communities of accommodating all the work-hungry, often young, former inhabitants of the countryside who migrated to the towns. The so-called ‘wretchedness of the journeymen’ (*gesälleländet*) soon became a fact of life among all those who found themselves unable to move forward within the framework of a pre-existing system that had now become too confined in its character. At the same time, the advancing bourgeoisie, which consisted of a largely self-made group of wholesalers and manufacturers, engaged in free competition with each other, increasingly through the medium of joint-stock companies, could in no way be accommodated within the privileged circle of the master artisans.

Steamboats and railways made an essential contribution to creating economies that were nationwide rather than regional in character. Women found it no easier than men to adapt to the new structures. The various functions the farmer’s wife had traditionally performed in agricultural production were comparable to those of the master-artisan’s wife and both had served as an important complement to their husbands, but there was little or no scope for such roles in the new unprecedented conditions governing working life. On the land, the wife of the landless labourer (*statare*), the ‘married farm-hand’, was often obliged by the terms of his contract of employment to milk cows on the estate. In towns women appear towards the end of this period working on the factory floor or as domestic servants performing a variety of different tasks for the wives of the new bourgeoisie, who had never experienced the need to take constant responsibility for unmarried journeymen and apprentices eating at their master’s table.

The disappearance of the corporate and collective nature of the old economy – the emergence of capital in all its anonymity – led in the social sphere to that same individualisation as occurred in those countries where the new economic trend became apparent at an earlier stage. The expansion of the towns and the way journeymen began to marry and disappear as a result from ‘their master’s table’ produced new, privatised social relationships which had to be based on ‘the principle of personality’ – to use the term which, under the inspiration of Kant, was favoured at the time. The nature of

everyday life altered. Examples of the forms of co-operation adopted by the freeholding farmers did not extend to other members of the rural population. The new agricultural proletariat frequently complained about the disappearance of the former, traditional land-owning elite, the landlords, the gentry (*helherrar*), with its sense of social responsibility and the appearance of the new elite (*halvherrar*), who were only interested in their employees as long as they remained fit for work.

The era of the corporations was well and truly over and the state was actively engaged in getting rid of them. If the new associations which were established at this time and which transcended the old barriers of rank, guild and gender had failed to appear on the scene, society would have gone under. The same remark could just as easily have been made in Norway. Scholars working on conditions in Norway during this period have argued that the state, and other associations as well, 'dissociated' itself from a number of functions it had previously fulfilled and that society consequently had no choice but to 'associate' itself. The opportunities for an equally open debate about all aspects of social life were more limited in Denmark, which was still formally an absolutist state, and in Finland, which was a part of the Russian Empire.

Despite such variations in the degree to which free debate was possible, all four Nordic countries witnessed efforts to find new practical forms for norms that were frequently old, to solve problems in this new age of the individual. The poor had to be looked after, children had to be educated, good practices had to be enunciated. Philanthropic circles often looked to the women of the bourgeoisie in this respect, because the relative leisure which such women enjoyed seemed to make them an untapped social 'resource' – to use twentieth-century terminology. As the principle of association was more generally welcomed during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century, members of rural families soon appeared on the scene as patrons of many of these associations which were inspired by British models. It can therefore be said that royalty to some extent adapted to the new conditions governing social life and accepted these manifestations of the bourgeois public sphere. A first step was taken in the early nineteenth century when society began to organise itself into associations. A second would be taken in the 1840s, as socio-economic differentiation became more pronounced and as wider segments of society began to form associations of their own like those of workers' and educational associations. The establishment of the great popular movements was affiliated in many cases to various 'internationals'. The pattern of social development can therefore be described as passing from corporations, via associations, to mass organisations.

In the sphere of domestic politics the new socio-economic groups were fighting in a variety of ways against the former, absolutist state. The differences are most obvious in the field of doctrine. The 'Little Sweden' of the Bernadottes created by the peace of 1809 returned the same year to reinforced constitutional safeguards on excessive monarchical power after the period of Gustavian absolutism, and the following half-century was marked by a debate among the bourgeois sphere about the survival of the country's most flagrant remnant of feudalism, the time-honoured diet or parliament of four estates. Given the social composition of Norway, the Eidsvoll constitution of 1814 could not be based on this old principle, even if some would have wished to do so. Instead, the Norwegian parliament (*storting*) represented a combination of civil servants, burghers and freehold farmers. These were all privileged groups in Norwegian society, and the label 'democracy' must therefore be reserved for later stages in the country's history. In the case of Finland, Alexander I had undertaken to govern the grand duchy in accordance with the Gustavian constitution of 1772, as amended in 1789, which enabled the Russian authorities to avoid summoning Finland's four-estate parliament for over fifty years – the so-called 'constitutional night' of 1809–63. In Denmark, absolutism continued after the truncation of the Danish state in 1814, but in a form which involved the dissolution of the absolutist principle from within. Demands in the duchies of Schleswig and especially Holstein, which, unlike Schleswig, belonged to the German Confederation, led after the July Revolution to the establishment of consultative assemblies of the estates (*rådgivende stænderforsamlinger*). These assemblies ultimately gave way in 1849 to an ordinary parliament of the modern kind.

The constitutional sphere was not the only area in which the old order was questioned. Social debate came increasingly to be conducted within what the statist guardians of tradition called non-state institutions – various manifestations of the bourgeois sphere. Swedish and Norwegian society in particular became strongly marked by private, civic associations in comparison with many European countries. The importance of the growing press for public discourse deserves particular emphasis. The self-designated citizens who replaced the subjects of an earlier age also demanded a say in municipal questions, that area of political activity which most clearly affected everyday life. In Sweden, and therefore also Finland, none of the absolutist systems of the past had been able to suppress the influence of the farmers and the urban population on local affairs, even if ambitions in that direction had sometimes existed. This meant that it became possible in the Grand Duchy of Finland to argue that the citizen should continue to be involved in municipal affairs, an



area that indisputably belonged to the public state sphere. In Denmark and Norway, Oldenburg absolutism, which on paper at least was the most complete absolutist system in Europe, had abolished popular participation in the management of local communities and placed it in the hands of officials employed by the state. It was not until the late 1830s and early 1840s that municipal institutions were restored, though it is true that they were based in part on bodies which had emerged organically under the pressure of events in the eighteenth century as temporary expedients. In all contexts, majority voting began to push aside the tradition of reaching decisions by consensus, even if a system of plural voting in which the individual's wealth determined the weight his votes carried long remained the method by which majority decisions were attained.

An appropriate point of departure for an examination of the position of the Nordic region in international relations is to look briefly at the relationship between Scandinavian countries. No one is surprised today by references to the 'Nordic family' or 'the Scandinavian model', which are largely products of the period after the Second World War, and the word 'Scandinavianism' had become an equally natural term by the middle of the nineteenth century, even though only a few decades had passed since Denmark and Sweden had virtually been centuries-old arch-enemies. After the loss of Norway, which had long been orientated towards Britain in economic terms, Denmark soon re-established a normal relationship with her former enemy, Britain, and the way for Sweden's conquest of her western neighbour was paved by the amicable meeting at Turku (Åbo) between Crown Prince Karl Johan and Alexander I, which laid the foundations for 'the policy of 1812' – a new approach to Sweden's foreign relations that would not be seriously questioned until the days of the Crimean War. In the era of the nation states, frontiers rapidly became a problem. Finland had to assert her special interests in relation to Russia, the disputes between Prussia and Denmark also assumed a national character – like those between Denmark and her North Atlantic dependencies – and Sweden-Norway remained no more than a personal union except in the field of foreign policy. The frontier problems which characterise the nation states are perhaps most clearly illustrated in the case of the Nordic region by the Sami people. When the Norwegian–Swedish frontier was demarcated and ratified in 1751, the Sami – nomads who lived by keeping reindeer and fishing and who roamed freely throughout the whole area above the Arctic Circle – did not constitute a problem. It was only one hundred years later that their economy was subjected to a severe trial when first the Fenno-Norwegian and then the Fenno-Swedish frontiers were closed.

These remarks about international relations indirectly touch upon the cultural effects of the transformation that was taking place. Sweden did not lose Finland in the war of 1808–9: the peace treaty merely listed the individual provinces that were to be ceded to Russia. However, at the same time, the emperor-grand duke ‘raised Finland to the rank of nations’, and his remarks were an indication that a new dialogue was needed throughout the Nordic region about a new civic identity, a new civicism. The combination of politico-constitutional change with the emergence of integrated economies created the objective preconditions for the growth of the nation, but it remained an open question how national consciousness was to be developed, how the struggle over the nation would end. In Denmark, a sense of Danish identity in opposition to German influence had begun to evolve even before the French Revolution, but after the events of 1809–14 there is much evidence in both Denmark and Sweden also of an internal, diachronic struggle against the past, against those organs of society and the state and the values left behind by absolutism. The role played by non-state institutions in assaults on absolutism varied, but the importance of the press for the process of national unification must be remembered.

The desire to question the past was less obvious in the case of Finland, where it was necessary to stick to the constitution and the state institutions, which Alexander I had promised to respect in order to ward off various forms of ‘russification’. Nonetheless, there are clear signs of synchronic activity: when the people of Finland ceased to be Swedish subjects and did not wish, despite the need to remain loyal to the emperor, to identify themselves as Russians. ‘Let us be Finns!’ became the new watchword. This same need to adopt a distinct profile of one’s own is apparent in Norway and was directed not least against the threat of excessive Swedish influence, but the ‘civil servants’ state’ also was beginning to come under criticism from those who saw it as the old Oldenburg monarchy in a new guise. A religious revival can be discerned in each of the Nordic countries, but there was great variation in the degree to which it broke with or succeeded in reforming the state church. The new social groups developed their own national literatures, and it is very clear that there was a need to confer architectural distinction in the towns of the Nordic region, above all in the two new capitals of Helsinki and Christiania. Scandinavianism contained political components, but it is noteworthy that it lacked the hegemonic tendencies which characterised movements like Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism. The nation was a precondition for this special form of internationalism – a word invented by Jeremy Bentham in 1780 and imported to the Nordic region when the time was ripe.

## The demographic transition during the period 1815–70: mortality decline and population growth

S Ø L V I S O G N E R

According to the theory of the demographic transition, mortality and fertility were both high in the pre-industrial society, and hence population growth was slow. Then mortality started to decline on a permanent basis, while fertility remained high for a period of time. During this period, population grew fast. Then fertility started on its irreversible fall as well. Balance was restored, and population growth slowed down.<sup>1</sup>

This model does not suit the experience of every country, but it fits the Scandinavian countries very well. This comes as no surprise, as the model is largely based on Scandinavian data. These were for a long time the only available historical data on a national level.<sup>2</sup> The data may not be flawless, but they have been subjected to extended scrutiny, and stand up rather well. The series of annual deaths and births go back to 1736 in all of the Scandinavian countries, and while allowing for certain problems for the earliest period – such as lacunae, inclusion of stillbirths among the dead, under-registration of infant deaths – it is indisputable that the quality of the data greatly improved over time. Censuses are available from around the middle of the eighteenth century. On this basis it is possible to compute national birth rates, death rates and marriage rates for each country and draw a fairly reliable picture of the main traits of the demographic development in Scandinavia in this early period. (See Figure 33.1.)

In all of Scandinavia there were about 3.5 million people around 1750. By 1850 the population had more than doubled and amounted to 8 million. In 1900 the total population in Scandinavia was 12.5 million. (See Table 33.1.)

1 F. W. Notestein, 'Population: The long View', in T. W. Schulz (ed.), *Food for the World* (Chicago, 1945).

2 H. Gille 'The Demographic History of the Northern European Countries in the Eighteenth Century', *Population Studies*, 3 (1949), pp. 3–65.

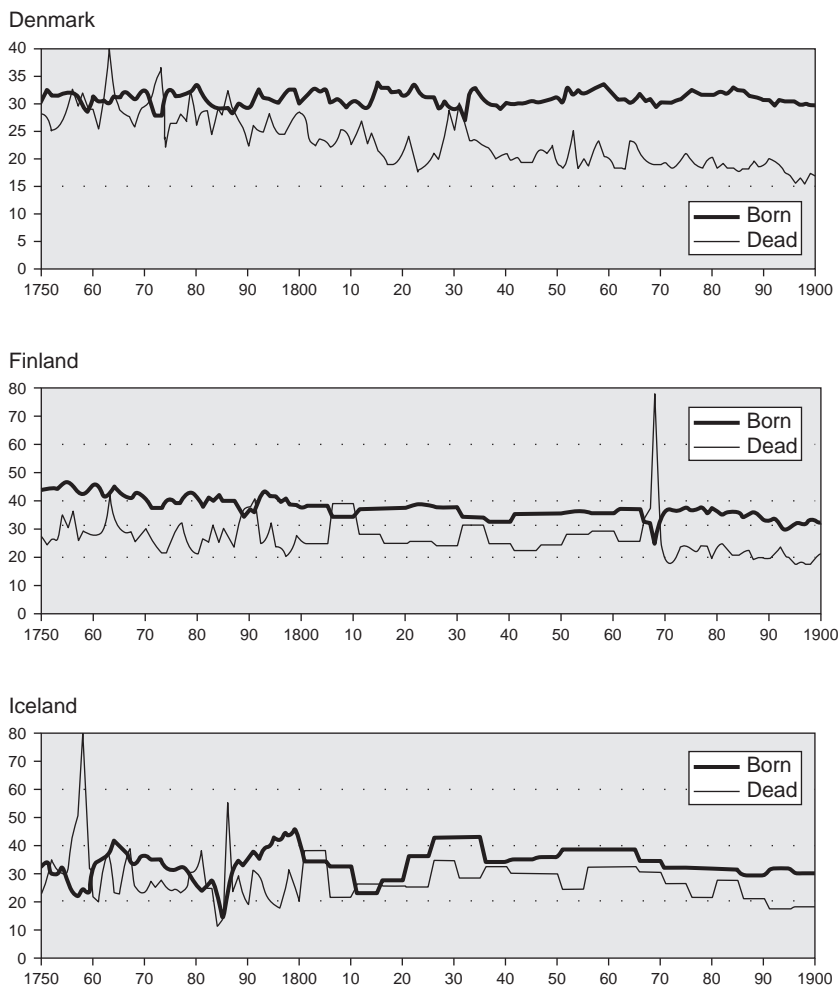


Figure 33.1 Live births and deaths per 1,000 mean population, 1750–1900

Note: Annual figures. For Finland 1800–65 and for Iceland 1800–1900, five-year averages.

Sources: *Historisk Statistik för Sverige, 1: Befolkningen*, 2nd edn (Stockholm 1969); H. Gille, 'The Demographic History of the Northern European Countries in the Eighteenth Century', *Population Studies*, 3 (1949); *Statistisk Aarbog, 1922* (København, 1922); *Statistisk Årsbok för Finland 1932* (Helsingfors, 1932); *Töfræðihandbok 1984* (Reykjavik, 1984); *Historisk statistikk 1978* (Oslo, 1978).

By 1870 the mortality decline had started in all of Scandinavia and population was growing fast. A lively transatlantic emigration – not foreseen in the transition theory which is global in its approach – was well under way. The heavy overseas emigration eased the pressure on the resources created

Table 33.1 *Population in the Scandinavian countries, 1750–1900*

Year	Sweden	Finland	Denmark	Norway	Iceland	Scandinavia
1750	1,781,000	422,000	806,000	591,000	49,000	3,649,000
1800	2,352,000	833,000	926,000	883,000	47,000	5,041,000
1850	3,462,000	1,637,000	1,415,000	1,392,000	60,000	7,966,000
1900	5,117,000	2,650,000	2,432,000	2,230,000	78,000	12,507,000

Source: T. Bengtsson, *Den demografiska transitionen* (Lund, 1992), p. 8.

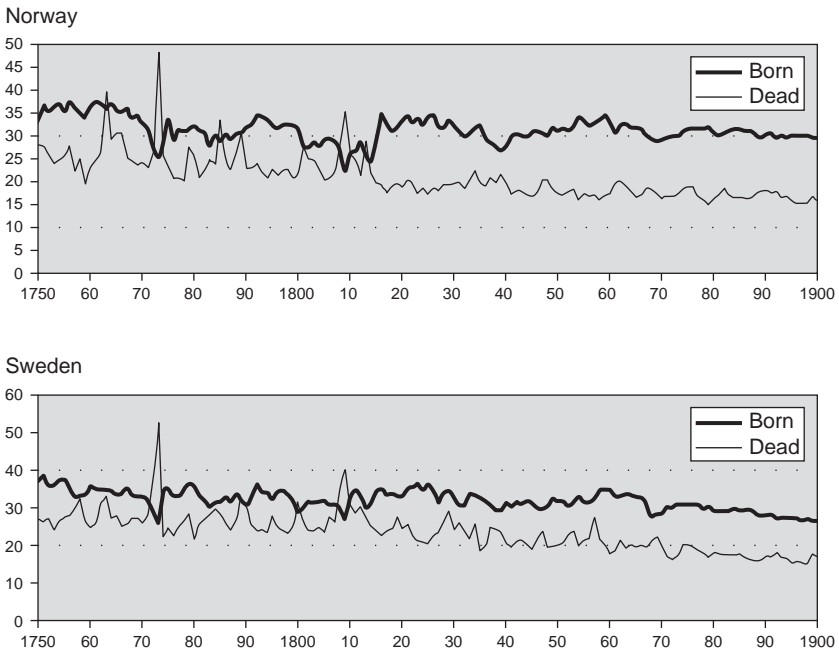


Figure 33.1 (cont.)

by the fast-growing population and contributed to a delay in the fertility decline. Fertility in Scandinavia did not start its irreversible decline until around the turn of the century.

### The mortality decline: the turning point

We are here considering the initial phase of the demographic transition in Scandinavia, the period when mortality started to decline on a permanent

basis. The most recent overview of the demographic transition in Scandinavia demonstrates how the mortality decline followed two different chronologies.<sup>3</sup>

The decline was well under way between 1815 and 1870 in central Scandinavia – Denmark, Norway and Sweden. In Denmark mortality declined steadily from the 1770s onwards – the trend only broken quite temporarily around 1830 by a malaria epidemic. In Sweden and Norway as well, the mortality trend was downwards from late eighteenth century. However, because of a rise in mortality in both countries at the beginning of the 1800s, the start of the irreversible decline is set to around 1815. This turning point was exceptionally abrupt and accentuated in Norway.

In the outlying parts of Scandinavia, in Finland and Iceland, the decline did not start until much later. In Iceland the decline may be said to start around 1860 – although there was a temporary rise in the 1880s – and in Finland around 1870 – after a major demographic crisis in 1868. Thereafter the decline of mortality was general throughout Scandinavia.

There are three main characteristics of the permanent mortality decline. Death rates cease to behave in the erratic way they used to and become more regular and even. Demographic crisis mortality becomes a phenomenon of the past: death rates – almost without exception – no longer rise above birth rates as they frequently did in occasional smaller ‘crisis’ years or during several subsequent years during major demographic crises. Finally, death rates in ‘normal’ years go down and they do not return to former high levels.

### Explanations of the mortality decline

How to interpret the mortality decline has been the subject of protracted discussions from the last century onwards. Contemporaries attributed the mortality decline to the peace, the potato and the smallpox vaccination. Modern researchers still accept these explanatory variables, but modified and only as partial explanations.

Certainly, peace reigned after the Napoleonic Wars. But the Scandinavian countries had lived in peace with each other, and mostly with the rest of the world as well, since 1720, after the Great Northern War, without discernible effects on the eighteenth-century death rate. Mortality in connection with the

3 T. Bengtsson, *Den demografiska utvecklingen i de nordiska länderna 1720–1914*, Lund Papers in Economic History, 15 (Lund, 1992), pp. 1–37; trans. in J. P. Bardet and J. Dupâquier (eds.), *Histoire de la population de l'Europe*, 2 (Paris, 1992).

military, irrespective of war and peace, was a serious problem, however. A thorough investigation of death from disease in military camps and their neighbouring communities is an interesting problem for countries like Denmark and Norway where general conscription was in force, as well as for Sweden (Finland included) with its special system for keeping a standing army. Troop movements had serious repercussions. For instance, the heavy mortality of 1763 in Norway was unanimously attributed by contemporaries to epidemics spread by soldiers returning from Holstein on Denmark's southern frontier, where they had been keeping neutrality guard during the Seven Years War.

The introduction of the potato around 1800 has received great attention in the Norwegian debate. Norway was a net importer of cereals for basic consumption, as considerable areas of the country were unsuited for cereal production. The potato was far less demanding even than oats and barley, and could be cultivated further north, at higher levels, and in poorer soil. Soon after its introduction the potato became a staple of people's diet. This happened too late, however, to be acceptable as a main cause of the fertility decline.<sup>4</sup> Besides, mortality declined simultaneously in grain growing Denmark and Sweden. As an interesting variable, the potato still enjoys considerable esteem among researchers, due to its high vitamin C content and its democratic growth potential. It would be a very poor cottar indeed who was unable to grow potatoes in some crevice. Terms like the 'potato people' (*potatisfolket*) or 'a potato cottage' (*pottitplass*) are used in the nineteenth century about cottars and their homes. It has recently been suggested that the potato – boiled in the skin, which is the traditional way to prepare it – also represents uncontaminated, easy to eat, healthy baby food.<sup>5</sup>

As regards the effect of vaccination in triggering off the initial decline, opinions differ. A longitudinal study of the Ahvenanmaa (the Åland islands) archipelago in Finland concludes that vaccination 'dramatically reduced the annual number of smallpox deaths' after it was introduced in 1805.<sup>6</sup> For Denmark vaccination is said to have had some effect.<sup>7</sup> In Sweden it has been

4 K. Lunden, 'Potetdyrkinga og den raskare folketalsvoksteren i Norge frå 1815', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 54 (1975), pp. 275–313.

5 B. Moring, *Skärgårdsbor. Hushåll, familj och demografi i finländsk kustbygd på 1600-, 1700- och 1800-talen* (Helsingfors, 1994), pp. 123–5.

6 J. H. Mielke *et al.*, 'Historical Epidemiology of Smallpox in Åland, Finland: 1751–1890', *Demography*, 21 (1984), pp. 272–95.

7 O. Andersen, 'The Decline in Danish Mortality before 1850 and its Economic and Social Background', in T. Bengtsson *et al.* (eds.), *Pre-industrial Population Change* (Lund, 1984).

claimed to have had no effect whatsoever.<sup>8</sup> The decline of mortality from smallpox had started well before the vaccination scheme was functioning optimally. This did not happen until the 1830s in Norway, but at this late date the effect was beneficial.<sup>9</sup> In any case, deaths from smallpox were never numerous enough to account for the traditional high mortality levels.

The debate on the mortality decline, in Scandinavia as elsewhere, has traditionally centred on the hunger and/or disease problematic. As elsewhere, Malthusian explanations used to be favoured.<sup>10</sup> Gradually, however, pride of place was given to micro-organisms as the prime mover. Steadily more sophisticated explanations have been presented, and raw hunger versus fatal disease merged into the standard-of-living variable which accommodates hunger or malnourishment as well as disease under the label of susceptibility to disease.

### The standard of living

Rising standards of living have been examined for Denmark.<sup>11</sup> The important agricultural reforms of the 1780s, it is argued, had beneficial effects on the living conditions of the rural population – production was raised and food supplies improved. With better living conditions, personal hygiene improved and so did people's resistance to disease. There is a snag to this explanation, however, as the mortality decline started a decade before the reforms. But even if the reforms as such may have played a less significant role than has been assigned to them, the same may not be true of living standards. According to most recent research, living standards had already improved considerably in Denmark from around 1750, along with an increase in production and population. But the links between economic and demographic development are not well researched:<sup>12</sup>

The explanations given for this decline (in mortality): the peace, the agricultural reforms, the potato, the vaccination or a better hygiene, have

8 G. Fridlitzius, 'The Mortality Decline in the First Phase of the Demographic Transition: Swedish Experiences', in T. Bengtsson *et al.* (eds.), *Pre-industrial Population Change* (Lund, 1984).

9 S. Dyrvik, 'The Effects of Smallpox Vaccination on Mortality: A Norwegian Case Study 1770–1840', in A. Brändström and L.-G. Tedebrand (eds.), *Society, Health and Population During the Demographic Transition* (Umeå, 1988).

10 E. F. Heckscher, 'Swedish Population Trends before the Industrial Revolution', *Economic History Review*, 2 (1950), pp. 266–77; M. Drake, *Population and Society in Norway 1735–1865* (Cambridge, 1969).

11 Andersen, 'The Decline in Danish Mortality'.

12 O. Feldbæk, *Danmarks økonomiske historie 1500–1840* (Viborg, 1993), pp. 123–9.



not proved reliable or convincing; and the admittedly vague international medical historical research is content to suggest a general strengthening of people's immunity defence against epidemic and endemic diseases, which until this time had caused the high mortality.<sup>13</sup>

This is deemed unsatisfactory, and research is called for on women's and children's social conditions, housing standards, disease, social norms and cultural indicators.

The standard-of-living argument has been questioned in the case of Sweden and Finland.<sup>14</sup> The argument is that the decline in mortality preceded the rise in living standards, as a rise in living standards may not have materialised in Sweden and Finland before the mid-nineteenth century. Also, the decline started simultaneously in different parts of the country, irrespective of social and economic structure.

The extreme climatic conditions of northern Scandinavia need to be taken into account.<sup>15</sup> This is particularly relevant for Iceland and Finland. But in Norway as well the debate has had a more traditional focus on hunger versus disease.<sup>16</sup> As mentioned, the country was not self-sufficient in cereals and relied on imports that arguably were precarious and at times deficient. This situation has led to research on the import scheme, agricultural production, climate, infrastructure and internal transport system. Sporadic catastrophes due to harvest failure are a fact. However, most researchers seem to favour explanations stressing morbidity as the main agent of death, and will explain the decline in mortality either in terms of a decrease in virulence of the main killers or a strengthened immunity against disease, as a result of government action, or cultural factors such as a heightened awareness in the population of how to protect themselves against these fatal diseases.<sup>17</sup> Pierre Chaunu's dictum, that 'La prophylaxie de l'Ancien Régime, c'est le cloisonnement', has been met with favour in a sparsely populated country with comparatively low 'normal' mortality.<sup>18</sup>

13 *Ibid.*, p. 207.

14 Fridlitzius, 'The Mortality Decline'.

15 G. Utterström, 'Climatic Fluctuations and Population Problems in Early Modern History', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 7 (1955); G. Gunnarson, *A Study of Causal Relations in Climate and History: With an Emphasis on the Icelandic Experience* (Lund, 1980).

16 An excellent overview of the Norwegian population debate is given in R. Engelsen, 'Mortalitetsdebatten og sosiale skilnader i mortalitet', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 62 (1983), pp. 161–202.

17 S. Sogner, *Folkevekst og flytting* (Oslo, 1979); S. Dyrvik, 'Comment', *Scandinavian Population Studies*, 5 (1979), pp. 98–103.

18 P. Chaunu, *La civilisation de l'Europe classique* (Paris, 1966), p. 233.

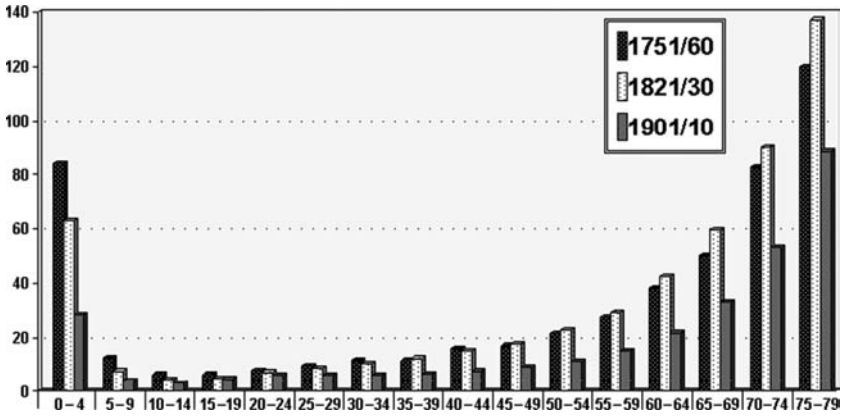


Figure 33.2 Mortality per 1,000 mean population, at different ages, in Sweden  
 Source: *Historisk Statistik för Sverige, 1: Befolkningen*, 2nd edn (Stockholm, 1969).

### The mortality of the very young is the first to go down

Living standards seem to be a slippery and unreliable variable, difficult to handle. Research in recent years has, therefore, increasingly focused on the particular age group which pioneers the general decline, with the idea of getting a grip on the most relevant variables in connection with this particular group.

There is general agreement and solid empirical data to the effect that the mortality decline in Scandinavia started with a decline in infant mortality and mortality of small children aged 1–4 years. It makes sense to focus on infant mortality when looking for the causes of the initial decline of the death rate. According to Swedish data for 1755–63 children of 0–4 years made up 40 per cent of all deaths; more than half of these were infants, under 1 year of age. Infant deaths, therefore, accounted for so large a proportion of all deaths that fluctuations in infant mortality would have a decisive bearing on the death rate. (See Figure 33.2.)

A study of cohort mortality in Norway for live births 1846–1994 shows that for children between 5 and 15 years of age, mortality did not change till the last years of the nineteenth century. For persons between 15 and 40 years mortality did not change until the 1920s. Persons above 50, however, experienced a decrease in mortality during the last half of the nineteenth century. And for children under 5 the reduction is considerable between 1846 and 1900: for 1-year-old boys the death probability is reduced by one-third, for

## Demographic transition during the period 1815–1870

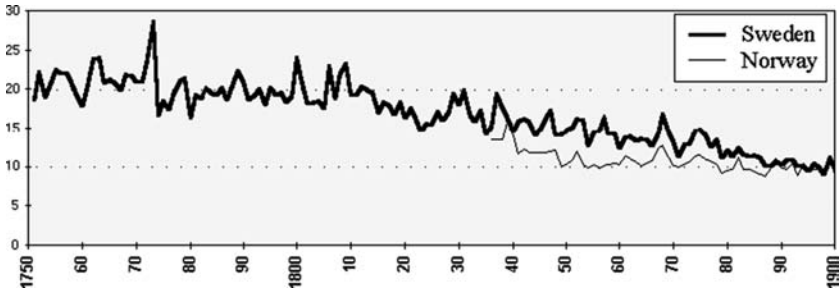


Figure 33.3 Infant deaths 0–1 year, per 100 live births, in Norway and Sweden  
Sources: *Historisk Statistik för Sverige, 1: Befolkningen*, 2nd edn (Stockholm, 1969); *Historisk statistikk 1978* (Oslo, 1978).

those between 2 and 4 it is halved. For infant boys aged less than 1 year the reduction is only 17 per cent, but being so many in numbers, the effect on the death rate is considerable. Besides, by 1846 the infant mortality rate had already been significantly reduced.<sup>19</sup>

Cause of death varies within the group of infants aged less than 1 year. Swedish data on infant mortality can from 1860 be split into neonatal mortality – mortality during the first four weeks after birth – and post-neonatal mortality. Neonatal deaths are to a high degree linked to conditions of the mother's pregnancy and to conditions during the birth, whereas post-neonatal death – and the mortality of children of 1–4 years – depend on living conditions, primarily intake of food and exposure to disease. The decline of the infant mortality rate after 1860 is primarily due to a decline in the post-neonatal mortality.<sup>20</sup> The attention of the researcher who is looking for declining infant mortality before 1860 is drawn towards infants and their mothers – conditions around pregnancy, birth and feeding practices.

### Infant mortality

National statistics of infant mortality in this period are scarce. Only Sweden-Finland has figures going back to the mid-eighteenth century. (See Figure 33.3.)

19 J.-K. Borgan 'Mortality Trends in Norway 1846–1980', *Scandinavian Population Studies*, 6:3 (1984), pp. 29–46; S.-E. Mamelund and J.-K. Borgan, *Kohort- og periodedødelighet i Norge 1846–1994*, Statistisk Sentralbyrå, Rapporter, 96/9 (Oslo–Kongsvinger, 1996).

20 E. Hofsten and H. Lundström, *Swedish Population History: Main Trends from 1750 to 1970* (Stockholm, 1976), pp. 45f.

Sweden in 1751–5 had an infant mortality rate (IMR) of 200, which is to say that some 200 out of 1,000 live-born children died before the age of 1 year.<sup>21</sup> An infant mortality rate of 200 in pre-industrial society must be considered low as, on average, ‘a stable pre-industrial IMR was around 250 per thousand’.<sup>22</sup> Model life tables show that with an infant mortality rate of 200, life expectancy at birth will be around 35, and 60 per cent of the children born will survive to age 20. From the beginning of the nineteenth century the rate began to fall steadily in Sweden, and by 1900 it averaged 100.

Finland, on the other hand, had an infant mortality rate in the neighbourhood of 200 up till the middle of the nineteenth century. The rate for the period 1751–1800 is computed to 218 per 1,000, but this is considered to be unrealistically low. The rate for 1801–50 was still as high as 198.<sup>23</sup> The rate kept going down, but slowly, and with immense yearly fluctuations until about 1870. In the period 1851–1900 the rate was down to 165. Not until the very end of the nineteenth century did the downward trend speed up.<sup>24</sup>

Denmark (with Iceland) did not start collecting statistics on infant mortality until 1842.<sup>25</sup> A nationally representative family reconstitution study for the period 1780–1801 gives an IMR of 200 per 1,000.<sup>26</sup> The national average for the 1840s showed a genuine decline, 140–150 per 1,000, on a par with Sweden. From the 1850s official Danish statistics report a steadily falling infant mortality.

The rate for Iceland in the 1840s, however, was 300–350, which gave rise to great concern among Danish authorities and official initiatives. As well it might: an IMR of 300 means that life expectancy at birth is down to 25 years and only forty-six babies out of a hundred will survive to the age of 20.

In Norway statistics on infant mortality are available on a national level from 1836. The rate was 140 in the period 1836–40, and kept going steadily down; in 1851–5 it was 105; then it rose a little in the late 1860s (114) and the

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 45f.

22 S. R. Johansson, ‘Neglect, Abuse, and Avoidable Death: Parental Investment and the Mortality of Infants and Children in the European Tradition’, in R. J. Gelles and J. B. Lancaster (eds.), *Child Abuse and Neglect: Biosocial Dimensions* (New York, 1987), pp. 57–93.

23 O. Turpeinen, ‘Infant Mortality in Finland 1865–1869’, in A. Brändström and L.-G. Tedebrand (eds.), *Society, Health and Population During the Demographic Transition* (Umeå, 1988), pp. 61–76.

24 K. Pitkänen ‘Infant Mortality Decline in a Changing Society’, *Yearbook of Population Research in Finland*, 21 (1983), pp. 46–74.

25 A. Løkke, ‘No Difference without a Cause: Infant Mortality Rates as a World View Generator’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 20:2 (1995), pp. 75–96.

26 H. C. Johansen, *Befolkningsudvikling og familiestruktur i det 18. århundrede* (Odense, 1975), pp. 118–20.

beginning of the 1870s (107). By 1881–5 it was 99, and from then on it was permanently below 100. Norway had the lowest IMR in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, with small regional differences.<sup>27</sup>

How are we to interpret these national figures? At a general level, we know that the central authorities already at the end of the eighteenth century had begun to take an active interest in the survival of infants. There are many indicators of this change of attitude: improved education of midwives, collection of statistics on stillbirths and the circumstances surrounding them, greater concern for illegitimate children – such as postponement of prison sentences for breastfeeding mothers and, around 1800, de-criminalisation of giving birth out of wedlock. The ‘cultural climate’ was changing. But it is difficult to link possible cause and effect. Local and regional studies have focused on these questions. In advance we know that the answers are tentative, because the variation in infant mortality is great, and the problem of representativity calls for caution.

Research interest has to a large degree focused on breastfeeding as a possible explanatory factor. The logic should be that mothers traditionally did not breastfeed their infants, with fatal results. Then mothers started to breastfeed, and infant mortality declined. A study of the effect of lactation on infant mortality, using medical records concerning 6,900 live-born infants from maternity clinics in Oslo and Bergen 1860–1930, shows that the mortality of babies not breast-fed was three times that of those who were.<sup>28</sup> Breastfeeding practices in northern Sweden and Finland have been thoroughly investigated.<sup>29</sup> In certain areas in northern Sweden and Finland mothers seem not to have breastfed their infants or only to have done so to a very small extent. High infant mortality in the same areas had already alerted medical authorities in the eighteenth century to the phenomenon. In 1755 a pamphlet was issued regarding this. In the nineteenth century regular campaigns were launched in order to enlighten mothers of the fatal effects of this neglect, with beneficial results. In 1779 similar views were expressed by a Danish doctor, Elon Mangor, whose book was translated into Norwegian.<sup>30</sup>

27 A. N. Kiær, *Om Dødeligheden i det første Leveaar*, Forhandlinger i Det Norske Videnskabs-Akademi i Christiania aar 1871 (Oslo, 1872).

28 M. Rosenberg, ‘Breast-feeding and Infant Mortality in Norway 1860–1930’, *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 21 (1989), pp. 335–48.

29 A. Brändström, *De kärlekslösa mödrarna. Spädbarnsdödligheten i Sverige under 1800-talet med särskilt hänsyn till Nedertorneå* (Umeå, 1984); U.-B. Lithell, *Kvinnorarbete och barn tillsyn i 1700- och 1800-talets Österbotten* (Uppsala, 1988); Moring, *Skärgårdsbor*.

30 S. Sogner et al., *Fra stua full til tobarns kull* (Oslo, 1984).

In Norway as well doctors promoted breastfeeding in the nineteenth century, notwithstanding that the widespread practice here was protracted breastfeeding – about 12 months.<sup>31</sup>

Scandinavian family reconstitution studies from a wide variety of rural parishes show fertility patterns with extended intervals between births, intervals of a duration which it is generally agreed among researchers is explained as the outcome of prolonged breastfeeding.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, it may seem that the north Swedish and north Finnish non-breastfeeding practice is a special case which does not apply to Scandinavia in general. But it is no less interesting. It has been linked to women's workload.<sup>33</sup> In areas where women bore the main responsibility for the farm work, because the men were away busily attending to other important business to support the common household, the heavy work that fell on women may have had fatal consequences for pregnancies and child care. The case is open and needs to be studied further.

One potentially interesting finding regards social differential infant mortality. Contrary to what might be expected, farmers' wives in Norway tended to have higher infant mortality than cottars' wives.<sup>34</sup> It has been hypothesised that this may have to do with size and geographical centrality of household, and the ensuing exposure to disease. Similar mortality patterns are found in Sweden and Finland as well. Variables discussed are family and household size, women's workload, length of intergenetic intervals and length and frequency of breastfeeding.<sup>35</sup> In Norway, for an urban population in the period 1776–1825, infant mortality was shown to be U-shaped, in the sense that the working classes and the elite had higher mortality than the middling group.<sup>36</sup> The picture is confusing, and more research is needed before conclusions can be drawn.

31 K. Liestøl, M. Rosenberg and L. Walløe, 'Lactation and Post-partum Amenorrhoea: A Study Based on Data from Three Norwegian Cities 1860–1964', *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 20 (1988), pp. 423–34.

32 S. Sogner, "'... a prudent wife is from the Lord': The Married Peasant Woman of the Eighteenth Century in a Demographic Perspective', *The Scandinavian Journal of History*, 9 (1984), pp. 113–33.

33 U.-B. Lithell, *Kvinnoarbete och barnmått* (Uppsala, 1988).

34 Engelsen, 'Mortalitetsdebatten og sosiale skilnader i mortalitet', pp. 191–202.

35 Moring, *Skärgårdsbor*, pp. 125–8; C. Winberg, *Folkökning och proletarisering* (Lund, 1977), pp. 242–5.

36 J. Lahn, 'Livsvilkår og levesjanser i Moss, 1776–1825', unpubl. MA thesis (University of Oslo, 1986); S. Sogner, 'Status of Women and Demographic Change: The Norwegian Case', in *Historiens et populations. Liber amicorum Étienne Hélin* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1991), pp. 577–91.

Table 33.2 *Average annual population increase in percentage*

Period	Sweden	Finland	Denmark	Norway	Iceland
1735–1800	0.5	1.2	0.3	0.7	0.1
1801–1900	0.7	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.7

Source: T. Bengtsson, *Den demografiska transitionen* (Lund, 1992), p. 11.

Table 33.3 *Expectation of life at birth: men and women*

Period	Sweden		Finland		Denmark		Norway		Iceland	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1791–1800	37	40	37	–	–	–	40	–		
1821–30	39	43	36	–	48	–	40	45		
1831–40	39	43	–	–	46	–	–	42		
1841–50	42	46	38	–	48	41	42	45	43	–
1851–60	41	44	–	–	44	47	47	50	32	38
1861–70	43	46	36	38	44	46	–	–	–	–

Source: T. Bengtsson, *Den demografiska transitionen* (Lund, 1992), p. 14.

Table 33.4 *Emigration from Scandinavia 1851–70:  
mean annual emigration per 1,000*

	1851–60	1861–70
Denmark	0.3	1.0
Finland	–	–
Norway	2.4	5.8
Sweden	0.4	2.3
Iceland	–	–

Source: H. Norman and H. Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections. Nordic Migration to the New World after 1800* (Oslo, 1987), p. 33.

## Population growth

Infant mortality declined. More children survived, and population grew. In the eighteenth century population growth had been uneven in Scandinavia, and relatively slow. (See Table 33.2.) In Iceland population hardly increased at all, whereas Norway and, above all, Finland had substantial growth. Now growth rates speeded up considerably in all the five countries.

Expectation of life at birth increased in the three central states. (See Table 33.3.) This was not the case, however, in Finland and Iceland where, as we have seen, mortality did not start its permanent decline until around 1870.

It is interesting against this background to notice that overseas emigration follows a pattern which harmonises well with the mortality development in the five countries. Before 1870 Scandinavian emigrants to North America only came from the three centrally situated countries, where mortality had been declining for quite a long period. (See Table 33.4.) This was to change later on.

Before 1870 it was, above all, Norwegian emigration which was substantial. It has been shown that there existed in the eighteenth century a differential mortality pattern between the rural inland and the urbanised coast in Norway – with very low inland mortality and high mortality on the coast – and a concomitant migration pattern from the inland to the coast. It has been argued that this was probably a stable element in the demographic structure, and an element which became destabilised along with the fall in mortality in the coastal parishes around 1815. The coast, which until then had been on the receiving end of the migration streams, gradually became more stable. The sending areas, therefore, began experiencing difficulties in disposing of their natural increase. Emigration to America was the answer to the problem. Migration was a more straightforward solution to the problems caused by a rising population than lowering the birth rate. The latter did not become a practicable solution until the 1890s and 1900s.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Sogner, *Folkevekst og flytting*.



## Agricultural development in Scandinavia, c. 1800–50

MATTI PELTONEN

### The beginning of the agricultural revolution

The available picture of the agricultural revolution in Scandinavia in the early nineteenth century is quite varied. The southern regions were dominated by a zone of manors extending from the eastern parts of Jylland and the Danish islands via southern Sweden to the southern regions of Finland. It must be noted, however, that towards the north the manors became smaller with peasant freeholds amongst them. North of the manor zone were the forest regions, where peasant agriculture was characterised by more traditional farming methods and an often greater necessity to combine farming with other means of livelihood.<sup>1</sup> Foreign travellers often made exciting observations of the differences between these two agrarian worlds. For example, in 1799 Thomas Robert Malthus visited the Nordic countries, where he noted the great poverty of the rural population in the manorial regions, but was surprised by the affluence of the peasants living in the forested areas. The Danish peasants of the manor regions in particular made a depressing impression on someone able to make comparisons with nearby areas.<sup>2</sup> Similar observations were made by many who travelled in Sweden and Finland in the early nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

The foreign travellers, however, mostly kept to the best roads and routes and saw only the façade of conditions in the forest regions. In the inland of the peasant zone, where communications were poor or non-existent, people

1 For more details see W. R. Mead, *An Historical Geography of Scandinavia* (London, 1981), pp. 120–31.

2 T. R. Malthus, *The Travel Diaries of Thomas Robert Malthus*, ed. P. James (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 49, 77.

3 Gustaf Utterström describes these observations in detail. G. Utterström, *Jordbrukets arbetare*, 1 (Stockholm, 1957), pp. 81–96. As for Finland the observations are confirmed by for example the Russian, Jakov Grot in *Matka Suomessa 1846* (Pieksämäki, 1983), pp. 54f.

followed a very modest existence. Malthus's diary from his travels mentions the inhabitants of Norway's roadless forested regions, who even in good years would mix bark-flour with their bread in order to be able to eat emergency bread during years of famine. The same was still observed in the 1830s among portions of the population in the outlying regions of Finland.<sup>4</sup> In the early nineteenth century travel in the roadless forest regions was still an expedition to a strange and alien world for the educated classes even of the same country. For example, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, who became Finland's national poet, worked as a tutor in a manor in the inland area during the 1820s while he was still a student. He wrote a markedly romantic account of the poverty of the peasants of the region, which in his eyes appeared to be exotic. One of Runeberg's observations was that in the inland wilderness the expressions 'He eats bread unmixed with bark throughout the year' and 'He has immense wealth' were synonymous.<sup>5</sup>

It was thus easy to find major differences and opposite tendencies in the conditions that existed in the rural context. Nevertheless, there were also common experiences. The nineteenth century as a whole can be termed the period of the agricultural revolution in the Nordic countries. According to Marc Bloch, the agricultural revolution entailed two aspects: the demise of collective institutions in cultivation and the adoption of new technology.<sup>6</sup> Both phenomena played an important role in changes in agriculture during the nineteenth century. In Scandinavia, however, a third phenomenon must be added – the improved social standing and expanded influence of the top stratum of the peasantry. All these phenomena derive from the eighteenth century, but in the following century they laid out and defined the course of developments in agriculture. Because agriculture and the rural population were still of major importance, these processes altered society as a whole.

The concept of the agricultural revolution can also be applied in a different sense. Bernard Hendrik Slicher van Bath distinguishes two historical stages in the agricultural revolution.<sup>7</sup> The first stage, which in the Nordic countries can be said to have already begun in the latter half of the eighteenth century

4 Malthus, *The Travel Diaries of Thomas Robert Malthus*, pp. 217f.; A. M. Soininen, *Vanha maataloutemme* (Helsinki, 1974), pp. 368f.

5 J. L. Runeberg, 'Några ord om nejderna, folklynnet och lefnadssättet i Saarijärvi socken', *Helsingfors Dagbladet*, 50, 52, 53 (1832).

6 M. Bloch, *French Rural History: An Essay on its Basic Characteristics* (Los Angeles, 1966), p. 198.

7 B. H. Slicher van Bath, *The Agrarian History of Western Europe AD 500–1850* (London, 1963), pp. 299–307. See also E. Boserup, 'Agricultural Change in the Period of Demographic Transition', in E. Boserup (ed.), *Population and Technology* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 114–17.

and continued until the mid-nineteenth century, involved the intensifying of agriculture and arable farming in particular. Everything possible was done to increase cereal crops by intensifying the use of arable land. Labour-saving improvements remained a secondary objective at this stage. In the second stage, from around the middle of the nineteenth century to the First World War, changes in the world market for farm produce and the resulting fluctuations in price levels made it necessary to focus growing attention on better productivity through labour-saving measures. Around this time a major change occurred in the orientation of agricultural production towards the greater importance of dairy farming. But the breakthrough of mechanisation and the growing commercialisation at the close of the nineteenth century were preceded in Nordic agriculture by a stage of intensive agriculture mostly involving efforts to develop arable farming. Important elements of this process were the enclosure movement and the adoption of new methods of crop production and new agricultural technology. Interlinked technological and institutional change had considerable impact on the living conditions and social structure of the population. In the rural regions of Scandinavia the first half of the nineteenth century was a period of rapid change preceding the breakthrough of industry.

## The Scandinavian enclosure movement

### *The enclosure decrees*

The British parliamentary enclosure movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was no isolated phenomenon; a similar process occurred in Scandinavia, where the enclosure movement was by no means less significant than the measures that radically changed the English countryside. In Scandinavia the movement shaped the rural communities in a profound way and it signified the more active influence of the state on the development of the local communities. Moreover, the Nordic enclosure movement was of shorter duration. In England the enclosure movement in its parliamentary stage consolidated only some 25 per cent of all enclosed land, while in Scandinavia almost all farmland was consolidated in at least the same time.

Enclosure had already begun in the mid-eighteenth century in Scandinavia. Sweden's first decree on land consolidation, which launched state-led enclosure in Sweden and Finland, was laid down in 1757. But already eight years earlier surveyors could enclose land if all the landowners of a village unanimously agreed to it. Complete unanimity, however, was difficult to

achieve, because ownership was often dispersed owing to its markedly peasant character. The decree of 1757 made enclosure easier, because now the application of only one landowner was needed to begin the process, and other owners had to agree to it if it was deemed necessary. From the very beginning, this legislation also applied to the parts of the Swedish realm in present-day Finland. A further special feature was that in Finland enclosure did not begin in the south, where the best farmlands were situated, but in central regions of Pohjanmaa (Österbotten) and Savo. The reason for this was that surveyors were at that time engaged in revising the basis of land taxes in these areas.

In Denmark, the state-led enclosure began in 1758, a year later than in Sweden. Here, too, a majority had to agree to enclosing before it could be carried out. One result of this was that in the early years, the measures were not particularly radical. Moving out of villages and hamlets, in particular, was distasteful to the peasants. Therefore, many of the early Danish redivisions of land are known as 'stellar divisions' (*stjerneudskiftning*), describing the shape of the boundaries of parcels of land radiating from the centre of the village like rays from a star in the heavens. This could result in very long parcels of land and fewer benefits than in the so-called block division (*blokudskiftning*) in which parcels of land were divided more according to terrain and the number of owners and the majority of the owners moved out of the hamlet to their parcels of land. In 1781, the Danish authorities adopted the Swedish practice whereby the application or motion of even one landowner was sufficient for initiating the enclosure of a whole village. The Danish decrees did not concern Norway, which belonged to the Danish realm at the time and where the first enclosure decree was not laid down until 1821 and revised in 1857. The Norwegian redivision decree of 1857 was as radical in content as the Swedish decree of 1757 and the Danish decree of 1781.

The Swedish decree was effective from the very beginning with its stipulation of the application of only one landowner being sufficient to begin the process in a locality. Underlying this strict position was the experience of earlier decrees where enclosure was only recommended and which did not lead to any practical results. These were instructions issued to surveyors in 1749 and a decree from 1752 permitting partial enclosure of land concerning only one owner. The redivision decree of 1757 also gave the authorities the right to apply for action. The active role of the authorities was particularly important in the brisk pace of redivision and enclosure that took place in Finland, where it was possible to take action even without the application of a single private landowner.

Scandinavian legislation concerning enclosure and land division was laid down by the monarch or by the diet. They applied to the realm as a whole and provided the framework within which action was taken. The Scandinavian practice was in this respect considerably different from enclosure in England, where landowners wanted Parliament to ratify legal action concerning individual villages.<sup>8</sup>

In Denmark, enclosure was carried out with great speed and efficiency, and in only a few decades it altered the whole rural landscape. The process was almost complete by 1810 in Denmark, and by 1850 in most parts of Sweden and Finland. By this time, enclosed land in Finland amounted to 70 per cent of all farmland throughout the country and up to 90 per cent in the main agricultural regions. In Norway most of the enclosure measures were carried out rapidly during the decades following 1857.<sup>9</sup> In Sweden and Finland the process fell into several distinct stages marked by amendments and additions to legislation. Complete enclosure seeking to dissolve the former open-field system completely and to combine all the lots of an individual owner into a single unit was initially too radical in most parts of Sweden and Finland. Enclosure was facilitated by permitting each farm to obtain up to four shares of each common field in the village. This meant that even after enclosure, an owner could have as many as twelve strips of arable land, because three-course rotation was the most advanced method in those days. Also in Denmark the related legislation was less radical during the first decades of enclosure, permitting the assembling of parcels of land initially into two or three units. In Sweden and Finland the various categories of land (arable land, meadow and pasture, forest) were divided at different stages, between which there could be considerable intervals. This procedure, at least partly resulting from the difficulty of assessing the potential yield of different types of land on the same scale, apparently eroded the economic benefits of enclosure. The number of lots automatically remained greater than if all farmland could have been divided at the same time. Furthermore, this procedure prevented changes to relative proportions of fields and meadow land, thus decreasing opportunities to adopt more intensive cultivation methods. Enclosure was thus initially carried out in diluted form at least in certain parts of Sweden and Finland. Particularly in the large villages

8 J. Thirsk, 'Agricultural Policy: Public Debate and Legislation, 1640–1750', in J. Thirsk (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1500–1750*, 3: *Agricultural Change: Policy and Practice 1500–1750* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 205–9.

9 T. Pryser, *Norsk historie 1800–1870. Frå Standssamfunn mot klassesamfunn* (Oslo, 1985), pp. 222f.

of Skåne the number of parcels of land per owner could at first be as high as between ten and fifteen.

Enclosure required the relocation of dwellings from the old village or hamlet centre to be situated amidst the tillages. This was not popular among the peasants. Moving was costly and it broke down the old village community. Also in Denmark as many freeholders as possible sought to preserve their old position in the village and to have enclosure carried out so that as few dwellings as possible had to be moved. Decrees concerning moving out of the villages promised assistance to those required to move and ordered other members of the community to participate in the costs. Enclosure in Scandinavia was facilitated by two factors. First, it was implemented with a single act of legislation at the national level, and it was not thought necessary to have separate decrees passed for each village, as was the case in England. Secondly, at least in Sweden and Finland, enclosure was carried out by state-employed surveyors, which meant that the landowners paid for only a part of the costs. In Norway the actual enclosure act came so late (1857) that spontaneous corrections to the dispersal of parcels of land preceding legislation were important.<sup>10</sup> The outfields (meadows and pastures) were already enclosed in the eighteenth century, but enclosure gained pace after a decree given in 1821 and would at times include infields. Moving out from the villages did not become common in Norway until after the act of 1857.<sup>11</sup>

In Sweden and Finland enclosure was carried out in several stages. Dissatisfaction over the inefficient nature of the original decree resulted in the *enskifte* consolidation measures of the first decade of the nineteenth century by which it was attempted to establish order amidst the dispersal of parcels of land in the southernmost parts of Sweden. This term implies the combining of isolated parcels of land into a single unit per owner. It followed the example of Denmark and was implemented in Skåne, Sweden's southernmost province, where conditions resembled Denmark more than the northern parts of the realm. The *enskifte* redivision provoked a great deal of criticism particularly among the peasant landowners. It was soon extended in slightly more liberal form (*laga skifte*) to the whole realm (1827), and after a brief time lag similar legislation was also passed in Finland (1848). This meant that for several decades two parallel processes were being followed: the implementing of enclosure and additions to it. Also in Denmark, the initially

<sup>10</sup> F. Valen-Sendstad, *Norske landbruksredskape, 1800–1850-årene* (Lillehammer, 1964), p. 221.

<sup>11</sup> H. Try, *Gardsskipnad og bondenæring. Sørlandsk jordbruk på 1800-talet* (Bergen, 1969), pp. 80–108.

poor results were revised and amended throughout the nineteenth century, albeit without new legislation. The nature of reforms to enclosure as a compromise is shown by the fact that in Sweden it was possible to reduce the number of parcels to an average of three. The situation was similar in Finland.<sup>12</sup>

### *Grounds for enclosure*

Influences for implementing the enclosure of land came via two routes. In the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, which belonged to the king of Denmark, privately conducted enclosure measures had long traditions dating back to the sixteenth century. Here spontaneous amendments to the fragmentation of arable land mainly carried out by peasant owners had already got under way in the early eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup> Beginning in the 1730s, local authorities in South Jylland made several proposals to promote enclosure, but these were tacitly rejected. The benefits of enclosure were first discussed in public in Denmark in 1757. Also the first known decree regarding the enclosing of agricultural land (*Gemeinheitsteilung*) was given in 1718 right next to Denmark in the duchy of Lauenburg situated south of Holstein.<sup>14</sup>

The other source of influence was England, where private enclosure measures had increased, after the Middle Ages, again in the seventeenth century and had developed into the parliamentary enclosure movement in the early eighteenth century. The heyday of this movement was between the 1750s and the 1830s and it was largely a parallel to enclosure in Scandinavia.<sup>15</sup> Jacob Faggot (1699–1777), head of Sweden's Royal Board of Survey and a vociferous and administratively skilled proponent of enclosure, readily pointed to the high productivity of English farming as the result of enclosure. When Faggot began to promote enclosure, voluntary measures to this effect were already under way in Schleswig-Holstein and it is quite possible that Faggot was also aware of conditions in the regions south of Denmark.

Before the enclosure decree of 1757 Faggot had already been able to combine enclosure with the official tasks of surveyors. New regulations issued to surveyors in 1749 ordered them to carry out enclosure if all

12 K. Bäck, *Början till slutet. Laga skiftet och torpbebyggelsen i Östergötland 1827–65* (Borensberg, 1992), p. 32; M. Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit* (Helsinki, 1992), p. 100.

13 P. G. Møller, *Udskiftningen og dens økonomiske og sociale følger i Sønderjylland ca. 1730–1830* (Åbenrå, 1984), pp. 15–18.

14 J. Blum, *The End of Old Order in Rural Europe* (Princeton, 1978), p. 266.

15 M. Turner, *Enclosure in Britain 1750–1830* (London, 1984); G. E. Mingway, *Parliamentary Enclosure in England: An Introduction to its Causes, Incidence and Impact 1750–1850* (London, 1997).

landowners in a village or hamlet agreed to it. This implied an expansion of the duties and authority of surveyors and the growing grip of the state on steering the course of agriculture.<sup>16</sup> Faggot regarded surveying and mapping as such as economically significant reforms. The surveyor who could precisely define the area of land that still lay unused provided an impetus for its use and cultivation. Faggot and his pupil Efraim Otto Runeberg, who directed the work of surveyors in Finland during the early stages of enclosure, drew up detailed micro-level studies of individual localities, in which opportunities for future growth were indicated.<sup>17</sup> By measuring and defining as precisely as possible the opportunities for future cultivation in areas to be cleared, these leading surveyors felt they were offering to the eyes of others the breathtaking vista of a whole country opened up for farming to serve the nation as an endlessly fertile garden. Faggot and his successors not only believed that all waste land could be cleared, but also assumed that this work would also improve the climate and make it more conducive to the flourishing of society.

Like the German cameralists of his day, Faggot also had a 'liberal' tone to his arguments. The main goals of improving agricultural production were to be promoted by removing artificial obstacles to the work of the farmer (*landtman*). In his main polemical work *Svenska Lantbrukets Hinder och Hjälpl* ('Obstacles and Aid to Agriculture in Sweden'), running to over one hundred pages and published in 1746, Faggot dwelt on replacing the open-field system with enclosure in only two and a half pages. The longest section is on improving tax collection by making the tax-payers of every parish jointly responsible for their land tax instead of the earlier payment per farm. This would provide more stable and even tax revenue for the crown.<sup>18</sup> Faggot was no friend of the peasants. For him, the improvement of agriculture was a means to achieve more important goals. His arguments are well characterised by a metaphor according to which bees can only be raised on a meadow of flowers.<sup>19</sup>

16 U. Sporrang, 'Samhällshistoria genom våra äldre lantmäteriakter. Några reflektioner med utgångspunkt från tidiga radikala jordskifte i Sörmland under 1700-talets förra hälft', *Ymer* '84, 104 (1984), p. 141.

17 Both these famous micro-level studies concerned Finnish localities: on the part of Faggot, Pernå parish; while Runeberg studied Laihia. J. Faggot, 'Beskrifning öfver Pernå socken, belägen i skärgården vid Finska viken', *Kungliga Vetenskapsakademiens Handlingar* (Stockholm, 1750), pp. 257–68; E. O. Runeberg, 'Försök til en Politisk Värdering på Land och Folk i anledning af Lajhela Socken', *Kungliga Vetenskapsakademiens Handlingar* (Stockholm, 1759), pp. 187–98. See M. Rantanen, *Tillväxt i periferin. Befolkning och jordbruk i Södra Österbotten 1750–1890* (Göteborg, 1997), pp. 136–58.

18 J. Faggot, *Svenska lantbrukets hinder och hjälp* (Stockholm, 1746), pp. 84–7.

19 Utterström, *Jordbrukets arbetare*, 1, p. 263.



Although public debate pointed to the great productivity of English agriculture, which was linked to enclosure, English experts were by no means the most important authorities for reforms in agriculture. A more prominent influence on thinking in Denmark and Sweden in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was German cameralism, which was also evident in other areas. Its influence on Danish economic thinking is a recognised fact, but it is equally obvious in the case of Faggot and some of his followers.<sup>20</sup> Good contacts with the German-speaking academic world also figured in the actions of Count Christian Ditlev Reventlow (1748–1827), the architect of agricultural reforms in Denmark, who not only had studied in Leipzig but also spoke German at home.<sup>21</sup> Contemporary public debate criticised the open-field system for the excessive dispersal of parcels of land. Open-field farming was regarded as ineffective and occupying the efforts of enterprising freeholders, because it bound all the freeholders of the hamlet or village to the same method. This criticism was not unfounded. The dispersal of parcels of land was truly marked in all the main arable farming regions of Scandinavia. There are many examples of villages where the land of a single owner could be found in fifty or even over one hundred parcels.

The open-field system and the dense village settlements associated with it must nevertheless have had certain benefits as it survived for so long in most of Europe. The economic rationality of a village or hamlet under this system has often been described as deriving from egalitarian peasant values or the efficient organisation of labour.<sup>22</sup> However, the development of farming technology and methods in North-western Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries began to take on forms that were in contradiction with the open-field villages. The new, more intensive methods of cultivation required more frequent access between the economic centres of the farms and their outlying parts. As the working of land developed, freeholders went out into the fields more often and with heavier implements. Fertilisation and soil improvement also required traffic, which made the long distances and the waste of working time a particular problem. The basic objective of enclosure measures, to reduce the dispersal of parcels of land, markedly

20 E. Oxenbøll, *Dansk økonomisk tækning 1700–1770* (København, 1977), pp. 9–20.

21 C. Bjørn, *Den gode sag. En biografi om Christian Ditlev Frederik Reventlow* (København, 1992), pp. 27–9, 102.

22 S. Fenoaltea, 'Transaction Costs, Whig History and the Common Fields', in B. Gustafsson (ed.), *Power and Economic Institutions* (Worcester, 1991), pp. 107–69; A. Raaschou-Nielsen, 'Danish Agrarian Reforms and Economic Theory', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 38:3 (1990), pp. 44–61.

shortened the average distance between the centre of the farm and the fields. Contemporary comments already underlined the shortening of working distances as an important aspect of enclosure.<sup>23</sup>

Research shows that the savings in labour brought about by shortened distances was the most significant economic benefit of enclosure. A study concerning *laga skifte* land division carried out in Finnish villages in the late nineteenth century shows that most (80 per cent) of the immediate net economic benefits of reparable came from the shortening of distances between the centres of the farms and the tillages. The second-largest benefit (14 per cent) was achieved through the more advantageous shape of the tillages and the third-largest (6 per cent) was due to the reduction of the number of parcels of land.<sup>24</sup> Freeholders of the period were aware of the role of distances for the intensity of cultivation. The general division between infields and outfields was one of the results of this. Fields located further away from the farm were not fertilised at all. They were often planted with oats from one year to another, with poor yields. Labour studies suggest similar results. A study conducted at the close of the nineteenth century showed that when the distance to a tillage doubled the requirement of human labour also doubled and that of horse labour grew by three-fifths.<sup>25</sup> These examples suggest that the arguments presented by crown officials and intellectuals did not always take into consideration the most important aspects.

### *Enclosure and the peasantry*

Older literature on the history of agriculture underlines the negative attitudes of the peasants regarding enclosure. This reaction has often been attested to by colourful accounts of individual events. For example, the Finnish authorities decided to begin enclosure in the parish of Laihia in Pohjanmaa in 1757. The local inhabitants, led by their vicar, rose up in opposition and delayed work by refusing to give the surveyor lodging.<sup>26</sup> In another Finnish village, the peasants at first refused to meet the surveyor and to talk with him. Recent studies in several Nordic countries, however, are changing this picture. Particularly results concerning Denmark and Sweden show that peasant landowners took an active part, and even the initiative, when

23 Møller, *Udskiftningen*, p. 94.

24 O. Sarvi, *Isonjaonjärjestely Laihiella ja Jurvassa vuosina 1890–1909* (Helsinki, 1915), p. 132.

25 Enckell's study concerned the Mustiala training farm in south Finland between 1899 and 1906. Quoted in Sarvi, *Isonjaonjärjestely*, p. 106.

26 S. Kuusi, *Isonjaon alkeuvaiheet Pohjanmaalla* (Helsinki, 1914), pp. 87f.

enclosure measures were begun.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, it is true that the freeholders, like all other landowners, often protested against some of the principles of enclosure and particularly against local instances of land division that were felt to be unsuccessful or unjust.

In most cases, criticism was prompted by two things. The landowners generally did not take well to the situation where only one landowner could initiate the whole process. Majority rulings were regarded as a better means of decision-making.<sup>28</sup> Secondly, the peasants in particular were reluctant to move out of their hamlets and villages. The most sensible economic solution was to leave those in the hamlet whose dwellings were in the best condition. In Denmark, the pace of relocation varied greatly in connection with enclosure. For example, in Sjælland, an average of 40 per cent of all buildings were relocated, while in Jylland this figure varied between 10 and 20 per cent. It is estimated that in Sweden and Finland around half of all farmhouses were ultimately moved as a result of enclosure measures.<sup>29</sup> It must be underlined that in the forest regions of Sweden and in Finland relocation from the villages already began in the early stages of enclosure during the 1750s and 1760s. The prevalence of moving was approximately the same as in Denmark. The southernmost part of Sweden was an exception, where moving out of the large villages was not popular. This regional difference has often been attributed to differences in vernacular building practices and related costs. Further to the north, more timber could be used as construction material, for which at least the landowners often had their own forests.<sup>30</sup> Those who moved out of the villages readily felt that they were separated from their social context. Relocation also involved costs. Buildings had to be re-erected or completely rebuilt. It was also necessary to arrange roads and dig new wells. Those who moved out were often given outfields in poor condition. A micro-level study of the south Swedish village of Kungslena

27 J. Dieckmann Rasmussen, *Bønderne og udskiftningen* (København, 1977), pp. 107–16; C. Bjørn, 'The Peasantry and Agrarian Reform in Denmark', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 25:2 (1977), pp. 117–23; K. Bäck, *Bondeopposition och bondeinflytande under frihetstiden* (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 209–44; B. Olai, 'Storskifte – ett modifierat tegskifte?', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 105 (1985), pp. 310–39; P. Svensson, *Agrara entreprenörer. Böndernas roll i omvandlingen av jordbruk i Skåne ca 1800–1870* (Stockholm, 2001), pp. 126–9.

28 For example, in local government in Sweden and Finland unanimous decisions were a method followed until the close of the nineteenth century. T. Jansson, *Agrarsamhällets förändring och landskommunal organisation* (Uppsala, 1987), p. 103.

29 Bäck, *Början till slutet*, p. 33.

30 J. Saarenheimo, 'Isojaot ja isojaonjärjestelyt', *Maanmittaus Suomessa 1633–1983* (Helsinki, 1983), pp. 41–7; Utterström, *Jordbrukets arbetare*, 1, p. 530.

clearly shows how the landowners fell into two antagonistic camps when the radical *enskifte* land division was carried out in the early nineteenth century. The opponents of these measures were those who had to move out furthest from the old village. The situation inspired an interesting protest song in which the dissolution of the beautiful 300-year-old village was severely criticised. The village is described in warm terms, not as something dreary and grey but as a local sight resembling a town.<sup>31</sup> This song is a rarity, for hardly any similar expressions of opinion against enclosure measures have survived.

The other source of conflict was the consideration of the quality of the soil in enclosing. The core of this problem lay in the fact that, for a long time, land was assessed according to yield, which meant gross production instead of net yield. This was quite natural, for in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries agricultural bookkeeping even in the manors was not sufficiently developed to permit assessments of production costs. Peasant criticism of enclosure meant that the freeholders had a completely different view of agricultural production from the upper-class civil servants who dominated public debate and were mainly responsible for decision-making. Although the equitable principle of compensation for poorer soil by giving a large area of field seemed suitable, the situation was not the same for a peasant involved in practical farmwork. It was clear that although a larger area of poorer soil provided precisely the same crop as a smaller tract of more fertile soil, the cultivation of the larger area required more labour. In connection with enclosure measures it proved to be difficult to take into account the greater amount of labour required for working the land.

The enclosure movement was a rapid and efficient process in Scandinavia. Even in Finland it was mostly completed within the span of approximately one century. The fastest pace was in Denmark, where most of the enclosures were completed within thirty to forty years. The differences are the result of various factors. Denmark, for example, had the benefit of better natural conditions which were more homogeneous than in the rest of Scandinavia. Furthermore, the terrain was more even and not broken up by forests and bodies of water as in the areas further to the north. Also the subjugation of the peasantry facilitated enclosure in Denmark. It is also possible that the initiative of the peasants of Schleswig and Holstein to arrange spontaneous

31 S. Bohman *et al.*, 'Oss arma folk att plåga'. *Skiftet i västgötabyrn Kungslena* (Stockholm, 1976), pp. 58–60.

enclosures was known more widely than among the civil servants alone and was a factor serving to dispel the suspicions of the peasantry.<sup>32</sup>

When enclosure in Sweden and Finland began to be complemented in the early nineteenth century by the *enskitte* and *laga skifte* re-enclosure divisions, the success of these measures was largely the result of the weak standing of a certain portion of the peasantry, the tenant farmers (*torpare*). If a farm had to be moved outside the village it was quite common to evict a tenant farmer and to move the owner's buildings to the tillages that had already been cleared by the tenant. Further enclosure measures, which in Sweden and Finland led to increased relocation from the villages and hamlets and their dispersal, partly took place at the cost of the poorer peasants. The number of tenant farmers decreased and that of landless rural inhabitants grew in the villages and hamlets that had undergone enclosure (*laga skifte*).<sup>33</sup> Re-enclosure, however, progressed so slowly that it never applied at the same time to any larger localities. Therefore, the mistreatment of the tenant farmers, which eroded the economic conditions and future prospects of this group, could only provoke local dissatisfaction. In many cases, the evicted tenants were given poorer land to clear at even greater distances from the centre of the village or hamlet.<sup>34</sup> The Swedish historian Kalle Bäck has suggested that the later enclosure measures and the eviction of tenants at least partly promoted emigration to America after the middle of the nineteenth century.

### The Danish rural reforms (*landboreformerne*)

In Denmark, the concept of agricultural reform gained a specific tone of its own. Reforms implemented at the turn of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took on a different character than in other Nordic countries. There were at least two reasons for this. First, the Danish reforms covered a much shorter period than rural reforms implemented elsewhere in Scandinavia. They were to such a degree intermeshed that they are regarded as a single chain of events, and are generally referred to as the *landboreformerne*, the

32 When enclosure was propagated for the first time in public, the peasants of Holstein were immediately quoted as an example. L. Dombernowsky, 'Ca. 1720–1810', in K.-E. Frandsen and L. Dombernowsky, *Det danske landbrugs historie*, 2: 1536–1810, ed. C. Bjørn *et al.* (Odense, 1988), p. 215.

33 Bäck, *Början till slutet*, p. 68.

34 E. Jutikkala, 'Maalaisyhteiskunta siirtoväen tuloon saakka', in *Hämeen historia*, 4:1 (Hämeenlinna, 1969), pp. 124f.

rural reforms. Secondly, the reforms concerned the upper stratum of the peasantry in a much more fundamental way than elsewhere. As late as the close of the eighteenth century, peasant ownership of land had little foothold in Denmark. This was contrary to the situation in the other Nordic countries, where particularly in the outlying regions most of the cultivated land (for example in Norway and Finland) was owned by the peasants. The position of the Danish peasants bore a greater resemblance to conditions in Central Europe. Therefore the course of development in Denmark had the same features as the liberation of the peasantry in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>35</sup>

When the manors improved farming methods on their own land in the late eighteenth century these developments marked a continuous trend to increase the responsibilities of the peasantry. In the early nineteenth century the freeholder households were divided into two almost equally large groups: tenant farmers (*fæstebonde*) and crofters (*husmænd*). The tenant farmers paid land tax to the crown and provided labour services (*hoveri*) for their landlord. These peasants farmed most of the cultivated land in Denmark. On the average, the labour rent requirements placed on the tenant farmers doubled in Denmark during the last three decades of the eighteenth century. Moreover, the landlords rented smaller areas – and also the freeholders if so permitted by the landlord – to crofters (*husmænd*), who did not pay land tax but provided labour services as ground rent. Since the *husmænd* households were usually quite small, their owners often worked also as day-labourers on the lands of the tenant farmers. The state sought to protect those tenant farmers who also had to be able to pay land tax (*landgilde*). When the reforms were finally implemented after prolonged political struggles, peasant unrest and demonstrations by the landlords, it was mostly done upon the conditions of the latter group. The status of the peasantry could only be changed if there was no risk to the landlords' rights of ownership or economic interests.<sup>36</sup> In this respect the Danish reforms resembled, in terms of their general conditions, the liberation of peasantry that took place in Central and Eastern Europe in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A positive result of the reform was that the rent burden of tenants became fixed and could no longer be arbitrarily raised. A negative aspect was the conversion of labour rent into money rent at a very high rate, which meant that the burden of high rents continued. Although the amount

35 Blum, *The End of Old Order*, pp. 357–417.

36 Bjørn, *Den gode sag*, p. 136.

of rent was calculated in money, it was mostly paid in grain. This system was augmented by an arrangement whereby the share of land tax due to the state was paid in grain via the landowners. Statutes were laid down in 1791 and 1792 on the conversion of required labour into fixed money rent. In other respects, the relationship of the tenants with the manors was affected by improving the security of the lease contract. The right of the landowner to administer corporal punishment was abolished in a statute issued in 1787, and in 1788 the *stavnshåndet*, i.e. restrictions on the movement of male tenant farmers, were repealed. According to these restrictions tenant farmers were not allowed to leave the area of the manor of their birth until they had turned 34, the upper age limit of military service.

The abolition of mandatory labour services for the leading sector of the peasant populace was a socially important measure which underlined the status of this group in society. By the eighteenth century, the tenant farmers had become a socially separate group among the common people. For example, the tenancy was usually carried on within the family, with the son or son-in-law as the next tenant. After the abolition of *hoveri*, it was no longer possible to administer corporal punishment to the tenant farmer or his wife. Liberation, however, did not concern other groups within the peasant population. The rural labourers, living in their small cottages, were still subject to unrestricted labour obligations and corporal punishment by the landowner. The way in which the rural reforms were enacted strongly underlined differences among various groups and strata of the peasant population. Fridlev Skrubbeltrang described the treatment of Danish crofters during the period of reforms as a 'not very humane procedure'.<sup>37</sup> Around the close of the eighteenth century there were even outright attempts to make conditions worse for hired labourers.<sup>38</sup>

Although the reforms of the late eighteenth century did not directly ease the burden of taxes and rent paid by the rural population of Denmark, they had important economic repercussions. For example, it was now possible to reduce the raising and keeping of horses in peasant households, which had a major impact on the production and use of fodder. It has been estimated that towards the close of the eighteenth century horses consumed almost half of all livestock fodder, which meant that the reduction of the number of horses from four to three or from three to two meant considerable

37 F. Skrubbeltrang, 'Danmark', in P. Einarsson *et al.* (eds.), *Jordpolitik i Norden* (Stockholm, 1955), p. 15.

38 T. Krogh, *Staten og de besiddelsesløse på landet 1500–1800* (Odense, 1987), p. 147.

savings.<sup>39</sup> The impact of the Danish rural reforms was, however, diminished by their limited scope, and the position of the majority of the peasantry remained unchanged for another fifty years. The same occurred in the other Nordic countries, including Iceland. In the processes of institutional change of the late eighteenth century the lower ranks of the rural populace, who nevertheless constituted its majority, were completely bypassed.

Compared with the rest of Scandinavia, Denmark's rural reforms focused on removing the remnants of serfdom (*stavnsbåndet, hoveri*), and the ownership of land by the peasants did not spread at the same pace as elsewhere. In Norway, which belonged to Denmark until 1814, land-ownership by the farmers had already increased in the seventeenth century, when the state sold land to be privately owned and tilled. By the mid-eighteenth century, the freeholders owned two-thirds of all farmland,<sup>40</sup> and by the beginning of the following century this trend deepened. The sale of forest products and revenue from logging were important sources of income for freeholders paying off their debts. Owing to the high cost of redeeming property, the burden of debt was particularly severe. In Sweden and Finland, the ownership of land by the freeholding peasants began to spread in the early eighteenth century, but was not to grow in importance until after the close of the century. The most important factor in promoting land-ownership was the state's need for revenue, which was obtained by allowing those who tilled crown land to purchase more complete ownership of their holdings. In Finland, over half of all farmland was already in the hands of the freeholders at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and in Sweden by the 1820s.<sup>41</sup> In Denmark, there were major differences between Jylland and the islands, the latter being manorial areas, while in Jylland the freeholders played a more prominent role. By the middle of the nineteenth century up to 80 per cent of farmland belonged to the freeholders themselves, while the corresponding figure was less than 50 per cent on the islands. After the statute of 1861 freeholder ownership of land in Denmark began to spread at a rapid pace. In Iceland, ownership of land by the farmers remained limited until the close of the nineteenth century.

39 Møller, *Udskiftningen*, p. 137; S. P. Jensen, 'Mennesket, naturen og landboreformerne', *Bol og By* (1991), pp. 16f.

40 Ø. Østerud, *Agrarian Structure and Peasant Politics in Scandinavia* (Oslo, 1978), pp. 114–25.

41 E. Jutikkala, *Bonden i Finland genom tiderna* (Helsingfors, 1963), pp. 323f.; E. F. Heckscher, *Svenskt Arbete och Liv. Från Medeltiden till Nutid* (Stockholm, 1985), p. 188.



## Intensified arable cultivation and economic differentiation among the rural population

### *Ecological crisis and change in agriculture*

Our picture of the development of agriculture in the early nineteenth century must not be based solely on institutional change. The extensive use of natural resources also led to pressure for changing methods of cultivation. Thorkild Kjærgaard has suggested an interpretation of the conflict between farming and natural resources whereby the rural reforms became part of controlling ecological crises. Accordingly, the *landboreformerne*, and enclosure in particular were not just measures to ensure a better future but also retrospective regulation in response to problems that had been accumulating for a long while. He underlines the fact that the highly extensive utilisation of natural resources in Denmark had already posed major problems for farming by the onset of the eighteenth century. The country's forested areas had been considerably depleted. In 1600 as much as one-quarter of Denmark's land area was forest, but by the mid-eighteenth century the proportion had shrunk to one-tenth. The utilisation of forest resources increased towards the close of the eighteenth century, and forested areas were rapidly depleted to around 4 per cent of Denmark's land area by c. 1800. The depletion of forest cover and the spread of sand drift raised the water table, increased the humidity of arable land and caused flooding. Moreover, sand drift reduced the area of cultivated land.<sup>42</sup> The inefficient drainage arrangements of the open-field system, which also caused problems in the other Nordic countries, proved to be the weakness of this system. According to Kjærgaard, the failings of drainage and the rise of the water table had a dramatic effect on cultivation conditions in Denmark. In the spring, the damp fields could be accessed much later than at present. As late as the eighteenth century, the growing period was as short as 100 days, which is considerably shorter than the present 125. The problems experienced in Denmark were familiar to freeholders elsewhere in Scandinavia, but there they were not exacerbated to the same degree. The Swedish scholar Gustaf Utterström regarded the decline of meadow yield as a serious obstacle to farming, mainly resulting from climatic change. In more cautious terms, the Finnish historian Arvo M. Soininen has stressed that within the prevailing

<sup>42</sup> T. Kjærgaard, *The Danish Revolution 1500–1800: An Ecohistorical Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 9–132; B. Fritzboeger, *Danske skove 1500–1800* (Odense, 1992), pp. 88f.

method of cultivation hardly anything was done to improve meadow yields.<sup>43</sup> As meadow area decreased as a result of arable clearance, or as their yield decreased for other reasons, the availability of cattle manure decreased and fertilisation suffered.

The pressure caused by environmental problems shows that there were other reasons for radically changing farming methods than an awareness that yields could be improved with more intensive methods. This meant that in Denmark the rural reforms entailed not only improvements to the institutional standing of the leading sector of the peasant population but also the repairing of environmental damage. The reform of the drainage system, associated with the new farming methods, was an integral aspect of this process. Other aspects in responding to environmental damage were a more purposeful and uniform struggle against the effects of sand drift (a statute laid down in 1792) and efforts to improve the protection of forests by ending grazing. But the development of the drainage system was a major new investment in all the Nordic countries where enclosure had been carried out. The development of the drainage system was particularly effective in the tillage of clayey soils, which had been particularly difficult to work. Similar changes have been noted as important in the history of the enclosure movement in England.<sup>44</sup> Enclosure was followed by another laborious change as a necessary measure. The new cultivated areas naturally had to be fenced so that the cattle that freely grazed in the common areas could be kept away from the arable. In many cases, communal grazing continued despite enclosure. For example, in Finland communal grazing at the hamlet and village level was common until the close of the nineteenth century. Considerably larger amounts of fencing materials were needed than before, when it was only necessary to enclose the common fields of the village or hamlet. It was estimated in Finland at the beginning of the twentieth century that if all the country's farmland fences were linked, they would extend eighteen times around the globe. As timber was becoming more expensive, it was conserved by building the fences of stone, which in the countryside were gathered from the fields, or by planting hedgerows as was done in many places in England.

43 Utterström, *Jordbrukets arbetare*, 1, p. 125; Soininen, *Vanha maataloutemme*, p. 151.

44 R. C. Allen, *Enclosure and the Yeoman: The Agricultural Development of the South Midlands 1450–1850* (Oxford, 1991), p. 149; Utterström, *Jordbrukets arbetare*, 1, pp. 453–55; Soininen, *Vanha maataloutemme*, pp. 113–16.

*New ploughs and deep tillage*

The decisive aspects of intensified arable farming were the development and introduction of new plough types and the more effective working of the soil. The heavy Central European wheeled plough was never adopted permanently in the areas of Scandinavia north of Denmark. The ploughs of these areas were light wooden implements suited to local soils. The wooden ploughs were better suited to working light and stony soils. It was very difficult to work clayey soil and the results were always poor. The new plough types which began to be developed during the second half of the eighteenth century were influenced by English, Scottish and Dutch examples. At first, only the main parts were made of iron and the frame in particular was for a long time made of wood. Different regional models were developed and were manufactured locally. Beginning in the early nineteenth century ploughs made completely of iron and increasing numbers of factory-made ploughs became popular.

The new iron ploughs revolutionised ploughing. They were used to remove a whole top layer of soil which the mouldboard turned over. The plough dug deeper and worked the soil more efficiently. The radical improvement of tillage was perhaps the most important individual event to influence crop yields prior to the introduction of artificial fertilisers. It has been estimated that in Denmark during the century following the rural reforms and prior to the beginning of artificial fertilisation an approximate 130 per cent rise in yields was achieved mainly by improved tillage and the exploitation of the natural fertility of the soil.<sup>45</sup>

The first new plough types were clumsy and required a great deal of work.<sup>46</sup> It was often necessary to harrow the soil after ploughing, because the ploughing still left clods in the upturned soil. Harrow types were developed as eagerly as the actual ploughs. Demonstrations and competitions were held to teach freeholders the techniques of deep ploughing. In Finland, the first, state-employed, farming instructors specifically taught new ploughing techniques. Around the middle of the nineteenth century the streamlined iron ploughs became increasingly lighter and more effective. An important innovation was the introduction of a model that could be drawn by a single horse. This meant that smallholders, including crofters, could adopt the new methods of tillage. But before the smallholders could obtain one-horse

45 Jensen, 'Mennesket, naturen og landboreformerne', p. 44.

46 J. Myrdal, 'Betingsläror och arbetsåtgång i landbruket', *Rig*, 64 (1981), pp. 4–55.

ploughs and harvesters a gap of several decades formed between large- and small-scale farming. This was clearly evident in the costliest investments, i.e. threshing machines and the construction of dairies.

*New crops and cultivation methods*

There was also another trend in the intensification of arable farming. As late as the eighteenth century the most common methods in crop production were two- and three-course rotations. Two-course rotation, which was applied on the heaviest clayey soils and had been completely bypassed in Denmark, alternated biennially between cereal cultivation and fallow fields. During the fallow season the soil was ploughed a few times during the summer to control weeds. Some of the fallow area would be used for growing beets or tubers. In three-course rotation, alternation involved two species of cereals, for example rye and barley, with one-third of the arable land lying fallow every year. There was thus a considerable proportion of fallow land. This situation was changed by new implements and new methods of ploughing. Deep ploughing made it possible to reduce the fallow area and to intensify the cultivation of the soil. The new methods stressed the importance of fodder plants, and the most important new crops were grasses, especially clover and timothy grass. The cultivation of fodder crops reduced the need for natural meadows and pastures, which in turn could be added to arable land. Potato cultivation also had begun to spread since the last decades of the eighteenth century, although at first the potato was equally regarded as a fodder crop. For example, when Carl Christian Böcker, secretary of the Finnish Economic Society sent an inquiry to the country's most advanced farmers in the early 1820s, many of the replies to questions on potato cultivation stated that this crop was used only as food for livestock and servants.<sup>47</sup>

The new cultivation methods were adopted from the northern parts of Germany. The most popular method was convertible husbandry (*Koppelwirtschaft* or up-and-down husbandry) adopted from Holstein. In this system, the fields of a farm were divided into between seven and eleven sections instead of the former three; only one section at a time lay fallow. This considerably reduced the proportion of fallow land, in most cases from approximately one-third to roughly one-tenth. Cereals, beets or tubers and perennial grasses or hays alternated in the fields. This meant that also the

<sup>47</sup> Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, p. 121.

proportion of bread corn was reduced. This slowed the adoption of *Koppelwirtschaft*, particularly on smaller farms.<sup>48</sup> If it was not possible to significantly increase arable area upon the adoption of the new crop rotation, for example by joining meadows and pasture to the arable, there was the risk that the farm's own production of cereals would no longer meet the freeholder family's own needs. If the farm operated on a largely commercial basis, the gap could be filled by buying grain. But if there was a shortage of ready cash, the situation was difficult and the smallholder was well advised to keep to his old methods which satisfied his needs.

The desire to adopt *Koppelwirtschaft* or some other method more developed than three-course rotation may have been a significant factor in the promotion of enclosure in parts of Scandinavia. Because in this situation the interests of the large and small farmers were at least for a while in deep conflict – it was impossible for the smallholder to cut down on his cultivation of bread corn – it was necessary to put an end to the open-field system and communal cultivation. The adoption of *Koppelwirtschaft* began at the Danish manors towards the close of the eighteenth century and the peasant farms followed closely in applying the innovation. Further to the north, central and northern Sweden and southern Finland followed suit with a time lag of roughly half a century. In the northern regions, the soil was free of frost for only part of the year. Therefore, farmwork had to be forced into a shorter period than in the south, for example on the Continent or in Denmark. Finnish smallholders in particular found it difficult to adopt up-and-down husbandry and the large estates were clearly ahead of them. Considering the highly different positions of smallholders and large freeholders in regard to adopting *Koppelwirtschaft*, it is easier to understand the emphasis often given in discussion on enclosure to the need to let more enterprising freeholders develop their arable methods differently from others. The desire to develop drainage systems was a similar issue dividing the farmers of the open-field villages and hamlets according to affluence or farm size.

#### *The role of livestock in agriculture*

The Scandinavian agricultural system can be termed mixed farming, a combination of cereal cultivation and animal husbandry. The peripheral geographic location kept commercialisation at a low degree and forced the freeholders to operate on a self-sufficient basis wherever possible.

48 Soininen, *Vanha maataloutemme*, p. 100; Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, p. 94.

A freeholder could not specialise solely in cereal cultivation; the farm had to be much more diverse. In Denmark and Skåne in southern Scandinavia, beef cattle had been particularly important for a long time. Sheep raising was prominent in Norway and especially in Iceland. A significant aspect of self-sufficiency in Scandinavian agriculture was the raising of dairy cattle, permitted by abundant pasture. Dairy products were an element of variety in the diet and permitted revenue through the sale of cheese and butter. Moreover, cattle raising significantly supported cereal cultivation. Combinations of animal husbandry and arable cultivation were typical of the open-field villages of Europe. After the harvest, the cattle could be pastured later in the summer in the common fields of the hamlet or village. In the Nordic countries, the forests were a more important resource for communal grazing. Straw was an important fodder for the winter feeding of livestock and cattle manure was an important fertilizer. In the northernmost Scandinavian countries animal husbandry was associated in other ways with forestry. The branches of leafy trees were gathered to supplement winter feed and in many places fir branches were cut for litter. In the open-field villages, arable cultivation, animal husbandry and forestry formed a system that began to be broken down by new phenomena and price structures in the late eighteenth century.

Agricultural development, which focused on intensifying arable cultivation in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, bypassed dairy farming. Higher cereal yields and improved use of arable land were the main concerns, and the development of dairy farming had to wait until the middle of the nineteenth century. There were, however, exceptions to this pattern. In principle, the changes in the cultivation system concerned the growing of fodder. Therefore in areas where the *Koppelwirtschaft* and its associated cultivation of grasses spread among freeholders new opportunities arose to improve the feeding of cattle and to develop dairying. Understandably, Danish cattle husbandry and dairy farming in particular thrived in southern Jylland, Schleswig and Holstein. These regions had traditionally led the market in exporting butter to England. The development of dairies originally followed the example of Holstein. The large manors came to have special facilities for treating milk, i.e. dairies, which initially produced butter or cheese from the milk produced by a single estate, or exceptionally by two adjacent manors possibly belonging to the same family. The dairy had to be a clean and heated space. The milk was kept in shallow metal containers, from which the cream could be skimmed to be churned into butter. The need for a separate heated room and expensive metal vessels made dairying costs

prohibitive for smallholders. This resulted in a decades-long quality gap between farmer-made and manor butter, i.e. ‘peasant butter’ and ‘dairy butter’, which were regarded as completely different grades of butter.<sup>49</sup> A completely different method for treating milk was developed for the smaller farms. This was the so-called ice-water method, also known as the Swartz method after its inventor. In this technique, the creaming of milk was speeded by cooling the milk below room temperature. This was easily done in the north where ice was available and easy to keep. This method also improved the preservation of milk. Because the Swartz method did not require special facilities or equipment, it could be used even on small farms. The technique began to spread rapidly in the late 1850s in Sweden, and soon became common among freeholders in Norway and Finland.<sup>50</sup>

The proximity of towns and cities and the development of transport were of decisive importance for the early dairies. København, Stockholm and St Petersburg were important markets for cream and butter. On the other hand, the inhabitants of at least the smaller towns would often keep cows to supply themselves with milk. For example in Helsinki, the keeping of dairy cows was not prohibited until the 1870s.<sup>51</sup> Finland exported a great deal of dairy produce to St Petersburg, in which connection steamship traffic from the late 1830s and the later railway to the imperial capital were important developments. Before the building of the railway line, a number of manors in southern Finland organised regular horse-drawn transport of butter to St Petersburg. Owing to its duchies, Denmark had already become a leading European exporter of butter before the middle of the nineteenth century, and by the close of the century it had become, along with the Netherlands, Europe’s leading dairy-farming area. Sweden and Finland were also able to export butter, but for many years efforts suffered from the poor reputation of so-called peasant butter and amateurish export arrangements. It was typical for freeholders to sell almost all available meat for cash and to base their own diet on salt fish and potatoes. Meat was only eaten on holidays and by the rich.

In the 1870s and 1880s fierce competition arose between the butter production of the freeholders and the manorial dairies, resulting in the exclusion of the latter from the market in only a few decades. In the background was

49 C. Bjørn, *Det danske landbrugs historie, 3: 1810–1860*, ed. C. Bjørn et al. (Odense, 1988), p. 159; Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, pp. 139–42.

50 P. Borgedal, *Norges jordbruk i nyere tid, 3* (Oslo, 1960), p. 145; Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, pp. 143–7.

51 Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, p. 162.

an agricultural crisis that shook all of Europe, being ultimately caused by the abundant supply of bread grain on the world market as North America and Russia markedly expanded cereal cultivation. European grain prices plummeted and farms relying on cereal cultivation faced financial problems. This particularly concerned the large estates, which were largely commercialised and operated with outside capital. As a result, the focus shifted to dairy farming. At the same time, the development of cultivation systems in Sweden and Finland also raised the proportion of fodder cultivation on the peasant-owned farms. Smallholders began to co-operate in dairy farming. In many countries, co-operative dairies were established to which the shareholders would deliver their milk to be processed. At the dairies, the cream was skimmed from the milk and the milk was either returned to the farm in the form of fodder or sold.

These small farmer-based dairies became profitable ventures after the invention of the centrifugal separator, which separated the heavier cream in a very short time. Large separators, operated by several men or a horse separated the cream more efficiently than the old creaming method. The new separators appeared on the market in the late 1870s. The small farmer-owned dairy establishments came to be known as 'village dairies'. They had the specific advantage of providing smallholders with the benefits of large-scale production that the manors and estates had already achieved by virtue of their size. In places where the dairies operated as co-operatives – or companies where co-operative legislation had not yet been passed – the numbers of shareholders and milk suppliers grew to such a degree that the manor dairies soon lagged behind. There were also problems since milk was a very delicate product that had to be kept clean and fresh. Therefore, the standard of animal husbandry and milk hygiene became important concerns for the freeholders.

#### *Forestry as part of the farm economy*

In Norway, Sweden and Finland, forestry played an important role in the overall economy of farms. Large amounts of wood were needed in the cold and damp climate of the north. It was an important building material and was consumed for heating and even light; and in most parts of the area grain had to be dried with wooden fuel prior to threshing. Owing to the lack of forests in Denmark, substitutes were developed and wood was imported from Norway. In most parts of Scandinavia forest land was used wastefully, even as pasture for cattle. Most of the consumption of timber was for the domestic



needs of farms and as firewood for industry and the towns. Ironworks and glassworks in particular consumed large amounts of firewood. Many processed forestry products also came from the freeholders. These included tar and hand-sawn or hewn lumber (boards and logs). Forests were also burn-cleared for cereal cultivation. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, this highly wasteful method of cultivation was used only on certain forested regions of eastern Finland and in the forest areas between Sweden and Norway. It was often even in these tracts that burn-beating was resorted to only as a secondary source of bread grain. It was, however, common to use burn-beating as a method of clearing meadows and pasture.<sup>52</sup>

During the nineteenth century the processing of forest products was finally becoming a separate industry apart from the farm economy. There had been water-powered sawmills for centuries, but the processing of forestry products by hand had been a competitive practice in many areas. Traditional vernacular tar-burning with constructed pits continued in the outlying regions of Finland until the very beginning of the twentieth century. Until the early nineteenth century, tar was the main export article obtained from Finland's forests.<sup>53</sup> Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the demand for timber in the industrial centres of Western Europe made the lumber trade profitable even in the northernmost parts of Scandinavia. This meant that selling timber outside the farm was an increasingly profitable alternative to domestic use, a situation encouraging economic use of timber in construction and other forms of consumption. The state had sought to conserve timber for many years by encouraging the use of more stone in buildings and fences. The nineteenth century saw significant changes in the use of timber on farms, especially for the more economical use of wood. In many cases new building methods were associated with the removal of the farmhouses from the village as a result of the enclosure movement.<sup>54</sup>

In the so-called great partition or enclosure, tracts of forest were also divided among those who paid tax on land. Where there were several peasant owners, this meant that forest ownership by the freeholders continued in a new form. In places, the forest resources of Finland and Sweden were so abundant that it seemed inappropriate to divide them among private

52 J. Raumolin (ed.), *Special Issue of Swidden Cultivation, Suomen Antropologi / Antropologi i Finland*, 12 (1987).

53 S.-E. Åström, *From Tar to Timber: Studies in Northeast European Forest Exploitation and Foreign Trade 1660–1860* (Helsinki, 1988), p. 172.

54 Soininen, *Vanha maataloutemme*, pp. 294–9; Kjærgaard, *The Danish Revolution*, pp. 92–129.

owners. Therefore, forest tracts exceeding a certain maximum area were given over to the state. Especially in Finland this led to large-scale state ownership of forest land that has continued to the present day. As late as the mid-nineteenth century, domestic consumption was the main use of forest resources among freeholders. Therefore not all forest owners, particularly freeholders, were able to obtain extra income by selling timber. Suitable demand was not found in all places and not everyone had so much forest that timber could be sold. A committee investigating private forestry in Finland in the 1890s estimated that only a third of all landowners could even consider obtaining extra income by selling timber.<sup>55</sup>

*The last flourishing of the manorial economy*

In Denmark, the years from the 1830s to the mid 1870s are referred to as the *kornsalgperioden*, or period of corn sales. This term underlines the welfare and growth of affluence brought about by large-scale grain exports during these decades of high prices especially for the large manors but also to some degree for larger peasant farms. It was during these years that the gap between large- and small-scale farming loomed largest, as mentioned above. On the other hand, many of the innovations of the period were initially so expensive to realise that only the largest properties could do so without undue problems. Moreover, official planning often took the needs of the manors and estates as its starting point and only later were versions of methods and equipment developed that were suited to the needs of small farms. In addition to farming technology, the differences between the large and small farms also involved teaching and instruction in farming methods. Vocational training in agriculture was initially geared to preparing staff for foreman positions on the large estates, and official instruction and consultation was also more readily attuned to the needs of large farming properties. Differences in social status were also reflected in the organisation of teaching and instruction and in the launching of associations and civic bodies in the agricultural sector. Smallholders, albeit owners of their land, found it difficult to participate with manor owners, high-ranking officials and intellectuals in the work of organisations. For the crofters this was still completely impossible in the nineteenth century, because even the freeholders felt uncomfortable among their betters. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, the heyday of large-scale farming was also influenced by the rural nature of industry. Many

<sup>55</sup> Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, p. 181.

factories and plants were in the countryside and many of them were associated in one way or another with the manorial economy. Many manor owners also possessed ironworks, glassworks or sawmills. The labourers and tenant farmers could be used in a variety of tasks; timber was felled for raw material and firewood in the manor's forests and labourers would be paid in the manor's produce.

The 1870s, however, marked the beginning of a new era. The expansion of the international grain markets and the rapid decline of grain prices radically changed the parameters of agriculture. The profitability of arable farming deteriorated or it became completely unprofitable, especially on the larger farms. For example in late nineteenth-century Finland, freeholders could only sell the hay, straw and potatoes grown in their fields. Cereals had to be consumed or fed to the livestock. For the smallholders, and the small tenant farmers in particular (*husmænd, torpare*) bread grain was at least partly a bought commodity. Therefore, they mainly profited from the plummeting grain prices. Moreover, the advantages enjoyed by the manors in dairy farming soon began to diminish as the village and co-operative dairies grew in importance. The state began to support the economic and vocational organisation of the freeholders. Co-operative methods permitted even the smallholders to enjoy, at least in part, many of the benefits of large-scale production. Changes in the international markets and the economic organisation of smallholders undermined the economic standing of the manors.

### The working process and growing social differentiation among the rural population

#### *Husmænd and torpare*

The great partition or enclosure and the introduction of new methods of cultivation increased the demand for agricultural labour. Large-scale field clearing, fencing, the removal of stones and rocks, and drainage work required farm labourers used to hard work and satisfied with low pay. It was therefore obvious that at this stage enclosure had the same effect on employment as parliamentary enclosure in England: the demand for labour grew, at least at first.<sup>56</sup> Intensified arable cultivation also increased the demand for labour but in a completely different way. More advanced crop rotation, with less emphasis on fallow periods, led to a faster pace of field

<sup>56</sup> Allen, *Enclosures and the Yeoman*, pp. 163–7.

preparation. There were seasonal peaks in demand during the harvests. Both factors serve to explain why all landowners from the close of the eighteenth century were eager to take on small tenant farmers, crofters and cottagers who would provide labour services in return for a site for a house and a small area of land. These groups had previously been present in the Nordic countryside, but until the late eighteenth century their masters had mostly been noblemen or persons in possession of an office-related holding. It was only in Norway that peasant landowners too could hire tenants. Social relations in the countryside began to change significantly in the last decades of the eighteenth century, and freeholders also began to avail themselves of their new right to take on tenants or crofters.

The new position of tenant farmers and labourers was closely associated with the implementation of enclosure. Previously, cottagers in the villages had relatively free use of common land with the permission of the community. But after the great partition, all land became privately owned, which made the landless rural population more dependent on the landowners. This aspect of the great partition decreased the demand for labour, because obstacles were now placed in the way of the landless peasantry's former means of livelihood relying on common land and unparcelled forest. The Danish legislation on enclosure underlined the benefits of having crofters and gave the landowners the opportunity to compensate the crofters' former grazing rights with a small area of land, usually from 1.5 to 2 hectares. Most of the *husmænd* (crofters), particularly in regions with a lack of land for clearance, did not receive any compensation for lost opportunities of livelihood. The freeholders in particular took a negative view of the tenants' demands when enclosure was implemented.<sup>57</sup>

In Norway, the land-owning peasantry, whose role in agriculture was already significant in the eighteenth century, had had crofters in earlier times. The number of them, however, began to rise in the late eighteenth century, continuing to grow until the middle of the following century. The same trend emerged in other Scandinavian countries. In Sweden and Finland, the freeholders were permitted to rent out allotments of their property in the mid-eighteenth century. The number of tenants and crofters began to grow rapidly in the last decades of the eighteenth century, and the largest numbers of them were located on the lands of the peasant freeholders. Peasant landlordship was not something that was limited to the agriculturally most

57 Dieckmann Rasmussen, *Bønderne og udskiftningen*, p. 101.

advanced regions; for example, in eastern Finland, where the manorial system had developed to only a minor degree, the numbers of crofters began to grow markedly in the late eighteenth century.<sup>58</sup> In Denmark, the growth of the crofter class was more directly related to the rural reforms of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. When it was no longer possible to increase the amount of labour rent demanded of the tenant peasants (*fæstebonde*) it became necessary to hire new labour as cheaply as possible. Improvements in the position of freeholders and especially the conversion of labour rent into monetary terms in the statutes and decrees of the 1790s added to the need to impose more rent on the *husmænd* or crofters.

Danish crofters (*husmænd*) differed from their Nordic counterparts in social and economic terms. Only in exceptional situations were they sufficiently affluent to keep their own draught animals. Therefore, the *husmænd* households usually ploughed with cows, if such were available, or help was sought from the landlord. In the smallest *husmænd* households the land was worked with spades. If the landlord took care of the tenants' ploughing or other work requiring draught animals, or lent the *husmænd* a draught animal and a plough, a new and extra relationship of dependence arose. In this case rent was always paid in labour, although its amount was laid down in terms of money. Although many of the Danish *husmænd* owned their tillages in the second half of the nineteenth century, they would still pay rent in the form of labour to wealthier freeholders or manor owners.<sup>59</sup>

Since the majority of the new crofts that were established after the close of the eighteenth century were in peasant freeholds, it is obvious that the independent freeholders made the decisions that significantly regulated population growth from the end of the eighteenth century. It was mainly the peasant freeholders who made decisions concerning the conditions and opportunities of the landless peasantry to found families and have children. Therefore we must view these changes from their perspective. The freeholders had various motives for obtaining underlings. At least in Sweden and Finland some of the tenant farms were established for purposes of tax evasion, i.e. inheritance in disguise. A further special group in Sweden and Finland were crofts established to maintain persons performing military service. In spite of this, we can claim that the need for seasonal labour and the desire to cut back on servants in husbandry were the factors that explain

58 K. Wirilander, *Savo kaskisavujen kautena 1721–1870* (Kuopio, 1989), pp. 97–9, 184–95.

59 H. Grelle, *Socialdemokratiet i det danske landbrugssamfund 1871–ca. 1903* (København, 1976), pp. 29–31.

most of the instances of establishing tenant crofts and cottages. It should also be noted that the renting of outlying and possibly less fertile tracts of land provided a better and more regular yield, in terms of rent, than the expansion of the freeholder's own cultivation far from the centre of the farm. It was often the case in freeholds that the tenant himself would clear the fields either completely or to a considerable degree. The croft or cottage would thus improve the value of the landlord's property. The compensation for clearing and building work by the tenant was initially laid down in unclear regulations. Particularly in Finland, undeveloped land-rent legislation kept the crofters in poverty until the 1910s.<sup>60</sup> It can be clearly seen how the tenant farm lots grew smaller during the course of the nineteenth century and that the tenants, particularly in Sweden and Finland, were more often referred to as cottagers. The depletion of the rented areas was also connected with the spread of potato cultivation.

The tenants or crofters usually paid their land rent in labour or produce.<sup>61</sup> The rent could also include a small sum of money which was paid to the landlord, when the rental agreement came into force. The labour services of the tenant farmers were part of the supply of rural labour, which retarded the development of a more modern labour market in the rural areas. Moreover, the landlord–tenant relationship contained opportunities for abuse in Finland. It was quite common to include in the tenant contract regulations on so-called extra days. These were labour days in addition to the actual rent for which the landlord undertook to pay wages considerably less than the going rates. The obligation of working for the landlord at lower wages when the latter so desired was extended to members of the tenant's family. Owing to their dependence on the landlord, the tenant farmers had to agree to this.

The rural labourers fell into two separate groups: agricultural servants employed on a yearly basis and day-labourers. The yearly hands were usually young people, some of whom would be from nearby freeholds, i.e. the social equals of their employers. In most cases, however, there was a difference of age and status vis-à-vis the employer. The day-labourers were landless rural dwellers, cottagers and in some areas vagrants who lived in other people's homes as separate households.

<sup>60</sup> Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, pp. 286–300.

<sup>61</sup> A. T. Simonsen, *Husmandskår og husmandspolitik i 1840erne* (København, 1977), pp. 55f.; Bäck, *Början till slutet*, pp. 49f.; S. Skappel, *Om husmandsvæsendet i Norge* (Kristiania, 1922), p. 109; Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, p. 248.

*The position of the landless population*

The role of the smaller tenant farmers changed in most of the Nordic countries during the nineteenth century. Rental contracts were already specified in Norwegian legislation in 1792. A decree issued in 1851 safeguarded the position of the small tenant farmer vis-à-vis the landlord and made it easier to redeem rented land; in Denmark, the position of the tenant farmers and crofters was amended in the late 1840s. During the 1840s and 1850s the *husmænd* participated in the political movement of the peasantry, forming an important sector among its supporters. The most significant political victories went to the large freeholders, who gained political rights at the local and state levels. In Norway, these changes had already taken place somewhat earlier.

A milder limitation of personal freedom was mandatory service, known in Sweden and Finland as 'legal protection' (*laga försvar*). In order to ensure the availability of labour particularly on the farms and to minimise costs for the care of the poor it was decreed that all persons below a certain minimum level of property and income were to have an employer. This form of enforced service survived in Denmark even after the rural reforms, albeit in less severe form. In Iceland, the main group of the landless population were the agricultural servants, whose position was extremely poor. Mandatory service was in force throughout the period from 1783 to 1863, which meant that each able-bodied adult lacking a minimum amount of property was required to become a servant. A less restricted labour market was not introduced until the close of the nineteenth century.<sup>62</sup> In the manors of Sweden and southern Finland, the problem of labour was solved by establishing a special category of rural labourers with families, who were employed for a year at a time (*statare*). The manor would provide the head of such a family with year-round employment, and often the wife would also be employed as a dairy maid. The payment of wages was a special feature of this system. Wages consisted of lodging, firewood and foodstuffs (grain, potatoes, skimmed milk). Particularly in Sweden, these labourers belonged to the poorest sector of the rural population. The system survived for a surprisingly long time in Sweden and was not abolished until 1945.

The political activism of Danish peasants in the 1840s and 1850s was not local or temporary in nature. Co-operation among tenant farmers and

62 G. Jónsson, 'Institutional Change in Icelandic Agriculture, 1780–1940', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 41:2 (1993), p. 106.

crofters was fraught with tension, because the former as employers and landlords often had interests conflicting with those of the crofters. The joint movement could thus not very easily campaign for very many special interests of the crofters, and therefore the political unions were easily dissolved.<sup>63</sup> In Denmark, the independent organisation of the crofters began to take root in the 1870s, originally in limited scope. The main activities were so-called crofter journeys (*husmandsrejser* – e.g. visiting farms to inspect new practices) and a few small local weekly journals. The first nationwide organisation was established in 1901.<sup>64</sup> Activities, however, were limited to the various islands and were political and vocational at the same time. Also in Sweden the political influence and organisation of the landless population was a slow and difficult process. This group was socially and geographically dispersed. In Finland the landless rural population began to organise at a very brisk pace after 1905, the first significant organisation being the League of Crofters founded in 1910. The guidance and economic assistance of the Social-Democratic Party was important for the organising of the rural labourers.<sup>65</sup>

### Division of labour and commercialisation

In the history of Norwegian agriculture, the developments of the second half of the nineteenth century are known as *det store hamskiftet*, ‘the great change’. This metaphor underlines the thorough change that took place in the peasant economy in terms of agriculture and changes in the relationship between the farm and society. The means of production were increasingly obtained from outside the farm or the local village, and agriculture became commercialised. The relationship of the farm with the outside world was mediated by money at several levels. Aspects of this change were conversion of taxes to public bodies into cash payments, the development of credit institutions into the modern controlled banking system and the growing degree of commercialisation of farms. Money may not yet have dictated the economy of most peasant farms, particularly if we include the small tenant farms (*torpare*, *husmænd*), but it already had a distinct influence. Like their Norwegian counterparts, Finnish and Swedish economic historians have stressed the

63 J. Boel, ‘Husmand og landarbejdere ca. 1840–1880’, in H. Damgaard and P. G. Møller (eds.), *Huse og husmænd i fortid, nutid og fremtid* (Odense, 1989), pp. 123f.

64 F. Skrubbeltrang, *Husmand i Danmark gennem 300 aar* (København, 1942), p. 81; F. Skrubbeltrang, *Dansk husmandsbevægelse* (København, 1943), pp. 59–62.

65 Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, p. 278.



importance of the late nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century as a period of fundamental change in agriculture. The Norwegian discussion, however, has criticised those who suggest that the changes took place abruptly after the 1870s and that prior to this time the peasant economy was completely self-sufficient. This could not have been the case. Exchange of a diverse nature had been in practise both within the villages and between the countryside and the towns for centuries. It is true that the use of ready cash was limited and that the lack of cash forced people to resort to methods whereby it could be avoided. Trade between the towns and the countryside is a good example of this. The peasants and merchants would often form long-term personal contacts, continuing from one generation to the next. In all parts of Scandinavia, and particularly beyond the actual area of manorial properties, the peasants would deliver grain, lumber, tar or other produce to the merchants for sale within the country or abroad. The accounts of the merchant houses show that the peasants were recompensed to only a minor degree in ready cash; they would mostly receive goods and stimulants consumed in the countryside.<sup>66</sup> The cash economy thus played only a minor role until the late nineteenth century. It should also be noted that the spread of the cash economy was not necessarily slowest outside the main rural areas. Outside the main agricultural regions, fishing, forestry and other extra means of income, which had to be practised in order to pay taxes, introduced commercial phenomena – including cash payments – into the periphery.<sup>67</sup>

The whole period of intensive agricultural development is characterised by a marked growth of population. Despite rapid growth in population, agricultural production grew even faster in most parts of the Nordic region. In this respect, the period before the modernisation process that began in the 1870s was by no means less important as a time of change. In Denmark, the growth of agricultural production already surpassed population growth by a significant margin in the period from 1750 to 1840.<sup>68</sup> In the following period,

66 T. Aunola, *Pohjois-Pohjanmaan kauppiaiden ja talonpoikien väliset kauppa- ja luottosuhteet 1765–1809* (Helsinki, 1967), pp. 152–309; S. Jensen, *Fra patriarkalisme til pengeøkonomi. Studier over dansk bondeøkonomi i tiden mellem midten af det 18. og midten af det 19. aarhundrede* (København, 1950), pp. 151–60; S.-E. Åström, 'Majmiseriet. Försök till en komparativ och konceptuell analys', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, 4 (1977), pp. 89–108.

67 I. Henriksen, 'Peasants and the Market', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 38:3 (1990), pp. 3–21; G. Hoppe and H. Langton, *Peasantry to Capitalism: Western Östergötland in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 310–33; Peltonen, *Talolliset ja torpparit*, pp. 223–9; Try, *Gårdsskipnad og bondenæring*, pp. 181–91.

68 Jensen, 'Mennesket, naturen og landboreformerne', pp. 16f.

from the 1840s to the 1880s, the growth of production was so successful that up to 50 per cent of all agricultural production measured in terms of value could be exported. There are, however, reservations on the part of the other Nordic countries. In regard to Sweden, we are not completely sure how much faster the growth of agricultural production was in comparison with population growth, but a positive general image predominates.<sup>69</sup> With the exception of Denmark, all the Nordic countries were areas of low cereal production, especially the northern regions of Finland and Sweden. In Norway, the import of grain had traditionally been important, but in Finland the import of bread grain did not begin to grow until the middle of the nineteenth century. When international grain prices sank in the 1870s, attitudes to grain import and the protection of agriculture with tariffs became important issues of economic policy. Where many Western European nations, including Sweden, resorted to tariffs to protect their agriculture, Norway and Finland pursued free trade in their main sectors of agricultural production.

How should we assess the macro-level of development in demographic terms and in the production of foodstuffs? There is no doubt that growth in production was not achieved solely by improving and rationalising production itself. Also at issue was a change in the overall division of labour. The freeholder began to concentrate more and more on farming as such, and many consumer goods began to be obtained from outside the farm either completely or in part.<sup>70</sup> A further interesting aspect involves the division of income, which was skewed by uneven conditions of land-ownership. It can be said that around the middle of the nineteenth century the majority of the Nordic peasants had a problematic relationship with the resources of production, and landed property in particular. One can easily imagine that the Scandinavian countryside was marked by a relatively egalitarian form of freeholdership.<sup>71</sup> This is based on the fact that the peasants owned a considerable proportion of the tilled land. On the other hand, ownership within the peasant class was unevenly distributed and in fact only part of this class actually owned land. A considerable proportion of the peasantry had come

69 S. Martinius, *Jordbrukets omvandling på 1700- och 1800-talet* (Lund, 1982), p. 21.

70 J. de Vries, *The Dutch Rural Economy in the Golden Age 1500–1700* (Massachusetts, 1974), pp. 1–22.

71 As a typical example of this view see D. Senghaas, *The European Experience: A Historical Critique of Development Theory* (New Hampshire, 1985), pp. 71–94. This is also stressed in Carl-Johan Gadd's contribution to Swedish agrarian history: C.-J. Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870. Det svenska jordbruket historia*, 3 (Borås, 2000), pp. 367f.

into various relationships of dependence upon landowners that were socially and economically problematic.

### Concluding remarks

Enclosure in Scandinavia coincided with enclosure in England, but was realised under different conditions. In Northern Europe, urbanisation and industrialisation were considerably smaller in scale and slower than in Western Europe. Consequently, there were fewer preconditions for changes in the social division of labour and the spread of commercialisation. In this respect Scandinavia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can be described as a semi-periphery, beyond the new force-fields of economic activity and combating the tendency of peripheralisation by mobilising its resources. A further important aspect concerns the role of the peasantry. The northernmost parts of Scandinavia already had a significant class of freeholders in the eighteenth century and even in the southern regions such a class was established through the rural reforms of the late eighteenth century. In this respect, developments followed a course opposite to that of England, where the freeholding peasantry continued to diminish in importance. The contribution of the wealthiest sector of the peasantry was of great importance to the success of rapidly implemented enclosure in Scandinavia.

Although enclosure in Scandinavia appears to have been a slow and incomplete reform in the individual countries, it was, in comparison with other nations, a fast and efficiently implemented project. The speed and efficiency of enclosure was due to the active guiding and implementing role of the state and the participation of the leading sectors of the freeholder class. In many respects, the underlying concepts of enclosure reveal a severe attitude to nature, which was regarded as a homogeneous measurable and classifiable space whose only purpose was to be utilised. The rules of the decision-making process and the relatively large number of removals of farms made the great partition in Scandinavia a more abrupt process than its English counterpart, which raised a great deal of criticism.<sup>72</sup> In England, enclosure could not be carried out upon the petition of one landowner alone, as was customary in Scandinavia, since it was always necessary to have the support of the majority of local landowners.

72 G. Hoppe, 'Svenska jordskiften och samhällsutvecklingen', in J. Myrdal (ed.), *Statens jordbrukspolitik under 200 år* (Stockholm, 1991), pp. 45–54.

In *Svenskt arbete och liv*, a well-known overview of Swedish economic history published at the turn of the 1930s and 1940s, Eli F. Heckscher compared parliamentary enclosure in Sweden and England.<sup>73</sup> In the latter country, enclosure was regarded as a negative and abrupt series of events that destroyed the independent yeoman class. Although this interpretation was disputed for a long time during Heckscher's time and the disappearance of the yeoman class was claimed to pre-date parliamentary enclosure, it survived as a general characterisation of enclosure. In Heckscher's account, the Scandinavian enclosure movement achieved completely opposite results – the strengthening and wellbeing of the freeholding peasantry. According to Heckscher, the positive image of enclosure in Sweden, however, is tainted by a feature that suggests a considerable similarity between developments in England and Scandinavia. Heckscher readily acknowledged that the landless peasantry, which he felt had no legal right to utilise common land but had been allowed, without punishment, to 'settle, keep a few pigs, goats or chickens and to collect branches or wood from the forests', suffered most from the great partition. He claimed that the landless rural labourers and craftsmen had been able to live so freely because no one considered them worthy of consideration. A telling example of the deteriorating position of the landless population is found in the records of a village in southern Sweden. The lack of lumber and ready cash would force the tenant farmers to take firewood without permission from common land or from fences erected by the landowners. In response, the landowners, who were the leaders of their communities, could jointly rule on inspecting the homes of tenants and on issuing fines to those caught in order to make sure that firewood was not collected illicitly.<sup>74</sup> Changes in the role and conditions of the landless rural population was one of the main aspects of the Scandinavian enclosure movement, but so far very little is known of this. It is, however, clear that Scandinavia did not experience the publication of pamphlets on the misfortunes of enclosure for the landless as was seen in England.<sup>75</sup>

In the countryside, the slow rate of commercialisation of the peasant economy, evident in a continuous shortage of ready cash, led to the

73 Heckscher, *Svenskt arbete och liv*, pp. 178–80. Heckscher does not mention a word of the enclosure movement in the other Nordic countries, but his remarks concerning Sweden can be applied to the whole of Scandinavia in general.

74 S. Erixon (ed.), *Mörby och Viby byars minnesböcker* (Stockholm, 1944), pp. 8f., 16f., 104, 124f.

75 J. M. Neeson, *Commoners: Common Right, Enclosure and Social Change in England, 1700–1820* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 19–34.

correspondingly slow development of a modern labour market. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, farms employing outside labour recruited workers with means of payment based on various forms of economic and social dependence. These usually served to ensure the supply of seasonal labour. Although production generally grew faster than population, an integral aspect of societal change was the growing class of the rural poor, which was significantly influenced by relations with landowners. Modern arable farming and a large class of rural poor were two sides of the same phenomenon. In terms of comparison it is interesting to see that these developments not only applied to changes in the manorial economy but were also characteristic of areas dominated by the freeholding peasantry.

## Industrial expansion

MARKKU KUISMA

### London and the Scandinavian development trap

The commercial capitalist expansion experienced in Scandinavia in the late eighteenth century was closely linked to demand in the British market and the rise of London to become a dominating metropolis of trade and finance in the Western world economy. By the early nineteenth century these links had driven the Scandinavian countries into a development trap, from which they were not able to extricate themselves on their own. The 'visible hand' of London had cut off Scandinavian and Baltic producers of raw materials and it now had to reopen the doors which had previously been shut. The outlying and relatively weak Scandinavian countries lacked the power to break down the structures of international trade and the new European order which placed them at a disadvantage and which the hegemonic British metropolis had shaped to suit its own desires.

The development trap was aggravated by the deep European recession that followed in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. The recession eroded demand for Scandinavian exports and thwarted economic enterprise. But the strategic and protectionist steps taken by Great Britain had an even more crucial effect. They can be regarded as a consistent, albeit inverse, continuation of Napoleon's Continental System, which had already severed Scandinavia's trade links with England and cut off Finland from Sweden. Finland had been a major supplier of tar for the Royal Navy, and Sweden had joined the anti-British trade boycott only after pressure from Russia. Peace, however, did not restore the old Scandinavian contacts with the British market. Scandinavia faced a customs barrier erected by London, with which the British sought to end their vulnerable dependence on outsiders by encouraging production within their own sphere of influence.<sup>1</sup> The most dramatic

1 S.-E. Åström, 'Britain's Timber Imports from the Baltic, 1775–1830: Some New Figures and Viewpoints', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 37 (1989), pp. 59–70; O. Feldbæk, *Danmarks Økonomiske Historie 1500–1840* (Herning, 1993), pp. 162f.; F. Hodne, *An Economic*

repercussions of this were felt in the timber trade vital to the three forested Nordic countries, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

As early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, London had dissolved the tar monopoly enjoyed by Sweden-Finland, and had sought alternatives to Swedish iron by opening new, competitive production areas in the forested regions of North America and northern Russia. The developments of the early nineteenth century were largely a similar strategic move fanned by the traumatic experiences of a long period of war. In order to prevent the Royal Navy – the protector of British hegemony – from again becoming subject to coercion by the richly forested North European nations, London established Canada as its purveyor of timber.<sup>2</sup>

This connection could not, however, be made solely by relying on the market forces. Intervention by the British government was needed in the form of a discriminatory blow against North European exports, which were now excluded from the largest market with the highest purchasing power by customs policies in favour of Canada. Between 1788 and 1802, European suppliers accounted for over 90 per cent of British purchases of timber, but after 1810 their share plummeted to 30–40 per cent, and to less than one-quarter in the late 1820s and early 1830s.

Norway, which had commanded half the British market for timber before the revolutionary wars, felt the full brunt of London's new policies. Merchant houses which had made their fortunes from shipping timber now fell prey to bankruptcy. Sawmills, which had provided the peasantry with an income, were closed down, and in the worst years exports to Great Britain sank to half of the figures for the close of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> In Sweden and Finland, where the sawmills and the timber trade did not play as large a role in the economy as in Norway, the effects were not so serious. Despite this, British protectionism, together with a sharp economic recession decreasing both demand and prices, dealt the Swedes and Finns a definite blow. For example, in the 1830s Viipuri, Finland's largest timber export port, achieved only one-third of the export figures attained during the best years of the late

*History of Norway 1815–1970* (Trondheim, 1975), pp. 17, 21f.; M. Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa. Suomi, metsät ja kansainvälinen järjestelmä 1620–1920* (Helsinki, 1993), pp. 155–7; E. Söderlund, *Svensk Trävaruexport under Hundra år* (Stockholm, 1951), pp. 17, 58f.; I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system III: The Second Era of the Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-economy, 1730–1840s* (London, 1989), p. 122.

2 R. Albion, *Forests and Sea Power: The Timber Problem of the Royal Navy 1652–1862* (Cambridge, 1926), pp. 344f.

3 Hodne, *An Economic History of Norway*, pp. 21f.; S. Lieberman, *The Industrialization of Norway 1800–1920* (Oslo, 1970), pp. 83–6.

eighteenth century. The same bleak course of events was evident throughout the Grand Duchy of Finland.<sup>4</sup>

For obvious reasons, the problems of development experienced by Norway, Sweden and Finland cannot be reduced to the triangle of British customs policies, forest resources and international trade. Nor can we explain the crisis of adaptation in Scandinavia in the first decades of the nineteenth century solely in terms of the setback encountered by production geared to exports. The opening of new markets elsewhere in Western Europe, in fact, led to a new boom for timber exports from the 1820s onwards, in addition to which Norway, for example, was able to compensate for its losses in this area by exports of fish, facilitated by exceptionally large catches and demand that strengthened prices.

Further arguments, however, for the crisis being brought about by the changed relations between London and Scandinavia are found in the situation where Swedish iron exports, which had previously dominated the British market, now faced British production, which had grown sharply. Moreover, the price of grain – Denmark's chief export article – sank quickly and reached its lowest levels in the 1820s. This did not in any way speed commercial or industrial expansion, although the reduction of København's merchant fleet between the 1810s and 1830s was mostly caused by other factors.<sup>5</sup>

The dynamics of crisis, however, are not revealed only by rising or stagnant export figures and prices. A more essential aspect is the close interaction of export-oriented merchant capitalism and early industrialist developments. As elements serving each other within the same system, their success was similarly interwoven. A telling example is found in the new export-oriented sawmills which emerged in Finland and Sweden in the late eighteenth century. The sawmills became an important strategic link in an integrated chain of business involving the merchants and trading houses of the coastal towns. The problems faced by timber exporters during the first decades of the nineteenth century were thus passed on directly throughout the whole network: to foreign trade, which relied on the production of the sawmills; to domestic trade, which suffered as the peasants' and farmers' forest income and freight fees decreased; and shipbuilding, which went into a

4 Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, pp. 156f.

5 A. Attman, *Svenskt järn och stål* (Stockholm, 1986), pp. 9–30; P. Boje, *Danske Provinskøbmænds Vareomsætning og Kapitalforhold 1815–47* (Aarhus, 1977), pp. 67, 83–121; Feldbæk, *Danmarks Økonomiske Historie*, pp. 173, 186–8.



slump as merchant seafaring declined along with the activity of the major trader-shipowners. This, in turn, affected manufacturing industries aimed at the domestic market and often owned by the same parties.<sup>6</sup>

But, with its protectionism, the 'visible hand' of London not only diminished exports from Scandinavia and thereby the latter's connections with underlying market-oriented industrial enterprise. It also markedly restricted the exportation of British technology, in order to maintain a leading position and to prevent know-how from falling into the hands of those who followed in Britain's wake. Even in Finland, the most outlying part of Scandinavia, triumphant British industrialism, the factory systems of Manchester and Birmingham and the 'revolutionary' success of the English iron industry had already in the 1810s become admirable models for the government and business circles who were seeking a way out of crisis and poverty. But in plugging the channels for the transfer of technology, London came to slow down industrial expansion both in Finland and the rest of Scandinavia.<sup>7</sup>

The barriers of protectionism could well be surmounted and bypassed so that the 'schoolmaster of industrial Europe', keeping its achievements to itself, could not effectively prevent its experiences and skills from spreading among those who seriously sought them. In the 1820s, young Johan Friedrich Hackman, heir and future director of the Hackman trading house, which dominated timber exports from Viipuri in eastern Finland, undertook a study-trip to England and Scotland, to the steamships of Liverpool and the textile mills of Glasgow. This was only a minor example of a major trend leading from Continental Europe and Scandinavia to the centre of the industrialised world. The Scotsman James Finlayson, who created the basis of Tampere, 'Finland's Manchester', by founding a cotton mill there in the early 1820s, was in turn only one of the hundreds and thousands of British technicians and master craftsmen invited by Continental and Scandinavian industrialists and governments to plan new factories, construct their machinery and to manage them.<sup>8</sup>

6 S.-E. Åström, *From Tar to Timber: Studies in Northeast European Forest Exploitation and Foreign Trade 1660–1860* (Helsinki, 1988), pp. 40, 54f., 68; Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, pp. 89–91, 157.

7 *Finska Regeringskansljens och Senatens Underdånige Berättelser af Åren 1812 och 1816 om Finlands Ekonomiska Tillstånd, Förvaltning och Rättsskipning, Todistuskappaleita Suomen historiaan*, 7 (Helsinki, n.d.), p. 154.

8 K. Bruland, *British Technology and European Industrialization: The Norwegian Textile Industry in the Mid Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 3f.; W. O. Henderson, *Britain and Industrial Europe, 1750–1870*, 3rd edn (Leicester, 1972), p. 212; Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, p. 165.

Table 35.1 *Size of merchant fleet (1,000s of net tons) in 1850 and 1870*

Country/Year	1850	1870	1870 (net tons per 1,000 inhabitants)
Norway	284	974	561
Sweden	204	347	83
Finland	132	265	150
Denmark	91	182	102
UK	3,565	5,691	182

Source: B. R. Mitchell, *European Historical Statistics 1750–1970* (London, 1980).

But it was not until London introduced new trade policies that the exterior obstacles to the commercial and industrial expansion of Scandinavia were moved aside. The purpose of lowering the timber tariffs – the ‘silent partners’ of the grain tariffs – was obviously not to assist Scandinavia but to serve British interests dependent on the import of raw materials. But this small step for the metropolis was a leap forward for the forested periphery of Northern Europe. The lowering of tariffs in the 1840s and 1850s returned Scandinavian timber exporters to the British market. When import tariffs were completely abolished in 1866, North European timber had already regained its old leading position from Canada.<sup>9</sup>

The opening of the British market from the 1840s onwards again linked Scandinavia to the growing stream of goods in international trade and encouraged efforts to expand production for export, not only in the forest industries but also in other sectors. The repeal of the Navigation Act in 1849 gave Scandinavian merchant seafaring new opportunities to participate in international freight. For example, Norway’s merchant fleet trebled in the 1850s and 1860s (see Table 35.1), and since the fleet had already accounted for two-fifths of the nation’s export revenues and had given work to thousands of labourers in 200 shipyards, the expansion had significant consequences.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, the repeal of injunctions on the export of machinery in the 1840s and the decision, already taken in 1825, to allow British technicians to emigrate

<sup>9</sup> F. Sejersted, ‘Aspects of the Norwegian Timber Trade in the 1840s and ‘50s’, *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 16 (1968), pp. 137f.; Söderlund, *Svensk Trävaruexport*, pp. 58f.

<sup>10</sup> Y. Kaukiainen, *Sailing into Twilight: Finnish Shipping in an Age of Transport Revolution 1860–1914* (Helsinki, 1991), pp. 20–6; F. Sejersted, ‘A Theory of Economic and Technological Development in Norway in the Nineteenth Century’, *Scandinavian Economic History*, 40 (1992), pp. 44f.

made it less difficult to carry out new industrial projects outside the 'workshop of the world'. At any rate, it obviated the need to smuggle technology abroad.

It was no coincidence that the revival of exports and merchant seafaring began in Scandinavia in the 1830s. Large projects to improve communication were also simultaneously launched in order to promote trade and production and to strengthen the industrial structures of these countries.

The new expansive integration of Scandinavia into the British-led system was also intertwined with a marked expansion of international trade. It is not easy to distinguish the respective effects of these interwoven factors. Neither is it easy to analyse the role and effects of the genuine efforts, enterprise and institutional arrangements by which the Scandinavian countries themselves shaped their future in the context of the international economic order.

### Nature, society and industrial progress

If coal and iron are regarded as the flywheels of the new industrialism, Scandinavia was poorly equipped in this respect. There were no coal deposits and only Sweden had large supplies of iron ore, with which she had dominated the West European market in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The success of Swedish iron had been based on a competitive advantage: extensive tracts of forest providing charcoal to fuel the iron industry. This advantage was now eroded by the new technology. However, forests still played a crucial role in the economics of Northern Europe. Sweden, Finland and Norway, together with Russia, formed Europe's reserve of forests, containing four-fifth of all forested land and an even greater proportion of coniferous timber reserves. Even with the exclusion of Russia with its 160–200 million hectares of forests, the over 20 million hectares in Sweden and Finland and roughly 7 million in Norway were a potential whose role was emphasised by Scandinavia's small population and the depleted timber resources of the populated centres of Western Europe. In the 1850s the British consul in Helsinki reported to London: 'In the vast forests which cover the greater extent of Finnish territory lies the chief wealth of the country.'<sup>11</sup>

It was important for the three Scandinavian countries that the rise of coal to replace wood as a source of energy would not dissolve the links between

<sup>11</sup> Åström, *From Tar to Timber*, p. 168.

forest resources and industrial expansion. Western Europe and particularly Great Britain, with its meagre forest resources, required growing amounts of timber in the 1840s and 1850s to serve their growing towns and the needs of their expanding industries. Furthermore, timber helped to get rid of an impediment to cultural development, when new technology, invented in the 1840s and adopted also in Scandinavia in the 1850s and 1860s, succeeded in making wood fibre the raw material of paper. This opened a new route to industrial progress for Sweden, Finland and Norway, making Scandinavia a major supplier of pulp and paper for Western Europe in only a few decades.

Alongside the forests, Sweden's iron ore and the lesser mineral deposits of Finland and Norway, water power was the second major natural resource of Scandinavia. Richest in this respect was Norway, with up to 3,000 water-powered sawmills around the middle of the nineteenth century. But also in Sweden and Finland ironworks, sawmills, flour mills and other industrial facilities were located at rapids, preferably in connection with the transport routes provided by rivers and lakes.

Large inland areas, however, remained beyond serviceable water routes. Here the extensive reserves of natural resources and the population which still lived in a non-cash economy remained almost untouched by commerce and industry. Owing to limited international demand, the problems posed by this situation for export industries relying on timber and metals were not yet serious at the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, the opening up of the inland wilderness regions by linking them to the coast with canals had already been addressed in ambitious, albeit mostly unrealised, schemes in previous centuries.

Poor communications and long distances, combined with sparse settlement, low population density and the small size of the relatively few urban centres, led to greater problems on another level. Demand by the domestic market and incentives to expand commercial and industrial operations remained limited. The new businesses lacked 'the encouragement, which can solely revive them', as it was realistically noted in a report issued by the Senate of Finland in the 1810s.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the Finnish and Swedish coastal towns of the northernmost reaches of the Gulf of Bothnia became more closely integrated with the tar and timber markets of Western Europe than with their own hinterland, where the rural dwellers were content to exchange tar, timber and grain for salt imported by the merchants and middlemen.

<sup>12</sup> *Finska Regeringskanseljens*, p. 148.

There were, however, considerable differences within Scandinavia. It is difficult to compare southern Sweden to the northern regions; Norway with its fiords greatly differed from the regions of Finland and Sweden at the same latitudes; and smaller and more densely populated Denmark belonged, in fact, to a completely different world from Finland, Sweden and Norway, not to mention the volcanic island of Iceland with its fishing and sheep-herding economy.

Denmark, linked directly to Central Europe, did not have any appreciable reserves of forest, ores or water power. But conditions for agriculture in Denmark were far better than elsewhere in Scandinavia, perhaps with the exception of the southernmost parts of Sweden. Denmark was more urbanised than the other Scandinavian countries and its stronger traditions of craftsmanship and manufacture, together with different resources, created impulses for development distinctly differing from those in northern Scandinavia, which typically focused on the production and processing of timber, ores and other natural resources.

Geography and climate laid down highly different conditions for the various parts of Scandinavia. At one extreme were Finland and most of northern and eastern Sweden, which were like islands surrounded by snow and ice during the winter months with hardly any contact with the outside world. On the other hand, Denmark, the west coast of Sweden and Norway opening onto the Atlantic Ocean were linked more closely to the metropolises and leading centres of Western Europe by shorter, year-round shipping routes.<sup>13</sup> This fundamental difference, which was not to change until the introduction of icebreakers, more efficient shipping and lowered freight costs around the close of the century, was evident in the degree of commercial integration and the depth of international contacts and also in the opportunities for expansion arising from these factors.

For Finland, which was most distant from the centres of Western Europe, the political changes of 1809, however, offered new opportunities in the east, as St Petersburg replaced Stockholm as the most important neighbouring metropolis for the Finns. The imperial capital and the Russian market furthered new industrial and commercial enterprise in Finland, but more slowly than could have been expected.

During the first decades of the nineteenth century, Finland simply lacked the opportunities for a rapid breakthrough in the Russian market. Ninety per

<sup>13</sup> W. R. Mead, *An Economic Geography of the Scandinavian States and Finland* (London, 1968), pp. 11–13.

cent of the population were employed in agriculture, which was heading for crisis. Only a few per cent were urban dwellers or people employed in crafts and the manufacturing industry. A few dozen minor textile, tobacco and sugar mills, and glassworks together with roughly one hundred small commercial sawmills and twenty or so ironworks could not constitute a sufficient industrial, technological and commercial basis for a rapid industrial development. There were actually no capitalists, finance capital or entrepreneurs able to create new businesses. Even the small body of major merchants which had been able to amass skills and capital over the course of several generations and to establish functioning international business networks was closely associated with the west-oriented tar and timber export, which was still more lucrative than the unknown market of St Petersburg.<sup>14</sup>

As an almost completely agrarian nation, Finland was more of an extreme case than an example of the situation prevailing in Scandinavia. In Denmark rural dwellers represented only some 60 per cent of the population in the early decades of the nineteenth century; crafts and industry employed approximately one-fifth of the population, and urban dwellers accounted for over one-fifth of the population. Sweden and Norway are to be found between the extremes of Denmark and Finland. The economic and social structure of Scandinavia as a whole had a common feature in a markedly agrarian orientation, the reliance of production dispersed in small units on rural resources and the relative weakness of genuine big business and large-scale production. On the other hand, this overall picture is contradicted somewhat by København, which attracted most of Denmark's crafts and manufacturing industries, by Stockholm and Göteborg as centres in Sweden, and to a lesser degree by Kristiania (Oslo) in Norway.

The Scandinavian countries also had in common a rapid growth of population continuing from the eighteenth century. The doubling of the population of Scandinavia between 1820 and 1870 to around 10 million (over 4 million in Sweden and under 2 million respectively in Denmark, Finland and Norway), a simultaneous rise in agricultural productivity, modernisation in agriculture and a distinct trend of urbanisation provided new impetus for industrial activity. A new dynamic of industrial development receiving its impulses primarily from demand and needs within the expanding domestic and nearby market rose alongside the export-oriented production of traditional staple products linked to the fluctuations of international trade.

<sup>14</sup> Schybergson, *Hantverk och Fabriker. Finlands Konsumtionsvarindustri 1815–1870*, 1, pp. 36–74; Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, pp. 152–4, 170–5.

## Institutions, infrastructure, ideology and the role of the state

The new political order in Europe after the Napoleonic Wars created institutional and ideological structures in Scandinavia that, at least indirectly, promoted economic and industrial activity. Finland, separated from Sweden in 1809, now had its first opportunity to seek a national path of development as a political unit forming a separate entity. The situation of Norway, separated from Denmark in 1814, was largely analogous, although its connection with Sweden was different from the role of the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland within the multinational and autocratically ruled Russian Empire. Denmark and Sweden, subjected to the reorganisation of Europe by the leading powers, could only seek compensation for their lost political status from internal economic, industrial and social development.

The problem of the desirable course of development, however, was linked to the political and ideological struggle between the protagonists of the agrarian development model and the supporters of industrialism. This struggle deepened in the 1840s and 1850s, continuing with varying emphases into the twentieth century.

The rural orientation had behind it the considerable economic weight of agriculture. It had broadly anchored connections with influential social forces, particularly the rising farmer and peasant classes, which the nationalist movements regarded as the main pillar of the emerging modern nation state. The proponents of industry had more tenuous links with forces in society, and their arguments could refer more to the progress of British industry than the achievements of their own nation. Where the industrialists had lost faith in the viability of agriculture under harsh Nordic conditions, the agrarian camp regarded the weak domestic manufacturing industries as only artificial creations which burdened the vitality of agriculture. For the agrarian conservatives the British model was more of a caveat than a vision of a better future. Developments in England had proved to them how the system would lead to the disintegration of the traditional order of society, and to social and moral decline.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> O. Hornby and E. Oxenbøll, 'Proto-industrialisation before Industrialisation? The Danish Case', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 30 (1982), pp. 7f.; J. Hult, 'Technology in Sweden', in J. Hult and B. Nyström (eds.), *Technology & Industry: A Nordic Heritage* (Canton, Mass., 1992), pp. 83f.; A. Montgomery, *Industrialismens Genombrott i Sverige* (Stockholm, 1947), pp. 145f.; Lieberman, *The Industrialization of Norway*, pp. 165–7, 177; T. Pryser, *Norsk Historie 1800–1870. Frå Standssamfunn mot klassesamfunn* (Oslo, 1985), p. 197.

The fate of domestic industries was not, however, unimportant even to those who envisioned an agrarian future for the predominantly rural Scandinavian countries. Viable industries created a demand for the products of agriculture, provided farmers with implements, furthered the progress of culture, and gave the landless rural population opportunities for work. In the 1850s, Johan Vilhelm Snellman, the leading ideologue of the nationalist movement in Finland and a representative of the moderate agrarian orientation, presented the following formulation: 'Under the present state of civilisation existing in Europe no nation can have developed agriculture without domestic manufacturing and factories; nor can any nation achieve a higher level of welfare and civilisation without them.'<sup>16</sup>

Proceeding from such concepts it was only natural to seek solutions that simultaneously improved the conditions of both agriculture and industry. In particular, major infrastructure projects for improving communications and boosting economic activity provided good opportunities in this respect. Accordingly, the decision of the Finnish Senate in 1844 to build the Saimaa Canal in eastern Finland did not require any choice between industrialism and the agrarian orientation, nor the hegemony of either position. The trading houses and sawmill owners of Viipuri had campaigned for the canal for decades in order to strengthen their hold on the rich forest resources of the inland area and to overcome the obstacles posed by costly land transport to expanding exports. To Snellman and his pro-Finnish *Fennoman* group the canal offered a means of upward social mobility for the rural areas of eastern Finland and its poor peasantry. St Petersburg recognised the benefits of the scheme, as the new water route would further advance the integration of Finland with the rest of the empire, and move the focus of the Grand Duchy of Finland from Sweden to Russia.<sup>17</sup>

The Saimaa Canal became a symbol of the opportunities of modern technology and the new era. But when it was completed in 1856, canal building along the English model was already losing out to the railways. The reason was obvious: railways made it possible to create a year-round system of communications that was more extensive, faster and more efficient than water routes.

Finland followed in the wake of international developments and did not obtain its first railway until 1862, when the Helsinki–Hämeenlinna line,

<sup>16</sup> M. Kovero, *Suomen Vientiteollisuus* (Helsinki, 1926), pp. 51–61; T. Rein, *Juhana Vilhelm Snellman* (Helsinki, 1981), pp. 369–76.

<sup>17</sup> Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, pp. 206–20.



planned since the 1840s, was finally completed. Like the Saimaa Canal, the railway linked the agrarian inland region with a port on the coast. Sweden also managed to realise its own giant communication project – the Göta Canal (1832) – before the victory of railways in the 1850s. The decision to build the canal had been made some twenty years previously, prompted by the shock of losing Finland to Russia. While linking the Baltic with the Swedish west coast, promoting the economy and serving strategic military aims, the Göta Canal was also an important national symbol, illustrating the desire to ‘reconquer Finland within Sweden’.<sup>18</sup>

In Norway, however, the communications project to become the first prominent symbol of the new era was the railway line. Where the sawmill owners of Viipuri in Finland tried to solve their acute transport problems with the state-built, state-funded and state-owned Saimaa Canal, the leading timber merchants of Kristiania solved a decade-long transport problem with the Kristiania–Eidsvold railway line which was completed in 1854. Financed half by the state and the sawmill companies and half by English railway builders, this scheme had already replaced plans for a canal in the 1820s.<sup>19</sup>

The first modern railway connections in Scandinavia were, however, achieved in Denmark, when the Altona–Schleswig line was inaugurated in 1844. Linking the North Sea and the Baltic, this railway line was more concerned with political than economic objectives. It was a means by which the Danish government sought to combat a growing German influence in Schleswig-Holstein.<sup>20</sup> But political and strategic considerations did not eliminate economic consequences – neither in Denmark nor elsewhere. For example, the Riihimäki–St Petersburg line, opened in 1870 and linking the capitals of Russia and Finland, opened the gates for the expansion of the eastern, export-oriented paper industry in Kymenlaakso, south-east Finland, despite its military strategic nature dictated by the Russian army headquarters.<sup>21</sup>

In general terms, the new railway lines fanned economic and industrial activity. The density of the railway networks is also a relatively accurate indicator of industrial and commercial development and potential in the various countries. Denmark, which was small in area, had completed its

18 Hult, ‘Technology in Sweden’, pp. 80f.

19 Sejersted, ‘Aspects of the Norwegian timber trade in the 1840s and ’50s’, pp. 152–4.

20 H. Nielsen and M. F. Wagner, ‘Technology in Denmark’, in J. Hult and B. Nyström (eds.), *Technology & Industry: A Nordic Heritage* (Canton, Mass., 1992), pp. 15f.

21 V. Talvi, *Pohjois-Kymenlaakson Teollistuminen. Kymin Osakeyhtiön Historia 1872–1917* (Kouvola, 1979), pp. 20f., 24.

Table 35.2 *Railway lines in four Scandinavian countries (km)*

Year/km	1850	1860	1870	1880
Denmark	30	109	770	1,584
Finland	–	107	483	885
Norway	–	68	359	1,057
Sweden	–	527	1,727	5,876

Source: *The Fontana Economic History of Europe*, 4:2 (London, 1976), p. 789.

main lines by the middle of the 1870s. Sweden, where the railway-building programme was introduced in 1853, rapidly built Scandinavia's largest network of lines, while the railways of Finland, also a country of long distances, operated only in the southern regions. Compared with Great Britain, which was regarded as a model, Scandinavia as a whole still lagged far behind. Around the middle of the century the almost 10,000 kilometres of railway in Britain was matched by only 30 kilometres in Scandinavia, and in 1870 the corresponding ratio was over 20,000 to some 3,000 kilometres. (See Table 35.2.)

At any rate, the canals of the 1820s and 1830s, the railways of the 1840s and 1860s and the whole improving system of communications of roads, ports and telegraph lines had the role of a growing revolutionary front in giving Scandinavia a new rhythm of development. They were opening previously isolated areas to market forces and giving the northern periphery of Europe stronger ties with international trade. In the making of this revolution, the role of the government and private initiative had slightly different emphases in the various countries. A feature in common to all Scandinavia, however was the visible participation of the state in creating the new national communication system.

The construction of the first electric telegraph lines as public schemes and almost simultaneously in the mid 1850s is a good example of the active policy of the Scandinavian governments. In Denmark, the København–Hamburg telegraph line was built in 1852–4. Sweden's first telegraph lines (1853–4) followed the Stockholm–Uppsala and Stockholm–Göteborg railway lines. In Finland, the Helsinki–St Petersburg line was built in 1855 as a result of Russian military interests, and in Norway the state constructed a telegraph network between 1855 and 1870 to link the northern and southern parts of the country. Although the telegraph networks were initially meant to serve military and administrative needs, they soon began to serve business, like

the railways, steamships and improved roads, particularly when the national communications systems were linked to international networks.

The role of the state was not only present in the growing number of major infrastructure projects. Rather, these projects expressed the governmental policy in all the Scandinavian countries that aimed at speeding economic growth, increasing national prosperity and modernisation along the lines of leading international examples.

These objectives were also expressed, for example, in taxation policies. Indirect taxes and thus the accumulation of capital was promoted. The stabilisation of monetary conditions led to the adoption of the silver standard first in the mid 1830s in Sweden and by the mid 1840s in Norway and Denmark. In Finland the first stage was to remedy the confusion of using both Swedish and Russian money. This was followed by the introduction in the early 1860s of the Finnish *markka* (mark), which was tied to the silver standard. These steps provided business with the necessary stability and opened the way for developing the financial system. Despite their non-independent status, Finland and Norway also established their own central banks, in 1811 and 1816 respectively. Liberal currents and the younger generation of civil servants and businessmen increasingly broke down the mercantilist-economic system with its restrictive and regulative elements from the 1850s onwards. Commerce in the rural areas was freed from the control of the towns, the monopolies and privileges were abolished, and at least a partial freedom of occupations and enterprise was implemented in all the Nordic countries by the 1860s at the latest.

A no less important aspect was the fact that liberalism did not seriously question the reasonable protection of domestic industries. Together with customs policies and regulation of the major public communications projects, the protective measures gave businesses opportunities to grow and obtain experience and technological skills without excessive foreign competition. The contemporary desire for industrial progress was also reflected by technological societies, polytechnic associations, technical journals and technical schools, which had existed in Denmark and Sweden since the 1820s. In Norway a polytechnic school was founded in the mid 1850s and a similar institution was established in Finland in the early 1870s after three decades of preparation. These trends were also indicated by the founding of the new government bodies entrusted with the promoting industrial and technological education and research.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Bruland, *British Technology and European Industrialization*, pp. 56–68; Hult, ‘Technology in Sweden’, pp. 78–82; T. Myllyntaus, ‘Technological Change in

Owing to the political connection with the Russian empire, Finnish projects for renewing the economy and promoting industrial development were possibly more political in nature than in the rest of Scandinavia. The domestic administration in Helsinki sought to strengthen Finnish autonomy by bolstering the nation's economy. Although the Russians refrained from interfering with the affairs of Finland, the political authority of St Petersburg was nevertheless evident in the timing and implementation of Finnish reforms. Crucial in this respect was also the political atmosphere of Russia. A telling example is the fact that liberal reforms (1856) became possible only at a stage when Russia sought a new Western-inspired way out of its deep crisis by applying the perestroika policies of Tsar Alexander II. In tangible terms, the power of St Petersburg was evident in customs policies, when Finland had to open its borders in the late 1850s to cheap grain from Russia. Finland had to adapt also in other respects to Russia's protectionistic policies which favoured its own industries.<sup>23</sup>

Duty-free export quotas to Russia, however, gave Finnish industry an advantage over Western competitors, who had to overcome a high customs barrier to enter the Russian market. The liberalisation of grain import in turn stimulated industrial expansion in two ways. On the one hand, it reinforced the competitiveness of Finnish industry through low living costs and related low wage levels for workers. On the other hand, it forced Finnish agriculture, which found itself in crisis, to adopt a structural change from grain cultivation to animal husbandry and the founding of dairies. This in turn created new markets for Finnish engineering works and machine industries.

The slow transformation process between the 1820s and 1870s reached a turning point in the 1840s and a distinct culmination in the late 1850s and early 1860s. The period saw, among other developments, the repeal of the last restrictions on the Swedish iron industry (1859) as also the liberalisation of strict forestry policies which opened the way for the expansion of the sawmill industries in Sweden (1860), Norway (1860) and Finland (1861). Similar crucial steps in Denmark were the abolition of guild monopolies and of the Sound Tolls.

Finland', in J. Hult and B. Nyström (eds.), *Technology & Industry: A Nordic Heritage* (Canton, Mass., 1992), p. 37; G. Nerheim, 'Patterns of Technological Development in Norway', in J. Hult and B. Nyström (eds.), *Technology & Industry: A Nordic Heritage* (Canton, Mass., 1992), pp. 61f.; H. Nielsen and M. F. Wagner, 'Technology in Denmark', in J. Hult and B. Nyström (eds.), *Technology & Industry: A Nordic Heritage* (Canton, Mass., 1992), p. 13; B. Wuolle, *Suomen Teknillinen Korkeakouluopetus 1849-1949* (Helsinki, 1949), pp. 43-6, 243.

23 E. K. Joustela, *Suomen Venäjän-kauppa autonomian ajan alkupuoliskolla vv. 1809-1865* (Helsinki, 1963), pp. 85f.; Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, pp. 190, 207.

Liberalisation did not signify a revolution, or even in the short term any rapid increase of industrial and economic activity. It did, however, shape the economic and political system in a direction that opened new routes to progress and engendered the necessary conditions for private enterprise. The latter was in turn encouraged by new profitable prospects in international and domestic markets as well as social and cultural features in Scandinavian societies. One of them was a Protestant Lutheran religion stressing the importance of hard work. The religious revival movements of the first half of the nineteenth century, which underlined the responsibility of the individual and worldly success as important moral values also played a role in the emergence of entrepreneurial attitudes.

The economy also gained a certain dynamism from the ambition for upward social mobility among the most active and affluent members of the urban and rural middle classes. Basic cultural structures that were of significance for this development were provided by elementary education, begun by the church and made effective by the public primary school system. As early as the first half of the century, elementary education in Scandinavia had succeeded in spreading literacy widely within society. The legislation concerning property rights and contracts, and a relatively uncorrupt and efficient administration provided the business community with the stability and predictability which were necessary for long-term business engagements and investments.

### Entrepreneurs, capital and labour

Merchant houses had played a central role in the economy in the early modern period. Change in the economic system, in turn, was represented by the transformation of many leading trading houses into industrial enterprises: capital and skills accumulated from foreign trade and shipping was increasingly invested in expanding new areas of business and production. As private financiers, the affluent merchants and trading houses had previously performed the role of banks. Now, they formed the core group during the founding stage of modern commercial banks in the 1850s and 1860s, and in this way were able to channel venture capital to serve industrial undertakings.

Part of the old established merchant class was, however, undermined by the repercussions of the depression of the first decades of the nineteenth century, while others were unable to associate their business activities with the currents of large-scale industrial enterprises and new technologies. The winners were those who did not remain in the mainstream of the bourgeois

corporations hanging on conservatively to the traditional economic system of regulation and privileges. These new types of businessmen and entrepreneurs, whose social origins and interests represented more dynamic activity, challenged the old system and broke down its boundaries.

Although the bourgeoisie still constituted the main social basis of recruitment for the business class, many of the successful newcomers clearly had humble origins. For example, Carl Frederik Tietgen, who founded the Privatbanken, Denmark's first merchant bank, in 1857, was the son of a craftsman of Odense. After a period spent in Manchester, Tietgen found his way into the business elite of København. Fritz H. Frolich, a restless innovator and one of Norway's leading entrepreneurs, rose from the lower ranks of society, as did Jacob Meyer, the son of a peddler who became Kristiania's richest timber exporter in the 1830s, and Erik Johan Långman, the son of a lower-ranking Finnish burgher, who in the 1850s became Finland's most successful timber baron and the developer of new log-floating routes. Dissatisfied with the restrictive forestry policies of the Finnish Senate, Långman moved via London to Sweden to become one of the pioneers of the textile industry in Malmö. In Sweden, André Oscar Wallenberg, a naval officer and the son of a bishop, rose to become a prominent businessman and the founder of a leading commercial bank. His example shows how capitalistic enterprise also appealed to the representatives of the educated classes, civil service and the military. Nils Ludvig Arppe, a major entrepreneur and innovator in sawmilling and iron industries in the early 1830s, who employed Finland's first steam-powered vessel to pull rafts of logs, belongs to this category.<sup>24</sup>

Elements of the nobility also entered the new sphere of industry and business around the middle of the nineteenth century. High civil and military office was not available to all, but even this had not been a problem; business and new industrial projects would attract sons of the upper classes, for whom the family's landed property, income from their offices and other wealth

<sup>24</sup> O. Gasslander, *Bank och Industriellt Genombrott. Stockholms Enskilda Bank kring Sekelskiftet 1900*, 1 (Stockholm, 1956), pp. 14–16; J. Glete, *Ågande och Industriell Omvandling. Agrargrupper, Skogsindustri, Verkstadsindustri 1850–1950* (Stockholm, 1987), pp. 67–107; F. Hodne, 'Industriborgerskapet i Norge 1850–1920. Dets karakter og funksjoner', in K. Kjeldstadli, S. Myklebust and L. Thue (eds.), *Formingen av industrisamfunnet i Norden fram til 1920* (Oslo, 1994), pp. 53–71; M. Kuisma 'Yrittäjät sääty-yhteiskunnan luokkakuvassa', in P. Haapala (ed.), *Talous, Valta ja Valtio. Tutkimuksia 1800-luvun Suomesta* (Tampere, 1992), pp. 45–53; P. Schybergson, *Fabriksetablering och Fabriksägare inom Finlands Konsumtionsvaruindustri 1809–1870* (Helsingfors, 1974), pp. 8–16; E. Söderlund, *Skandinaviska Banken i det Svenska Bankväsendets historia 1864–1914* (Stockholm, 1964), pp. 30–3.

were sources of venture capital. They also had social and political capital and contacts deriving from education and status which provided the mental and intellectual capacities necessary to a large-scale industrialist and businessman. For example, Count Baltzar J. E. von Platen, admiral, diplomat and owner of Sweden's leading engineering works at Motala, was an entrepreneur of noble background. His father's role as director of the Göta Canal project and perhaps also family relations via his mother with the Ekman merchant and industrial dynasty of Göteborg were important impulses for enterprise. Another kind of example was Carl Fredrik Rosenlew, who established a major sawmill, timber, shipping and engineering company at Pori on the west coast of Finland when preferring to 'become a rich burgher than to remain a poor nobleman'.<sup>25</sup>

The lack of the cultural and social capital that the old elite strata took for granted largely explains why large-scale entrepreneurs with peasant or working-class roots were exceptions to the rule. On the other hand, businessmen of foreign birth, such as Swedes, Germans, Russians or Britons in Finland, were prominent trailblazers in many technologically new and rapidly growing fields. This was not due so much to their wealth but to their technical skills. A good example of such developments was the rise of Axel Wahren, the son of a Jewish dyer of Stockholm, to become the founder of the Forssa Cotton Mill and one of Finland's leading industrialists in the 1850s. Similar examples are found, for example, in the slightly later eastward expansion of Norwegian sawmill entrepreneurs to the forest region of Sweden and Finland and in several other businesses over the whole of Scandinavia.

The financing of Scandinavia's traditional export industries was customarily organised through advance payments from customers to trading houses with short-term credit, mostly from Hamburg and Amsterdam and from London. The breakthrough of the commercial banks in the 1850s and 1860s and the spread of limited companies and companies of joint-stock type already familiar among shipowners helped in the acquisition of increasingly larger amounts of capital. New banks and firms channelled resources from trade, seafaring, farming and landed property to industrial enterprises. At the same time, the governments and to some degree the municipalities and various mortgage institutions left the domestic credit market to the sphere of private business by organising the funding

25 Glete, *Ägande och Industriell Omvandling*, p. 103; Kuisma, *Metsäteollisuuden maa*, p. 176.

of major public infrastructure schemes through long-term, low-interest bond loans mainly obtained from France and Germany.

The emergence of the capital markets and improved financing went hand in hand with growing investment needs. New engineering technology, steam engines, improved networks of communication and the liberalisation of production and forest resources released from old restrictions opened the way for industrial concentration. The first representatives of large-scale industry were above all the new cotton and textile mills of the 1830s–1850s. Of these, Finlayson's of Tampere in Finland became Scandinavia's largest in its field, with some 2,000 workers already in the 1860s. In the Swedish metal industry, the Lancashire process and mechanical rolling combined with the liberalisation of restrictions on production and new railways promoted the concentration process. In the timber industry, a similar combination of modern technology and liberal politics made it possible to replace the networks of small sawmills and the traditional putting-out system with steam-powered sawmills and better locations at logistically advantageous sites and with concentrated production. The steam-powered sawmills required larger investments also in transport routes and related organisation, as well as in ports and community infrastructure.

Foreign capital played a minor role in Scandinavian industrial transformation, at least if we disregard the indirect influence of capital imported by the state or short-term trading credit awarded to export firms. The relatively visible role of the Russians in the iron and forestry industries of eastern Finland, German influence in Denmark and the mostly rejected British attempts to dominate industry in Norway do not appreciably change this picture. Where the entrepreneur class was mostly of domestic origin, or consisted of recent immigrants who had quickly adapted to their new countries – or were the descendants of long-since assimilated families of immigrant merchants – the same was true of the industrial workforce. Nevertheless, many of the enterprises that adopted the new technology initially had to rely on skilled workers, technicians and engineers from abroad.

The landless rural proletariat, which had rapidly grown in numbers, and the children of small farmers formed a broad social basis of recruitment for most of the new workforce for manufacturing industries. For this sector of the population industry opened a channel, albeit still narrow, to a more independent life and a better income. Their moving into industry was facilitated by the rural locations of many mills, works and plants and by the relatively low skill requirements of many industrial fields. For example, the sawmills and the textile industry were often able to employ young



women and children. However, the poor availability of technically skilled personnel was sometimes an obstacle to development of the new branches of mechanical engineering and other fields of industrial production.

### Technology and industrial growth

The conversion of the Fiskars ironworks, established in the seventeenth century, into Finland's first mechanical engineering shop in the 1830s and 1840s illustrates the strategies of adaptation and survival of Scandinavia's old iron industry. But it also tells of the mechanisms of technological transfer typical of the period. A trip to the industrial regions of England and Scotland in 1815 had revealed to Johan Julin, university pharmacist of Turku, the opportunities inherent in the new technology. While passing through Stockholm, Julin visited an engineering works established by Samuel Owen, a pupil of James Watt. In the 1830s Owen's son-in-law, the Scotsman David Cowie, who was employed at the works, and the Swedish draughtsman Anders T. Ericsson became shareholders and technical managers of the Fiskars engineering works company, founded by Julin. The new facilities were outfitted with technical equipment partly made on site and partly obtained from Owen's factory in Stockholm and from the Motala engineering works. In 1838 Fiskars constructed the first steam engine to be made in Finland – some three decades after Owen had made Sweden's first steam engine in 1807.

In fact the rise of Fiskars and the emergence and growth of the modern engineering industry in Finland were part of the same wave of events that had led to Sweden's considerably more prominent industries in this field. Within this wave, British technology – represented by immigrant professionals, technicians and engineers – and major public infrastructure projects by the Scandinavian governments were combined with private enterprise attracted by new lucrative business opportunities.

One of the catalysts of this wave was the Göta Canal project. Known as 'Sweden's oldest university of technology', the canal project led to the founding of the Motala engineering works (1822) led first by British technicians. This leading concentration of new engineering technology was the largest of its kind in Sweden. In fact, it formed the basis from which new, innovative entrepreneurs and executives set out to follow their careers. Thus the Motala works had an important impact for such successful industrialists as Carl Bolinder (Bolinders Mekaniska Verkstad, Stockholm),

Gottfried Kockum (Kockums Mekaniska Verkstad, Malmö) and Wilhelm Tham of Husqvarna.<sup>26</sup>

The Scottish mechanic Daniel Fraser, sent to Sweden by the Bryan Donkin Company of Great Britain, became the long-term director of the Motala works and the architect of its prowess. Via Fraser, the Göta-Motala technological complex extended its influence to Finland. The brothers Alexander and Daniel Fraser, who had been trained at Motala, came to Finland to serve in the 1840s and 1850s as technical managers at Fiskars and its parallel branch, the Hakaniemi engineering works in Helsinki. They organised the production of the works for the Saimaa Canal, the imperial Russian Fleet, the Baltic textile and paper industry and the Finlayson cotton mills in Tampere. Finlayson's at this time was expanding into large-scale operations, and its order for a 50-horsepower iron waterwheel was regarded as the largest of its kind in all Europe.<sup>27</sup>

Norway also saw the rise of a modern engineering industry, producing turbines, steam engines, steam boats, canal locks and equipment and machinery for the new textile industry and for agriculture and sawmills. Developments in Norway followed from similar industrial dynamics and technological diffusion as in the case of Fiskars in Finland and Sweden. The Akers engineering works, founded by the young naval officer Peter Severin Steenstrup in 1841, was Norway's first representative of modern mechanical engineering. Over the next two decades it was joined by half a dozen similar works in Kristiania, including Myrens Verksted (1848) and Kvaerner Brug (1853). Many of these establishments were originally only repair shops which first gradually developed to genuine industrial undertakings with the capability to substitute for imports. In almost all cases British technology and technicians played an important role.

Similarly, most technological development in Denmark before the middle of the nineteenth century was based on the transfer of British technology, although the German and Belgian known-how was also influential in the textile industry. Increasing signs of the expansion of a qualitatively new kind of industrial and technological system were evident from the 1830s and 1840s.

26 B. Berner, 'Intelligensens ånga och kapitalets svänghjul. Ingenjörer och svensk industrialisering till 1920', in K. Kjeldstadli, S. Myklebust and L. Thue (eds.), *Formningen av industrisamfunnet i Norden fram til 1920* (Oslo, 1994), pp. 146–51; Hult, 'Technology in Sweden', pp. 80–3.

27 K. Ekman, 'Finlands mekaniska industri genom hundra år', in *Verkstadsingenjörsföreningen i Finland r. f. 1917–1942* (Helsingfors, 1942), pp. 22–38; Myllyntaus, 'Technological Change in Finland', pp. 37f.

These included the domestic construction of steam engines in the 1830s, Denmark's first iron-built ship in 1854 and the establishment in the 1840s of foundries and engineering works not only in København but also in the rural towns. Like Anker Heegaard, an entrepreneur who bought the originally state-owned Fredriksværk works in 1857, these new enterprises participated in the modernisation and mechanisation of agriculture, shipbuilding, construction and industry that was more diversified than in the rest of Scandinavia. Further examples are the modern Carlsberg brewery (founded 1847) and the Burmeister & Wain company, which was established in the 1840s and rose in some two decades to become a major engineering and shipbuilding company with a staff of almost 1,000 by the early 1870s.

The almost simultaneous rise of the engineering industries throughout Scandinavia was more an example of new developments in qualitative terms than industrial growth on a broad front. For example, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Sweden's engineering works had only some 1,500 workers, of whom almost one-third were in the service of Motala. The steam engine was even more a symbol of the new age than a source of power facilitating the marked growth of production. At this stage the water turbine, developed in the 1820s and which rapidly spread throughout Scandinavia within a few decades, proved to be a more important innovation than the steam engine.

Perhaps more than any other sector, the modern 'Mancunian' textile industry, with its breakthrough in the 1840s and 1850s, replaced crafts and the labour-intensive putting-out system. It was also a pioneer of mechanised large-scale production in Scandinavia. Its emergence is explained by several converging factors, including growing demand in the domestic market – and on the part of Finland also in Russia. Other factors were tariff policies favouring the domestic processing of goods, a positive atmosphere for private enterprise, the growing proportion of American raw cotton in international trade and the improved availability of British technology. In fact, British engineering companies delivered almost complete factory packages to Scandinavia and helped local businesses in hiring the necessary managers and technicians.

It has been noted, with due cause, that 'Norwegian textile industrialisation was not so much an imitation as an extension of British developments following the development of a differentiated capital goods industry in the UK.'<sup>28</sup> In terms of the pattern of technology transfer this observation can be

<sup>28</sup> Bruland, *British Technology and European Industrialization*, p. 6.

extended to the rest of Scandinavia, although Denmark did not have its own cotton mills and although Belgian technology, in particular, was prominent in the new textile mills founded in Sweden in the 1830s and 1840s. Finland, in turn, differed from the rest of Scandinavia by virtue of the large size, small number and the markedly enclave nature of its modern textile mills. The Finlayson cotton mills of Tampere, founded by a Scottish technician and expanded in the 1850s by rich Baltic-German businessmen, had the lion's share of production, employment and Russian exports in its field. With its approximately 2,000 women workers, Finlayson's represented a concentration of industrial activity rare in all Scandinavia.

The Scandinavian iron industry during the first half of the nineteenth century was characterised by a singular blend of old and new elements. One of the new elements was Alfred Nobel's dynamite (1866), which improved mining methods; the second one was new iron and steel production technology, such as the Bessemer method (1856) originally involving the efforts of the founder of the Swedish Sandviken company. The Martin method (1863), in turn, did not make its breakthrough until the close of the century.

An example of the old elements was that in Finland demand in the Russian market led as late as the 1850s to a flourishing, albeit short-lived, of small smelting works relying on traditional technology and the lake-bottom ores of eastern Finland. The Swedish example was the mixed one. Having lost its role as Europe's leading producer, the Swedish iron industry adapted to the new situation through renewal and the reorganisation of production technology. Lacking its own deposits of coal, Sweden kept to methods relying on charcoal. By making a virtue from necessity, however, and concentrating on quality instead of quantity the Swedish iron industry was able to expand product and exports, although its share of the market dropped sharply from eighteenth-century figures.<sup>29</sup> Following the stagnation of the 1820s, when pig-iron production remained at the same 80,000-tonne level as in the 1780s, figures rose to over 100,000 tonnes in the 1830s, followed by over 150,000 in the 1850s and more than 250,000 tonnes by the late 1860s. The yearly production of forged and rolled steel and iron rose in the late 1860s to over 180,000 tonnes, of which some 145,000 tonnes were sold in the export market. This points to an important fact. The iron and steel industry was still primarily export-oriented, which leads to the other conclusion: not even

29 A. Florén, 'Swedish Iron before 1900', in G. Rydén and M. Ågren (eds.), *Ironmaking in Sweden and Russia: A Survey of the Social Organisation of Iron Production before 1900* (Uppsala, 1993), pp. 36–40.

railway projects or other large-scale infrastructure schemes had a strong enough impact on the demand side of the domestic market.

Without doubt, the most important technological innovation of the Swedish iron and steel industry was the introduction of the Lancashire method and its adaptation to charcoal. Tested in the 1820s, the Lancashire method had spread over the course of the next two decades. It was not, however, a technological revolution but rather an improvement of existing technology, permitting higher and more even quality. The method also conserved expensive charcoal and thus lowered production costs. In fact, quality-oriented production was also promoted by a regulatory economic-political system, whereby industrial enterprises were given relatively strict production quotas in order to conserve forest resources. Restrictions were first eased in the 1840s and finally abolished only in the late 1850s.

For the sawmills similar regulatory measures in forestry policies led in part to opposite results in terms of quality. As in the iron and steel industry, controls prevented the formation of concentrations of large-scale production. It is illustrative that Sandviken, the new arrival in the Swedish iron and steel industry of the 1860s, had some 200 regular employees and as such it was an industrial facility of considerable size, outstripping the old iron-works and sawmills or glass- and brickworks with ten to thirty workers each. Besides the small size of production units, the low quotas for sawmilling rights led to trends that undermined quality and broke down industrial organisation. In order to circumvent strict restrictions and to respond to the demand of the export market, the timber merchants organised the help of peasants and farmers who sawed timber by hand, but their work was of poorer and more uneven quality than the products of the sawmills.<sup>30</sup>

The policy of restrictions was prompted by fears of forest depletion. But the attitudes, approaches and methods in forestry changed in the middle of the nineteenth century, and liberalisation of forest policy began almost simultaneously throughout Scandinavia. Sweden was the first explicitly to revoke its strict quotas on timber trade (1842), and Scandinavia's first steam-powered sawmill was founded in Tunadal in Sweden's province of Norrland in 1849. At the same time, debate still continued in Norway over the sawmills, branded as bringing about the devastation of the forests, and Finland introduced extreme felling restrictions in addition to its already strict

30 Åström, *From Tar to Timber*, pp. 158, 161; K. Hoffman, 'Sawmills: Finland's Proto Industry', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 30 (1982), pp. 39f.

forestry policies. On other hand, Sweden did not liberalise the founding of sawmills until 1860, the same year when the first steam-powered sawmills began to operate in Finland and at the stage when legislation previously preventing the expansion of the sawmills was liberalised in both countries.

The prominent breakthrough of the forest industry and the steam-powered sawmills in the 1860s and 1870s did not, however, follow from any breakthrough of Scandinavian forestry policies. The growth of exports had started before the political turning point. It was as much a result of the contemporaneous opening of the British market and the rising trends of international trade, which, combined with the 'transport revolution', opened a route for the expansion of a low-cost, space-consuming product such as sawn timber. No doubt, the latter factor improved the competitive position of Sweden and Finland, which were more distant from the main markets, in relation to previously dominant Norway, whose forest resources had been seriously depleted by centuries of timber exports. Between 1840 and 1860 Norway was still able to double its exports of timber and sawn goods, but growth came to an end around the middle of the 1860s and exports stabilised at around 1 million cubic metres per year. Sweden, where the almost virgin forests of Norrland provided a sound basis of raw material, rose from the 1840s within two to three decades to lead the European timber market. In the early 1840s Sweden shipped 0.2–0.3 million cubic metres of sawn timber prepared at hundreds of water-powered mills; by 1860 this figure had grown to 1 million. Ten years later over 100 new steam-powered sawmills together with technically improved water-powered sawmills using turbines produced 2 million cubic metres for shipping. With this level of production, the industry accounted for over 40 per cent of the Sweden's revenue from exports.

Finland's timber export figures also doubled between 1840 and 1860. But the most prominent stage of growth did not come under way until the 1860s. By the end of the decade, the country's exports of timber and sawn goods reached the 0.5 million cubic metre mark. This was half the Norwegian figure and only a quarter of Sweden's exports, but even this amount provided at best half of Finland's export income.

Where the stagnant timber trade lost its relative importance in Norway, the forest industry of Sweden and Finland, with impulses from the Western markets, became a dynamic force in the economy. It attracted not only domestic trading houses but also domestic and foreign speculators dreaming of quick profits. These speculators included, for example, Norwegian entrepreneurs familiar with the opportunities of the business, and major companies previously active in other areas, such as *Stora Kopparberget* of

Sweden. In the turnover of this firm in the late 1860s, timber alone equalled the combined sales of its traditional copper and iron products.<sup>31</sup> For both countries, the forest industry played the same role as commercial agriculture did in the process of modernisation for Denmark, or merchant seafaring, sawmills and the fisheries had for Norway. It was the main source of income from exports and its orders and cash flow also created demand for domestic metal, engineering and consumer products. This situation, perhaps more than any other, influenced the modernisation of society and the breakthrough of industrial capitalism.

### The Scandinavian pattern of development

It would be incorrect to claim that Scandinavia's course of industrialisation was set in motion by exports amounting to only a few per cent of the total value of imports into Britain. It is particularly incorrect because Denmark with its major agricultural business sector differed completely from this pattern. Even the beginning of industrialisation in richly forested Sweden, Finland and Norway did not follow uniquely from the emergence of the timber industry, despite the prominence of rich sawmill barons as symbols of the modern industrial capitalism. The whole scene was more complicated than that.

However, the export-led forest-based development model explains crucial features of the dynamism of early Scandinavian industrial expansion. What was a small step for the core regions of the world economy opened up unforeseen opportunities for marginally located Scandinavian regions. In these countries forestry, together with export industries and merchant seafaring, constituted a development bloc integrating areas into the international trade and Western world economy. This bloc with its demands and needs promoted the emergence and growth of a new type of domestic industrial production and reinforced the domestic market. In Denmark a similar bloc developed around the agrarian sector, which accounted for four-fifths of income from exports.

The decades from 1815 to 1870 were not a revolutionary period of rapid change and growth. Following far behind in the wake of Britain, the world's leading industrial pioneer, Scandinavia did not appreciably stand out from the rest of Europe or the other peripheral regions of Europe. However,

31 K.-G. Hildebrand, *Erik Johan Ljungbeg och Stora Kopparberg* (Uppsala, 1970), p. 13.

Table 35.3 *Levels of Scandinavian GDP per capita in 1880 international dollars and rates of GDP growth per capita in 1830–70 (annual average compound growth rates)*

Country	1830	1870	Rates of growth 1830–1870
Denmark	763	1,149	1.0
Finland	529	700	0.7
Norway		900	
Sweden	681	965	0.9
UK	1,133	1,996	1.4

Source: A. Maddison, 'Measuring European Growth: The Core and the Periphery', in E. Aerts and N. Valerio (eds.), *Growth and Stagnation in the Mediterranean World in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Leuven, 1990), pp. 83–7.

differences between Scandinavian countries were remarkable. (See Table 35.3.) In fact, in its standard of living and rate of growth Denmark, the most affluent of the Scandinavian countries, bore more resemblance to Switzerland or Austria than, for instance, Finland. But even Finland despite the weakest starting points in Scandinavia sought to enter the same development path and to follow the same models, even applying the same means at almost the same time. The most important of these means were transfer and the application of the technological innovations of the forerunner nations. The results of this process were seen in the modernisation of the industrial production and transport and communication systems, which cleared the bottlenecks and stimulated technological know-how and the emergence of new industries. Instrumental in realising these modernisation schemes were the nationalist-spirited civil servant class and governments with their ambitions towards reform, and progressive domestic entrepreneurs seeking profit and economic growth.

The first half of the nineteenth century can best be described as a period during which a new industrial and economic system gradually took shape within an old one. The slow rate of industrialisation is shown by the fact that by the mid 1860s even Sweden's industrial working class, mainly consisting of iron, sawmill and textile workers, did not number more than 65,000–70,000 people. The corresponding figure was 40,000 in Denmark and slightly over 10,000 in Finland. In Norway, where the crews of trading vessels in 1860 were almost double the number of the industrial working class (under 20,000), the working class remained under 35,000 in 1870. One-third of this group worked in forestry.



## Industrial expansion

The industrial development that burgeoned in the 1830s and 1840s was evinced in the emergence of new technology, modern infrastructures and fresh entrepreneurial and political activities. Many of these appeared to be 'revolutionary' to contemporaries. But their significance for economic and industrial growth was not revealed until a period of rapid breakthroughs in the 1870s and even more evidently in the expansion of industrial capitalism towards the close of the century.



PART VII

\*

THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER



## New social categories in town and country

LARS-ARNE NORBORG

### From feudal estate society to bourgeois class society

As far as social relations are concerned, the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century was a period of decisive social transition in Scandinavia, though with great regional variations. The traditional 'feudal' societies were gradually transformed into modern capitalist ones built upon commodity relations and monetary principles. Market production and wage labour expanded. A growing proportion of the population was proletarianised in the sense of being separated from their means of production and having to sell their labour in order to earn a living. The market was by degrees emancipated from its previous 'embeddedness' (K. Polanyi) in political and social relations. Generally, at the beginning of the period, each Scandinavian country was to a greater or lesser extent an estate society where social status was defined by traditional, legal criteria. By the end of the period, the change into class societies was in full swing.<sup>1</sup>

### Peasants become farmers

As the Scandinavian countries throughout this period were overwhelmingly rural, it was only to be expected that the trend just described should manifest itself first of all in the countryside. Because of their different starting points, the road to agrarian capitalism was not the same in all the Nordic countries. But the final result everywhere was that the final ownership of land fell into the hands of freehold peasants who, in the process, were transformed into a class-conscious group of modern, market-orientated farmers. From being a possession of the family, subject to rules of heredity, or part of a feudal manor and/or a village community, farmland became a commodity to be

1 Ø. Østerud, *Agrarian Structure and Peasant Politics in Scandinavia* (Oslo, 1978), pp. 68–194.

bought and sold on the market by individual owners. This implied a thorough alteration in the social and, as a consequence, political position of the peasantry. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was in the whole of Scandinavia a deep social and cultural gap between the educated classes and the peasants, whatever their status in the rural community. Through his dialect, his dress and his manners, the peasant disclosed his estrangement from the cultural values of the higher estates.

This was particularly the case in Denmark, where peasant freehold had until recently been uncommon, and where the overwhelming majority of the peasants were highly dependent leaseholders under noble or bourgeois proprietors. But even in democratic Norway where the land tenure system was one of peasant ownership combined with contractual tenancy, the economic and administrative elite of bourgeois proprietors and civil servants segregated themselves from the lower strata. The corps of army officers was even closed formally to the sons of peasants.<sup>2</sup> In Sweden, as in Finland – until 1809 an integral part of Sweden – the peasants were legally free, but, with a few notable exceptions, socially inferior to ‘the lords’ (*herrarna*), i.e. noblemen, clergymen and non-noble so-called ‘persons of rank’ (*ofrälse ståndspersoner*). In Finland, the majority of the peasants literally spoke a different language – Finnish – from the Swedish-speaking elite. As Swedish was the official administrative language, most peasants were excluded from active participation in political life. That the peasants made up one of the four estates in the diet did not matter, simply because the diet was not convened between 1809 and 1863.

In Denmark, decisive steps towards a change were taken from the mid 1780s through a wave of agrarian reforms introduced from above by authorities who, under the influence of the Enlightenment and incipient liberalism, had come to look upon the unfree position of the peasants as an obstacle to economic growth. In 1787 a government decree regulated tenancy conditions in order to secure the rights of the leaseholders against arbitrary landowners, and in the following year the *stavnsbånd*, a compulsory residence system introduced in 1733 in order to supply the army with soldiers and the noble lands with labour, was abolished. In 1799 the *hoveri*, compulsory labour service on the landlords’ manors, was regulated and successively replaced by money rents. The leaseholders were encouraged by means of favourable loans to buy their lands, and at the turn of the century in 1800 a considerable transition from leasehold to freehold was well under way.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

In Norway, Sweden and Finland, where there was no dominant class of big landowners and the peasants, although in many cases they cultivated crown or noble land, were legally free, there was no need of an emancipation of the Danish type. But even there a transition towards peasant ownership took place, at a different pace and extent.

In Norway a great number of the crown's leaseholders, especially in the eastern part of the country, had already bought their farms by about 1700. It is generally held that, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the freeholders were in a majority in the country as a whole with a share of almost two-thirds of the land.<sup>3</sup> There were, however, still many peasants who leased ecclesiastical land. In 1821 they too were granted the right to buy their farms, and they utilised this right to such an extent that, in 1890, scarcely 10 per cent of the registered land was still let on lease.<sup>4</sup>

In Sweden, as in Finland, the land tenure system was built upon a classification of 'types of land' (*jordnaturer*), namely crown land (*kronojord*), tax-free noble land (*frälsejord*) and taxable peasant land (*skattejord*). Apart from a limited number of manors, mostly concentrated in the Mälaren region and the southern provinces of Sweden (Skåne, Halland) as well as in south-western Finland, the holdings were scattered in the villages all over the country, and, regardless of ownership, were cultivated by personally free peasants with full social and political rights. For the peasant this meant that he could as a tax peasant (*skattebonde*) pay tax to the crown bailiff, or, as a crown peasant (*kronobonde*), pay him a rent in kind or money or, if his holding was tax-free, pay the corresponding rent to the owner.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a transition towards peasant ownership took place, crown peasants buying their holdings in order to secure their land occupancy. Besides, the peasantry acquired noble lands, partly from the noble owners and partly from non-noble proprietors who had gained noble lands earlier. The legal restrictions against transforming noble to peasant land were abolished in 1789 and 1809. The final result was that the peasants' share of Swedish land increased from about 30 per cent in 1720 to about 60 per cent in 1850. There were, however, considerable regional variations, from about 30 per cent in Södermanland near Stockholm, to 90 per cent in Norrland.

In Finland, where the process continued throughout the period of autonomy (1809–1917), only small amounts of the crown domains were left by the

3 *Ibid.*, p. 114.      4 *Ibid.*, p. 115.

turn of the twentieth century. As noble land was comparatively insignificant, the rural scene in Finland during the nineteenth century was increasingly dominated by peasant ownership.

But peasant land did not only expand in terms of quantity. The very concept of ownership was also redefined and assumed a more individualistic and unrestricted character. A key role was played by the *skifte* or enclosures which not only favoured technical innovation, subdivision of farms and cultivation of new land, but also paved the way for a new type of individualistic entrepreneurs who increasingly produced for the market and, more than their predecessors, were masters of their own soil, free to use it as they felt most profitable without asking for the permission of the village community. Of crucial importance was the partitioning of common land which strengthened private ownership at the cost of the poorer sections of the peasantry, whose earlier rights to use the commons for grazing, collecting of wood etc. were now curtailed. In fact, one motive for the enclosures seems to have been the farmers' wish to get their right of possession more clearly defined against claims from non-landed elements in rural society.<sup>5</sup> The outcome of all this was, to conclude, that in all Scandinavian countries peasant ownership became 'individual, absolute and uniform'.<sup>6</sup>

### The farmers' road to emancipation

At the same time, the whole social situation of the peasants underwent a fundamental change in the direction of more independence and self-assertiveness in relation to the authorities and the upper strata of society as a whole. One reason was the general economic progress within agriculture, which to a greater extent than ever before benefited the freeholders and led to higher living standards. This is clearly visible in the quality of their dwelling-houses and in their general lifestyle, which approached that of the bourgeois middle classes. The peasants also devised their own distinctive forms of cultural expression, as for example their folk costumes.<sup>7</sup>

Ambitious on behalf of their children, the freeholders were generally ardent supporters of elementary school reforms which were introduced in

5 P. Aronsson, *Bönder gör politik. Det lokala självstyret som social arena i tre Smålandssocknar 1680–1850* (Malmö, 1992), p. 316.

6 C. Winberg, *Grenverket. Studier rörande jord, släktskapssystem och ståndsprivilegier* (Lund, 1985), p. 1.

7 P. O. Christiansen, 'Peasant Adaptation to Bourgeois Culture? Class Formation and Cultural Redefinition in the Danish Countryside', *Ethnologia Scandinavia* (1978).



all countries during this period. They also sent their children to the folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*), a peculiarly Scandinavian institution with its roots in Denmark which emerged in this period as an expression of the farmers' struggle for emancipation, and which aimed at inculcating useful practical knowledge rather than the prevalent classical erudition of the Latin schools. An increasing number of farmers, however, sent their sons to the universities, usually for theological studies, the first stage in upward social mobility.<sup>8</sup>

An important, although at least initially indirect and unconscious role in the emancipation of the farmers was played by the religious revivalist movements which appeared in the nineteenth century all over Scandinavia as a reaction to the dominant rationalism of the established churches. One of these was the Haugean movement in Norway, named after the founding preacher Hans Nielsen Hauge, himself a farmer, who organised a network of 'friends' all over the country, not only for religious purposes but also for economic activities like farming and local industries. Haugeanism was strictly fundamentalist and represented a popular revivalist counterculture in opposition to the rationalistic clergy and, moreover, to the whole establishment. It combined a strong conservatism in theological matters with a populist radicalism in worldly affairs, an attitude not uncommon among peasant politicians in Norway in the middle of the nineteenth century, many of whom were active Haugeans.<sup>9</sup>

The situation with Grundtvigianism in Denmark was rather different. Its founder, Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, poet and clergyman, at first appeared as a champion of orthodoxy against rationalism, but later he gave up fundamentalism and stressed 'the living word' in creed, preaching and hymns as an expression of the religious consciousness of the church. Grundtvigianism developed further in the direction of theological broadmindedness and cultural optimism. It had its strongest roots among the freeholders in the best farming districts of Denmark, and was closely intertwined with the folk high-school movement. Both movements also exerted an important, though more limited influence in Norway.

Apart from their different theological outlooks, all revivalist movements were built on the activity of laymen who were expected to think and act for

8 S. Carlsson, *Bonde, präst, ämbetsman. Svensk ståndscirkulation från 1600 till våra dagar* (Stockholm, 1962).

9 S. Steen, 'Hans Nielsen Hauge og bondereisingen', in S. Steen (ed.), *Tusen års norsk historie. Artikler og avhandlingar av Sverre Steen utg. til hans 60-årsdag* (Oslo, 1958), pp. 109–21; Østerud, *Agrarian Structure*, pp. 230f.

themselves, independent of ecclesiastical authority. They also gave their members a training in organisational technology that could be used as a preparation for later political activities on a local, regional and national level.

As for the political participation of the peasantry, the starting point differed very much from one country to another. Since medieval times the peasants in Sweden and Finland had formed one of the four estates of the *riksdag* and were, in a sense, part of the central authority, though their political influence was rather limited, particularly in comparison with that of the nobility and the royal bureaucracy. During the Swedish period, the Finnish peasants were represented on the same terms as their colleagues from other parts of the realm, a prerogative they lost when, in 1809, they came under Russian absolutist rule.

Norway, in 1814, was granted a more democratic constitution than any European country at the time, which meant, among other things, that freeholders and leaseholders disposed of a potential majority of the votes to parliament (*stortinget*). In Denmark and Iceland, again, the peasants lived until 1849 under an absolutist, though benevolent monarchy.

From these starting points the peasants everywhere increasingly articulated a set of political demands: abolition of mercantilist regulations favouring towns and burghers at the expense of the countryside, equalisation of public burdens (taxes, conscription), restriction of public expenditure for purposes alien to the peasant community (the army, bureaucracy, culture), widening local autonomy and religious freedom, improving primary school systems.

In Sweden, this could be done through the ordinary channels of the political system. Local autonomy was secured through ordinances in 1817, 1843 and 1862 in a way which gave the farmers a decisive vote in most parish assemblies. In the farmers' estate in the *riksdag* the *herrebönder* (farmers of rank) played a prominent role, usually as champions of the liberal cause, and, after a constitutional reform in 1866, *Lantmannapartiet* (the Farmers' Party) dominated the second, popularly elected, chamber for a lengthy period of time.

In Denmark, a peasant movement appeared in the 1840s, demanding among other things that the remnants of villeinage be abolished. Peasants and radical bourgeois intellectuals, the National Liberals, united in 1846 in a *bondevenneselskab* (society of friends of the peasants), a coalition that paved the way for the peaceful democratic revolution in 1849, in which several of the peasants' demands were satisfied. In the 1870s, the peasant-liberal coalition having broken down, the farmers united in a new party, *Venstre*

(the Left), which, in addition to the general demands of the peasants, also took up and even realised, after a protracted struggle, the demand for second chamber parliamentarianism.

In Norway a peasant movement had already got under way in the 1830s. Led by Ole Gabriel Ueland, a schoolteacher from the western and most egalitarian part of the country, the peasants took advantage of their constitutional rights and formed a vigorous opposition group in the *storting*, in coalition with intellectual liberals, e.g. the poet Henrik Wergeland. They combated, above all, the financial demands of the bureaucratic regime but had, at this stage, no ambitions to take over governmental responsibilities themselves. In 1837, however, they scored a great success when carrying a law prescribing popularly elected local and regional assemblies (*formannskapsloven*). In the 1860s, after an interval, the political peasant movement flared up again, and 'societies of friends of the peasants' on the Danish model were formed all over the country. In this later phase, the peasants widened their objectives to include parliamentarianism, and the peasant movement was, in fact, one of the most important prerequisites for the parliamentary breakthrough that took place in 1884.

In Finland, there was no equivalent to the Danish and Norwegian friends of the peasants, nor was there any agrarian party until 1906. But the antagonism between lords and peasants came to the fore even there, initially in the parish assemblies where the peasants sometimes tried to block expensive reforms suggested by clergymen and other persons of rank. When, in 1863, the diet was again convoked, the peasants made up one of four estates, as had been the case in the Swedish period. But only freeholders and some leaseholders had a vote, and the franchise was graded according to landed property, which is why the peasants' estate was, in the first place, representative of the bigger landowners. For most people in the Finnish countryside the language question was probably the most urgent question of equality needing to be addressed. Finnish grammar schools and Finnish instruction at the university were necessary prerequisites for the upward social mobility of the farmers, and it is no wonder that the Fennoman cause found some of its most ardent supporters in the peasants' estate.

### The rural proletariat

The transformation of the peasantry into a class of bourgeois farmers was only one side of the coin. The other side was the rise of a huge rural proletariat below the landed farmers and the consequent social polarisation

of the rural population, a process which has in recent years been the object of much interest on the part of Scandinavian economic and social historians.<sup>10</sup>

The rapid population growth that began in the latter part of the eighteenth century meant first of all an increase in the numbers of members of the lower social classes in the countryside. In Sweden, for instance, they multiplied fourfold in the period between 1751 and 1850, while the landed peasants increased by only 10 per cent. This was not, as has sometimes been assumed, because of a higher fertility rate among poor people, but rather the result of downward social mobility within the peasant population, a process of proletarianisation which over two to three generations separated a rising number of peasants from their means of production. Even if population growth must have played a significant role, proletarianisation now appeared as a complex process in which not only demographic, but also economic, social and ideological factors were at work.

When there was not enough land for each child in a farmer's family, different strategies opened up. One was subdivision of farms, often combined with cultivation of new land. Such divisions were increasingly made possible as remaining legal restrictions were lifted. In some cases peasants' children could stay at the home farm as workers, though at the price of being highly dependent on near relatives. Towards the end of the period emigration to the United States or to Germany might appear an attractive alternative. But the majority of disinherited brothers and sisters sooner or later had to join the rural proletariat, a huge and heterogeneous group.

Not so different from the poorer peasants were the crofters, known in Sweden and Finland as *torppari/torpare*, and in Denmark and Norway as *husmän*. They lived on small plots established on peasant farms or noble manors. The crofter leased his lot in return for duties in money and/or kind to the landowner, sometimes with labour duties as well. In Denmark, where the crofter system developed in parallel with the transition towards peasant freehold, the crofters' labour seems to have replaced the leaseholders' *hoveri* as a source of agricultural labour.<sup>11</sup>

A special category among the crofters were, in Sweden and, up to 1809, in Finland too, the professional soldiers who were supported by the farmers of the neighbourhood with a piece of land which they cultivated when not on

<sup>10</sup> For a survey of Swedish works, see U. Rosén, *Himlajord och handelsvara. Ägobyten av egendom i Kumla socken 1780–1880* (Lund, 1994), pp. 20–35.

<sup>11</sup> Østerud, *Agrarian Structure*, p. 129.

active service. When, in the wake of the Russian conquest in 1809, the Finnish military units were dissolved, these soldier-crofters lost their holdings.

The crofters were gradually replaced by new, still more proletarianised groups like *statare* in the Swedish plains: married agricultural workers at the manors who received most of their wages in kind (*stat*), and whose wives were employed to milk the cows; and *backstugusittare*, cottagers without enough land to support themselves. The latter had only a tiny cottage, perhaps with a potato-plot or a small strip of land where they could keep some pigs and hens. They earned their living as wage-labourers and formed an 'intermittently free labour force' (E. F. Heckscher) that could be exploited at a very low cost. When common land was divided up or when forest rose in value, they were often evicted, and their position was, on the whole, precarious. Nevertheless, they often developed a high degree of inventiveness in order to find subsidiary sources of income, for instance in different forms of handicraft, in charcoal-burning or as migrant seasonal workers. In some regions, e.g. Ångermanland and Västergötland (Sweden), the women above all were active in decentralised home industries like spinning and weaving.<sup>12</sup>

In the wake of proletarianisation there often followed social unrest. For example, the radical movement led by the Norwegian socialist agitator Marcus Thrane around 1850 admittedly originated among the urban proletariat but soon became dominated by crofters, agricultural workers and smallholders above all in the eastern counties and in Trøndelag, areas of sharp class conflict between large freeholders and a numerous rural proletariat.<sup>13</sup> Typically, Thrane identified his principal opponents not so much as being the conservative, bureaucratic government as 'the so-called democrats who are, in fact, aristocrats', i.e. the big farmers.<sup>14</sup>

In Finnish Pohjanmaa (Österbotten), rapid population growth and extreme downward social mobility around 1800 combined with a rich supply of vodka to create a wave of violent criminality whose practitioners are remembered as *puukkojunkkarit* or *knivjunkarna* (knife-fighters).<sup>15</sup> In Sweden, hunger riots and spontaneous strikes seem to have been fairly common phenomena during this period.<sup>16</sup>

12. C. Ahlberger, *Vävarfolket. Hemindustrin i Mark 1790–1850* (Göteborg, 1988).

13. Østerud, *Agrarian Structure*, p. 129.

14. E. Bull, *Sozialgeschichte der norwegischen Demokratie* (Stuttgart, 1969).

15. H. Ylikangas, *Knivjunkarna. Våldskriminaliteten i Sydösterbotten 1790–1825* (Helsingfors, 1985).

16. R. Karlbom, *Hungerupplopp och strejker 1795–1867* (Göteborg, 1967).

In Scandinavia, as in most European societies, the rural proletarians were seen, not unnaturally, as a potential threat to the existing social order. There was a lot of talk about the 'dangerous underclass' and serious public debates on the problem of 'pauperism'.<sup>17</sup>

Social legislation was sometimes used in order to control the poor people, among other things by making it obligatory for them to enter service, and even by trying to limit their numbers. In Iceland, where, up to the 1870s, economic growth was extremely slow, the dominant farmers went so far as to forbid the clergy by law to marry people who were not considered able to support a family.<sup>18</sup>

Faced by the threat from below, the socially and politically better-off farmers drew nearer to the top strata of society, at the same time as the gap between themselves and the proletariat widened. As a consequence, the big and middling Scandinavian farmers who, in the first half of the nineteenth century, had been a pressure group for social change, became more conservative. In 1914, for instance, Swedish farmers demonstrated in favour of King Gustav V in his constitutional conflict with the liberal and social democratic left. In 1918 the Finnish farmers were among the leading supporters of the White side in the civil war, while the crofters, to a certain extent, sided with the Reds, the socialist workers.

In the final analysis, the problem of pauperism was insoluble within the limits of the existing agricultural system as long as there was no sufficient outlet for the surplus of labour. The only solution for the rural proletariat lay in their disappearance as a distinct social group, and their transformation into ordinary smallholders. In the second half of the century this became reality, in the first place by means of emigration from the countryside, either to towns in their own country which were becoming industrialised, or to the United States.<sup>19</sup>

### An embryonic working class

In the period under review, Denmark and Sweden stood on the threshold of industrialism. Norway, Finland and Iceland had not even got that far. Hardly

17 A. Kjellén, 'Den svenska opinionen inför det sociala läget 1846–1848', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 65 (1945).

18 G. A. Gunnlaugsson, 'The Poor Laws and the Family in 19th Century Iceland', in J. Rodgers and H. Norman (eds.), *The Nordic Family: Perspectives on Family Research* (Uppsala, 1985).

19 Bull, *Sozialgeschichte*, pp. 35, 53f.

anywhere were there traces of a working class of the later type, united by a common culture, common interests and a feeling of fundamental conflict with the employers. But there were of course groups of different professional traditions, both in the countryside and in the growing cities, that performed manual work in return for a wage. They comprised a broad spectrum from journeymen and apprentices in the various trades through miners, manufacturers and lower civil servants to seamen and servants in other people's households.

Around 1800, most workers in these groups lived under paternalistic conditions, but there also seems to have been a tendency towards capitalistic, cash-nexus relations between employers and workers in different fields. This is especially the case in the manual trades, above all in bricklaying and carpentry, where the journeymen were already permanent wage-labourers by the beginning of this period, with only slight prospects of becoming masters. In other crafts too, particularly in the bigger cities, there was a tendency towards an increase in the proportion of journeymen marrying and forming their own households, while apprentices of low social origins saw their chances of advancement more or less disappear. A rising number of craftsmen never reached mastership and had to choose between remaining journeymen or leaving the craft altogether.<sup>20</sup>

In this way, the ground was prepared for a real working class within the craft. In several Swedish towns associations sprang up around 1850 under the name of 'unions of workers', in which artisans played a prominent role. The use of the word 'worker' in this connection indicates a wider identification than with journeymen alone.<sup>21</sup> In the formative phase of the labour movement, craftsmen who, during their travels in other countries had become acquainted with socialist ideas, were often leaders. The first Norwegian trade unions' board contained, for instance, a tailor, a carpenter, a tanner, a painter and a mechanic.<sup>22</sup> The first Swedish trade union, founded in 1869, organised bricklayers in Stockholm, and the founder of the Social Democratic movement, August Palm, was a tailor.<sup>23</sup> Journeymen were, however, also important in the liberal labour movement of the 1860s and 1870s.<sup>24</sup>

20 E. Bull, 'Håndverkssvenner og arbeiderklasse i Kristiania. Sosialhistoriske problemer', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 45 (1966), pp. 89–113; I. Bull, *Håndverk i omdaning. Håndverksforhold i Trondheim 1850–1900* (Trondheim, 1979); L. Edgren, *Lärning, gesäll, mästare. Hantverk och hantverkare i Malmö 1750–1847* (Lund, 1987).

21 Edgren, *Lärning, gesäll, mästare*, p. 297.      22 Bull, *Sozialgeschichte*, p. 63.

23 L.-A. Norborg, *Sveriges historia under 1800- och 1900-talen*, 4th edn (Stockholm, 1995), p. 61.

24 Edgren, *Lärning, gesäll, mästare*, p. 301.

In manufacturing, the period was characterised by a rather slow and tentative transition from a proto-industrial phase based on out-putting to large-scale mill production. Around 1850, in southern Norway by the Glomma estuary and on the Bothnian coast in northern Sweden near Sundsvall, there emerged a sawmill industry which attracted huge crowds of unskilled workers who were separated from their original environment and housed in temporary accommodation. These first groups of industrial workers, however, did not yet form a class 'by itself' (E. P. Thompson). Later research has, for instance, indicated that in the textile industries in the district of Mark, western Sweden, the workers at the beginning of the twentieth century still to a large extent adhered to traditional religious and conservative values and rejected socialist ideas.<sup>25</sup>

### The social elites

If, finally, we ask who the 'ruling class' were in the period under review, the answer will be: life in the Danish countryside, before the emancipation of the peasants, was dominated by the landed nobility whose authority over the leaseholders was judicial and administrative as well as economic. The agricultural reforms of the eighteenth century, however, implied the dissolution of the manors as judicial and administrative units. Nevertheless, the c. 600 big landowners were still the leading social group in rural society, and the occupants of high political posts in the central administration were, as a rule, recruited from their ranks. Even in the capital, København – with its 100,000 or so inhabitants, the only really big city in Scandinavia at the time – the higher nobility around the court traditionally made up the top stratum of society. Along with the aristocracy, there were the rich merchants, the shipowners, the bankers and the industrialists, all of them prominent in economic and social life. But it was characteristic of the age that these financial magnates more often crowned their careers by acquiring magnificent manor-houses in the countryside.

Sweden and Finland started out with a system of estate privileges prescribed by law. The nobility were in the lead by virtue of exclusive rights to ownership of tax-free land as well as to higher civil and military offices. In the *riksdag* they were by far the most influential of the four estates, while the second place belonged to the Lutheran clergy.

<sup>25</sup> C. Winberg, *Fabriksfolket. Textilindustrin i Mark och arbetarrörelsens genombrott* (Göteborg, 1989).



This system was gradually dissolved by a process of estate equalisation (*ståndsutjämning*) which began soon after the end of the Great Northern War in 1721, and was concluded by a parliamentary reform in 1866 which deprived the nobility of its last important prerogative, the right to be represented by a separate estate. (What was left was the right to be executed by sword.) By then the nobility had long since lost their exclusive rights to land and offices, and their shares of tax-free land and high office had diminished over a long span of years.<sup>26</sup>

As in Denmark, however, the nobility kept much of its former reputation and influence and for a long time held key positions in the agencies of government and the armed forces. The first commoner prime minister, Carl Johan Thyselius, was appointed as late as 1883. Closely allied to the higher nobility were groups of wholesale dealers, above all in Stockholm and Göteborg.

As economic progress continued in the towns and, not least, in the countryside, the middle classes grew gradually stronger. In this heterogeneous group were reckoned to be entrepreneurs of different kinds like foundry proprietors, mill owners, wholesale merchants in domestic industries, better-off craftsmen and tradespeople, but also professional people like doctors, lawyers, journalists and other intellectuals. Between this group and the aristocracy there was a natural tension. Even if there was never complete political unanimity within the bourgeois estate, the general trend in the middle classes was liberal and implied a critical attitude to aristocratic and clerical privileges as well as to mercantilist regulations.

In the latter part of the century one can see the contours of a new social elite, formed by a fusion between the aristocracy and the big entrepreneurs in industry, wholesale trade and banking. This group not only disposed of the real and financial capital of the industrialising society but could, thanks to the Parliament Act of 1866, administer the bourgeois state apparatus as well. As a rule, they adhered to a liberal *laissez-faire* ideology in which certain conservative, nationalist and religious elements were smoothly assimilated. As the old antagonism between conservatism and radical middle-class liberalism faded away, a powerful conservative establishment took shape, capable of defending its class interests against the well-organised farmers and, above all, against the imminent threat from the workers. Through its majority in the

26 S. Carlsson, *Ståndssamhälle och ståndspersoner 1700–1865. Studier rörande det svenska ståndssamhällets upplösning*, 2nd edn (Lund, 1973).

first chamber since 1866, it was able to operate a veto on any bill, and members of the government were regularly chosen from its ranks.

Norway, finally, stands out as an exception to the general Scandinavian model, in so far as, for geographical and historical reasons, it had never had a dominant land-owning nobility. What was left of the nobility had been abolished by a *storting* decision in 1821. Nor was the bourgeoisie very strong, above all not in the depressed years after the Napoleonic Wars. In place of these groups, the civil servants stood ready to fill the position of ruling class. It has been said that 'Before 1814, the civil servants governed Norway in the name of the king; after 1814 the same people governed the realm in the name of the people.'<sup>27</sup> They dominated not only the central administration but the *storting* as well. As the basis of their position was the Eidsvoll constitution of 1814, they vigorously defended it against any encroachments by the king and any attempt at amalgamation between Norway and Sweden. It was mostly thanks to them that Norway never came to be governed from Stockholm but, from 1814, became an independent state. They also played an active role in the modernisation of the country, promoted railway building and abolished mercantilist regulations in the spirit of economic liberalism.

However, when in the 1860s Johan Sverdrup, as leader of a majority of the *storting* based on peasants and urban liberals, put forward a demand for parliamentarianism, the civil servants, being convinced of their own competence and civic spirit, refused to yield. A conflict broke out that might well have led Norway into a civil war. The opponents, however, reached a peaceful solution in 1884 which implied at one and the same time the breakthrough of parliamentarianism and the capitulation of the civil servants as a ruling class.<sup>28</sup>

27 See S. Steen, *Det frie Norge*, 1–5 (Oslo, 1951–62).

28 Bull, *Sozialgeschichte*, pp. 9–21.

## Social reactions at different levels

TORKEL JANSSON

### The growth of a 'public opinion'

There was not a total absence of communication in the Nordic states before 1800, but the exchange of views that took place was based on corporations and often dictated from above to a much greater extent than it would be the case after the turn of the century. The various guilds and the growing 'societies' of the towns provided natural forums for internal discussion and for contact with other practitioners of the same occupation both in other parts of the country and abroad. Rural society was characterised by a similar spirit. Arable land had still not been divided into consolidated holdings and was therefore largely farmed jointly by village communities, a state of affairs that made consultation and co-operation imperative. The right of the common people to lay their grievances before 'the good monarchs' created some sort of dialogue with the highest authorities in the land, who also sent commissions out to the remotest corners of the two kingdoms in order both to maintain control and to communicate with their subjects.

However, there were certain differences between Denmark and Sweden and they were largely still apparent after 1809 and 1814. The Swedish state had never crushed, or rather had never succeeded in crushing, independent local government in the towns and the countryside of Finland and Sweden. As a result, those who were burghers or who owned their land had always enjoyed quite a lot of power and authority in the local community. This in its turn had meant that the common man had possessed little opportunity to influence events in rich agricultural areas in which there were large estates and many tenants. However, in areas where freeholding farmers predominated, the parish meetings at which most social questions could be discussed were sometimes attended by hundreds of people. As many sorely tried pastors observed, the discussions at these meetings were often 'surprising and shapeless', and the pastor frequently had to give way to the views of

the farmers. The minutes of parish meetings often record that ‘the pastor suggested . . . , but the meeting decided. . . ’.

It was of great significance in Sweden-Finland that the foremost representative of the state in the local community, the state-church pastor, who chaired parish meeting *ex officio*, was elected in the vast majority of cases by those entitled to attend parish meetings, and they were called, quite correctly, a sort of ‘middle estate’ (*medelstånd*) because of this dual function as the servant of both the state and the people. The four estates of the realm continued to be summoned to meetings of parliament, to *riksdagar*, even under Gustavian absolutism – though the role of the *riksdag* after the overthrow in 1772 of the parliamentary regime that had governed Sweden for the previous fifty years was to legitimate decisions made by the crown rather than to take decisions itself. In contrast, the social sphere had been circumscribed in the Oldenburg state to a quite different extent after the introduction of an absolutist system of government in the seventeenth century. There were no parliamentary institutions of any kind, and local communities were dominated by two individuals both appointed by the state: the bailiff and the pastor. The latter was undeniably in contact with his flock, but he received his orders from above.

This state of affairs did not change overnight simply because the two old states of the Nordic region gave way to four distinct political units, even if there was an awareness that the old corporate society was undergoing a process of ‘atomisation’ – to quote a word used at the time – and that a new ‘national association’ needed to be created in its place by and among the citizens. By employing the term ‘national association’, contemporaries captured two essential new ingredients in society: the goal was to create a nation, which ought to be allowed to expand at the expense of the state, and the means was the association, which had to be based on forms of individual membership that transcended the old corporations. The men capable of sustaining the public debate which it was believed would serve to unify the nation were still in short supply, but the concept of a public debate was welcome – albeit within limits, which varied from country to country – even in the highest quarters as a means of obtaining information and know-how in an age of perplexity.

Change was least marked in the truncated Sweden of the years after 1809. The coup d’état of 1809 was succeeded by a return to constitutional forms within the old framework, which involved both a balance of power between the executive (the king and the government) and the four-estate *riksdag* and freedom of the press – a freedom which Karl XIV Johan often did what he

could to circumscribe in both the kingdoms he ruled. Despite the survival of old forms, a new age had nonetheless dawned – an age in which ‘no day passed without the appearance of a new pamphlet’ and in which it was possible to breathe again. The powers-that-be sometimes felt as if they were sitting on a volcano which was about to erupt and that their task would be to direct the flow of lava as best they could.

In Norway, where the post-revolutionary *storting* had played a part in abolishing the legal status of nobility as early as 1821, political influence was based on a system of individual representation and individual suffrage which gave the vote to civil servants, the burghers of the towns and farmers who owned their land – about 5–7 per cent of the total population. Within this parliament, various groups, above all the farmers, fought for a quarter of a century for a system of independent local government guaranteed by law.

When Alexander I ‘raised Finland to the ranks of the nations’ in 1809 at the meeting of the four Finnish estates at Porvoo (Borgå), he felt obliged to endorse the constitutional framework provided by the Swedish constitution of 1772 as amended by the Act of Union and Security of 1789. They became the fundamental laws of Finland for the whole period until Finnish independence just over a century later, and this meant that, in contrast to the Poles in 1815, the Finns did not enjoy their constitutional rights merely by the emperor’s grace. It was for the emperor/grand duke to determine when and if the estates would be summoned, but he was forced to show respect for all the organs of the state in Finland and for the long-established right of local communities to manage their own affairs. However, Alexander had no need to give such assurances to the growing civic ‘societal free sphere’, which had both been small and relatively confined between 1772 and 1809 and whose rights were not enshrined in old Swedish law. As a result, Finnish society for a long time remained comparatively untouched by the sort of ‘associative’ tendencies that produced established organisations.

Private societies were banned in 1822. After the Decembrist uprising, the ban became more severe and closed student meetings were prohibited. The censor was active throughout the 1820s in ferreting out objectionable literature, and a series of investigations around 1830 into the reading societies that had emerged led to their suppression. In this climate, it was natural for a liberal Hegelian like Johan Vilhelm Snellman, the father of the Finnish national movement, who had lived in both Sweden and Germany, to try and rouse the people by encouraging them to exploit state institutions that were both inviolable and inaccessible to external interference. He did this through the book he published in Stockholm in 1842, *Läran om staten* (‘The Doctrine of the

State'), which caused some displeasure in St Petersburg. It was just as natural for Erik Gustaf Geijer in Sweden to seek to rouse the people by using voluntary associations – a matter he discussed in *Om vår tids inre samhällsförhållanden* ('The Internal Condition of Society in Our Time'), which appeared in 1844.

In contrast to Sweden, Oldenburg absolutism had been enshrined in law since 1665 and at least on paper it was the most complete form of absolutism in Europe. In practice too, the Danish state tried to live by autocratic principles. The Swede Geijer, who had since childhood witnessed the proceedings of open parish meetings at which debate was free and wide-ranging, observed when he visited Denmark for the first time in 1825 that the Danes were a pleasant but 'politically dead' people. The freedom of the press which had been encouraged during the period of reform of the last two decades of the eighteenth century was curtailed in 1799, and that last remnant of popular election in local communities, the Icelandic *hreppstjóri*, was turned into a civil servant of the crown ten years later.

However, as the Danish state had realised since the eighteenth century, an absolutist regime in practice required contact and economic help if it was to solve social problems. As a result, early in the nineteenth century a relatively small number of so-called *bedste mænd* (literally 'best men') began to be appointed to assist the pastor, who was, of course, ordained by the state, in dealing with the problems associated with poor relief (1803) and schooling (1814). This marked the beginning of a process which would involve an ever-increasing number of well-to-do Danes, above all from the expanding class of freeholding farmers, in a relationship which linked the state to society. Since 1780, the various clubs that had emerged in the towns had been under the supervision of the state-appointed mayors – though it may be doubted whether this supervision was very strict, since these bodies were usually led by civil servants.

The July Revolution of 1830 led to increased demands from the bourgeoisie in Scandinavia too for greater influence and an enhanced role. In the Oldenburg state, which consisted of the kingdom of Denmark, the 'dependencies' of Iceland and the Føroyar (Faroes) and the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (to which the *Ländchen* of Lauenburg was added in 1815), the primary source of these demands was Holstein. The king of Denmark was also duke of Holstein, but the duchy belonged to the German Confederation, and it had been stipulated at the Congress of Vienna that all members of the confederation should give some form of representation to the different estates of society.

In contrast to the kingdom of Sweden, the Oldenburg monarchy had never been a centralised, unitary state with a unified central administration, a common code of laws and a single organ of popular representation. The Danish king and the council of state which he had regularly consulted since 1814 were therefore all too ready to listen to the advice of Emperor Nicholas I and Prince Metternich that four separate consultative assemblies should be set up (for the Danish islands, the portion of Jylland that belonged to the kingdom of Denmark, Schleswig and Holstein) so as to impede the development of national consciousness and the pretensions that tended to accompany it. As a result, four such assemblies began to meet from 1835–6 onwards at Roskilde, Viborg, Schleswig and Itzehoe (the Icelandic *Alþingi* and the Føroyar *lagting* were reanimated and given the same functions as the assemblies on the mainland in 1845 and 1852 respectively).

Political opinion had thus been created in an age still characterised by the strict censorship in force since 1799, and one of the first demands these assemblies put forward, and it was a demand that was accepted in Denmark proper, was for elected institutions of local government. Such institutions were established for the market towns in 1837 and for rural communities in 1841. The lower strata in society were given no greater influence in these bodies than anywhere else in the Nordic region. The legal position regarding local government had been so complicated in the two duchies since time immemorial that no uniform system of local government was ever established while they remained under Danish rule (until 1864). This state of affairs illustrates the point of Lord Palmerston's immortal remark about conditions south of the Kongeå, the river which divided the kingdom of Denmark from the duchy of Schleswig:

Only three men have ever understood the question. One was the duke of Augustenburg, and he is dead. The second was a German professor, and he has gone mad. The third is myself, and I have long since forgotten what I knew.

These were the conditions, which were similar in all the Nordic countries in some respects and very different in others, under which civicism – the notion of the citizen which had its roots in the Enlightenment and, to a lesser or greater extent, in an idealistic philosophy – took root and evolved into something which could be put to real use. If we look at the Nordic countries as a whole, this development turned into an exciting 'triangular drama' involving the state, the organs of local government and private associations. Despite the differences between Karl XIV Johan's isolated constitutionalist

peninsula in the north and the absolutist system in Denmark and the tight rein the Russian authorities maintained in the east, the state was confronted in all four Nordic countries by essentially the same problem: how to emancipate it from obligations for which it no longer wished to take responsibility and how it was to cope with new tasks. All four often wanted to be 'night-watchman states', largely organised in order to administer agrarian societies, but they now had to come to grips with a new age.

There was, of course, great variety in the conditions under which the new press that emerged alongside the old news-sheets had to function. *Det Norske Nationalblad* started to appear as early as 1815. It was inspired by British models and saw its task as being to provide an oppositional counterweight to the power of the executive. In Sweden, the liberal organ *Aftonbladet* arrived on the scene in 1830. It had at times to struggle against the government's 'power of confiscation' in relation to printed material, but it still represented the dawning of a new era though it had two rather clumsy predecessors in *Anmärkaren* of 1816 and *Argus* of 1820.

In Denmark, both *Kjøbenhavnsposten* (1827) and *Fædrelandet* (1834) had to do battle with the censor, who also tried to prevent the importation of above all Norwegian newspapers. In 1835, the same year as the consultative assemblies met for the first time, these clashes with the censor led to a petition about freedom of the press and to the foundation of *Selskabet til Trykkefrihedens rette Brug* (the Society for the Correct Use of Freedom of the Press).

In Finland, Adolf Ivar Arwidsson – the man who coined the slogan 'Let us be Finns!' – was inspired by the way a civic spirit was developing in Sweden to found *Åbo Morgonblad* in 1821, but it was soon closed down by the authorities and Snellman's *Saima* had only been in existence for two years when it met the same fate in 1846. Nonetheless, these were newspapers whose pages contained articles debating the whole range of questions affecting society. The first Finnish-language newspaper, *Suometar*, appeared in 1847. Mention should also be made in this connection of *Finska litteratursällskapet* (*Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura*, the Finnish Literary Society), which was established in 1831 and which had its roots in the so-called *Lördagssällskapet* (the Saturday Society). It was founded and led by senior civil servants and its primary goal was to publish good literature for a Finnish-language readership.

An attempt was also made on Ahvenanmaa (the Åland islands) in 1868 to establish a newspaper by Frans Petter von Knorring, a clergyman who engaged in a wide range of economic and cultural activities. The experiment was short-lived, but it demonstrates that von Knorring, without being aware



of it, was preparing the ground for a distinct Åland identity within Finland. Given the nature of the relationship between state and society in Finland, the forces of the new age made great use of civil servants – a group that was strongly attacked elsewhere, for example in Norway, by the representatives of those forces. In 1816, *Hið Íslenska Bókmenntafélag* (the Icelandic Literary Society), which had been preceded by a number of reading clubs, was founded as a means of promoting the Icelandic language and the country's medieval literature both at home and in Icelandic circles in København.

### The new society takes shape: state-authorised societies

In view of how deeply society was permeated by religion, both ideologically and in practice through the role of the state church in everyday life, it is hardly surprising that the earliest questioning of the prevailing order of things was manifested at the religious level. This questioning was based on the belief that something had gone wrong with the Faith that had been handed down for so many generations and with the way in which it was practised, and it appeared both at the highest levels of society and among ordinary people at around the same time.

Pietistic revivalism occurred throughout the Nordic region in those parts of the countryside where the farmers were sufficiently strong to sustain the movement, and it often created an element of tension between traditional peasant culture and emerging rationalistic, bourgeois attitudes. The most notable examples are provided by the Haugean movement in Norway, which had its roots in eighteenth-century developments, and the movement founded in Denmark in the 1820s by Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig. The latter in particular ascribed a central place in his 'programme' to fostering individuals capable of playing a useful role in society – he believed that individuals should be 'a human being first and a Christian second' (the exact opposite of the line adopted by the Danish Home Mission movement in 1883). An important difference among the Nordic countries, especially during later stages of the process when social differentiation was further advanced, was that Swedish and Finnish freeholders had the right to elect the local pastor, whereas pastors were ordained by the state in Denmark and Norway. This difference played a significant part in determining both the social profile of revivalism and the forms it assumed. Why should farmers who had themselves elected the pastor/local political leader turn against him? This only happened, and it did on occasion, when they wanted to win him over to the revivalist cause.

There were similar efforts in the higher echelons of society to come to terms with growing absence of accepted norms, and important impulses were also received from Britain, the country which was the source of most of the new ideas about the organisation of society during this period. It can quite simply be said that the British and Foreign Bible Society was the father of all the Bible societies founded in the Nordic region during the second decade of the nineteenth century. Moreover, it was in the more economically developed Britain that large editions of the Bible were printed for use in the Nordic countries, even if the omission of the *Apochrypha* appalled many traditionalist Nordic Christians. The creation of 'women's Bible societies', whose membership was drawn from among the women of the new bourgeoisie and which assumed the task of disseminating Bibles to every corner of the land, should be seen as one of the seeds from which the emancipation of women would eventually grow.

British influence continued to be of central importance even after it was realised that the message contained in the Bible was not enough to solve problems which were not of a purely religious character. Especially in Norway and Sweden, the name of one British 'society' after another was rapidly translated into the language of the country as a Nordic counterpart was established. The question of schooling for the mass of the people appeared on the agenda at an early stage. The savings bank movement was launched in the 1820s as a direct attempt to deal with the growing problem of pauperism, a problem which each of its victims had to face as an individual, not as a member of a corporation. Once a proper system of independent local government was established in all the Nordic countries in both the towns and the countryside, it was common for the organs of local government to give their support to savings banks, and the foundations on which the latter were built were often the former grain magazines maintained in almost all localities, which were now 'realised', i.e. sold. Great hopes were also placed on what philanthropy could achieve: members of the royal families in the Nordic region were often the titular leaders of philanthropic bodies, and once again a central role was played by women of high social rank.

The potato was not only a means of feeding more mouths; it also rapidly became popular as the basic ingredient in the growing distillation of aquavit, which in its turn led to a debate about whether the right 'to distill for domestic consumption' should be abolished. Legislation removing this right was enacted in Norway in 1842, in Sweden in 1855, and in Finland in 1866. It is hardly surprising if we compare the effects of alcohol abuse in an agrarian culture where the peasant ploughed the soil alone with its consequences in a

growing, increasingly mechanised industrial environment or in an agrarian system based on rationalised, large-scale agriculture that the first temperance societies often emerged under the leadership of large landowners and among factory owners in industrialised areas during the 1820s and 1830s. As was normally the case, the impulse for organisational innovation came from the west across the North Sea: it is typical that the Swedish temperance movement was initiated by Samuel Owen, a British industrialist active in Stockholm.

In the 1830s the American Presbyterian clergyman Robert Baird began to travel around Europe to spread the word about the temperance societies established in the United States. He always went straight to the top, but the reception he was given there varied greatly from country to country. He got nowhere at the imperial court in St Petersburg – written undertakings to refrain from the consumption of alcohol could easily be interpreted as a secret conspiracy among his subjects by an emperor who was afraid of shadows, and had little appeal to noblemen who distilled vodka themselves. In København, the king's advisors told Baird that members of the royal family would find it difficult to place themselves at the head of non-state organisations, even if they regarded sobriety as such as a worthy cause. Despite this reaction from the court, the supporters of temperance were active in the lands ruled by the Danish crown – including Iceland, whose inhabitants lived under the same restrictions as in Denmark and who, as usual, were much influenced by the attitudes of Icelanders resident in København.

Baird encountered a more receptive reaction, both as regards to the essential idea and to the means by which it should be pursued, in Stockholm. He had hardly crossed the threshold of the royal palace before Karl XIV Johan had conferred on him one of Sweden's most prestigious decorations, *Illis quorum meruere labores* (To those whose work will live on). Before long, more than 100,000 Swedes and Norwegians had joined, cheerfully or against their will, *Svenska nykterhetssällskapet* (the Swedish Temperance Society) or *Den norske Forening mod Brændeviinsdrik* (the Norwegian Association against the Consumption of Aquavit), which were founded in 1837 and 1845 respectively. At the local level, these organisations were often led by the clergy and other people in authority. By accepting honorary membership, the king and the state drew closer to society in a fashion that would prove decisive for the future.

However, agreements to refrain from alcohol consumption were sometimes also entered into without directives from above. Such agreements

were often concluded at the parish meetings that played a significant part in the life of the local community in Sweden and Finland. In the case of Finland, this naturally served as an important corrective to the general hostility of the state towards associations. Similar local initiatives also occurred at the 'parish societies' which existed in Norway even before independent local government was restored and which were supported by *Selskabet for Norges Vel* (the Society for Norway's Welfare), a body founded in 1809. These local agreements ultimately led to the creation of an umbrella organisation built up from below, *Det norske Afholdenhedsselskab* (the Norwegian Temperance Society) of 1844. The missionary society was also built up from below in Norway, while its Swedish and Danish counterparts were under a considerably higher degree of control by the state church.

It is hardly surprising that the absolute kings of Denmark were no more inclined than the autocrat of Russia (the grand dukes of Finland) to accept voluntary organisations. The consequences of this attitude are more interesting. One was that religious revivalism and other moral questions like temperance were kept at arm's length by the state church and other organs of the state. In other words, ideological developments were adapted to the prevailing circumstances. The Danish tradition, which exercised a strong influence in Norway too despite the events of 1814 and which produced parallels even in south-western Sweden, led to the development of Lutheran ideas about man's direct relationship with his Creator. This is why the assurances given in connection with membership of temperance societies were sometimes seen as smacking of 'monastic vows and popery'. Similar arguments were heard in Finland too, though others were irritated that people were allowed to gather in taverns but not in order to read the Bible together.

It should also be noted that Karl XIV Johan was not in general a liberal initiator in either Norway or Sweden. He was happy to discuss matters of state with the emperor in St Petersburg, who reminded him, when Karl XIV Johan complained about the activities of his subjects/citizens, that 'after one has given constitutions to one's peoples, it is necessary to observe them properly'; but it is striking that at the same time he and his advisors were sending Norwegian and Swedish civil servants to Britain to explore alternative solutions to the problems affecting society. The year 1833 provides a telling example of how different the climate was in Sweden and Denmark: while the governor of Stockholm, in one of his regular reports to the government, expressed regret that he had not mentioned all the voluntary charitable organisations founded and run by inhabitants of the capital, the

crown prince of Denmark and the minister of the interior held secret discussions about the possibility of establishing a voluntary association as a means of reducing the level of destitution in København.

Many traditional norms were maintained in the associations established between 1810 and 1840, but it should be remembered that the liberalism of the bourgeoisie was still on the offensive in the sense that it made practical use of new, non-corporate forms and that this aroused or prompted a new civic spirit. These associations were therefore an important element in the nation-building process – a point underlined by the fact that during the ninety years when Norway and Sweden were united under the same crown not a single association which covered both countries was set up. A new age was dawning. Despite the ordinance of 1780 concerning clubs, Orla Lehmann in Denmark and Jón Sigurðsson in Iceland were able to argue during the early 1840s that ‘the silence of the law’ could be interpreted as meaning that everything was permitted which was not explicitly forbidden.

### The new society takes shape: the first voluntary associations among the lower strata of society

The ‘authorised’ associations established during the first decades of the nineteenth century intervened in most areas of social life, albeit to a differing extent and with differing results in the four Nordic countries. However, developments in the 1840s would show that these bodies, this first attempt by members of the new individualistic society to organise themselves, were insufficient and that more was required.

The reintroduction of independent local government in Denmark and Norway in the form of small, elected representative bodies paved the way for the emergence of new associations within the agrarian sector, which was still the overwhelmingly dominant element in Nordic society. Associations open to freeholding farmers, tenants and crofters whose leadership was democratically elected and which focused primarily on local government issues came into being at the same time as the newspaper *Almuevennen* (‘The Countryman’s Friend’), which was founded in 1842. The following year, the great landowners formed their own counterweight, *Godsejerforeningen* (the Estate Owners’ Association), which rapidly became a powerful factor in both local and regional affairs.

The continuing struggle of the peasantry against privilege and leasehold tenancies and in favour of better schooling, universal military service and free enterprise was manifested most markedly by the foundation in 1846 of

*Bondevennernes Selskab* (the Society of the Friends of the Peasantry). It had soon recruited 10,000 members and did not allow itself to be deflected by the so-called 'peasant circular' of 1845 which prohibited general meetings of the common people. The way was open for co-operation between this group and the national liberals of the towns.

The link between the new organs of local government and the new associations was just as clear in Norway, though in this case, of course, no association representing large landowners was formed – for obvious reasons. The essential point, at least in the earlier stages, was that the system worked; the farmer was able to enrol the whole of his household in the local countryman's association, and it was not unknown for the leadership of this association to be elected at a local government meeting – the clear distinction drawn today between private and public bodies was not yet entirely in place at this time.

There were no elected organs of local government in Iceland, and the associations and reading clubs formed by farmers sympathetic to the cause of temperance were primarily concerned with securing purely material improvements in agriculture. However, from 1848 onwards it was possible to debate domestic social questions in the pages of the newspaper *Þjóðalfur*. In organisational terms, the peasants had ceased to be pure objects and had through their associations become subjects.

Countryman's associations were not formed in Sweden and Finland, and the explanation is both simple and worth remembering: freeholding farmers had their local parish meetings where most matters of importance to them could be discussed, and at the national level parliament included an estate which represented them (though in the case of Finland, this second advantage was more a question of theory than practice until 1863). When an enthusiastic urban liberal in Göteborg arranged a 'meeting of friends of the farmers' a little later, only Danes and Norwegians attended; the Swedes were unable to understand what the whole thing was about. As for women, these new associations did not provide them with any sort of independent role.

It was perfectly clear by the 1840s that the days of the guild system were numbered. New legislation about the handicrafts and commerce was enacted in Norway in 1839 and 1842 respectively (and later revised during the 1850s and 1860s); freedom to engage in any occupation and to trade without restriction was introduced in Sweden in 1846 and 1864 respectively; and there were similar reforms in Denmark in 1857 and 1862 and in Finland in 1868. Those who were without property had no more opportunity of exerting an influence on events in the towns than they had in the countryside, and in the

discussions and practices which accompanied the increasing differentiation between trades ideas were borrowed widely from abroad.

The thinking of Saint-Simon, Cabet, Proudhon, Fourier, Schulze-Delitzsch, Marx and others all played a role in this respect. From 1845 onwards educational associations sprang up in Stockholm and other large Swedish towns, and self-education and self-help naturally occupied a central place among their goals. However, the impatience of those who were discontented with the prevailing order of things also led as early as 1847 to the formation of the much more radical *Skandinaviska sällskapet* (the Scandinavian Society) led by Per Götrek, which may be described as representing a form of 'artisans' communism'. It was in these circles that the Communist Manifesto was translated into Swedish in 1848 – with the title 'The Voice of Communism'.

In Denmark, artisans had been forbidden in 1835 to visit certain foreign countries (the source of most new ideas about associations), and this naturally inhibited an interest in establishing associations from below. Nonetheless, *Industriforeningen* (the Industrial Association) of 1838, which wanted to see all restrictions on economic activity removed, its 'counterweight' *Haandværkerforeningen* (the Artisans' Association) set up in 1840 and the petit bourgeois *Haandværkerdannelsesforeningen* (the Artisans' Educational Association) of 1847, which espoused the ideal of class co-operation, must be seen as steps towards the new age.

The dawning of this new age can also be discerned in the growth of Danish national consciousness, especially in the duchies. *Foreningen til Dansk Læsnings Udbredelse* (the Association for the Dissemination of Danish Literature) of 1836, and the Danish-language newspaper *Dannevirke*, which began to appear in Schleswig in 1838, were both manifestations of this process. When Danish gained the status of the language of administration in the northern, Danish-speaking parts of Schleswig in 1841, the foundations were in place for the formation in 1843 of *Den slesvigske Forening* (the Schleswig Association), which was countered the same year by the establishment of the Schleswig-Holstein movement by the German-speakers of the duchies.

As we have seen, Snellman, to take one example, had to proceed very cautiously in Finland in his efforts to revitalise society and create a civic spirit. In 1846 he succeeded in making membership of the Finnish Literary Society open to women and to individuals from the lower classes in society, but he was soon compelled, on the orders of the emperor, to turn it back into a narrowly academic association. This also applied to the literary society established at Viipuri (Viborg) in 1845. The efforts of Elias Lönnrot, the chronicler of the *Kalevala*, during the 1840s to establish the temperance

movement on a firmer basis that was more in accord with common international practice were also unsuccessful.

On the other hand, many voluntary fire brigades were formed on this western periphery of the Russian empire. The idea was a stroke of genius: towns ought not to burn down, the state could not afford to fund the arrangements needed to ensure that they did not, and those in authority were therefore sorely tempted by the alternative of voluntary bodies. However, uncertainties remained: in 1846 the authorities refused to allow the various fire brigades of the capital to elect their own chiefs, and only inhabitants of the city who were assumed to be entirely loyal to the existing system were selected as members of the brigades. Despite such restrictions, the brigades did still provide, naturally enough, an opportunity to gather together and to discuss matters other than how best to fight fires. More general questions were also discussed at the various dance, reading and conversation clubs that were active, and one subject touched upon was the Scandinavianist movement and its occasionally violent Russophobia.

The philanthropic women's associations which sprang up in Scandinavian towns from the mid 1840s onwards are an interesting phenomenon in many respects. As we have seen, their social base lay among the ranks of the growing bourgeoisie, and these women were able to offer their services in the social sphere precisely because they were relieved of the heavy mundane burdens of everyday life. At the same time, the way these women reacted illustrates the point that socio-economic developments nearly always precede mental ones. Women were often frightened of the new form of public sphere and their own role within it, and they asked themselves whether it was compatible with the female nature, which was so closely linked to the natural and intimate spheres of life, to occupy the chair and other posts in a formally constituted association. In the case of Finland, there was a further question: could men be allowed to join these philanthropic associations, thus creating, in the eyes of the state at least, a potential threat to social tranquillity? In Finland women's charitable societies based on voluntary Christian charity had been founded since 1835 in various towns. They were later organised on a nationwide basis as the Finnish Women's Association (1884). This occurred at the same time as women started to be given equal inheritance rights in the 1840s and would ultimately lead to a successful struggle to gain full control over their own lives in law (a process which began in Denmark in 1857 and which was completed in Finland in 1898): the right to own property; the right to attend university, which was achieved in the 1870s and 1880s; equal conditions at work; and the right to vote in local and national elections.



With all due regard to nuances and to the differing pace of change in each Nordic country, it can be said that the second step in the emergence of a society based on private organisations had been taken. Women made an important contribution to this process – often through literature. In Sweden, Fredrika Bremer, who had been born in Finland, attempted after her visit to North America to create a new attitude, for example through the novel she published in 1856, *Hertha*. During the same period Mathilde Fibiger and Camilla Collett were propagating a similar, emancipatory message in Denmark and Norway, while in Finland Fredrika Runeberg stepped out of the shadow of her husband, the national poet Johan Ludvig, in the early 1860s and clothed the liberal ideas she had borrowed from the Swedish writer Carl Jonas Love Almqvist in a form she had derived from the Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen. In Finland there were also other female authors, like Frederika Carsten, Charlotta Falkman and Wendla Randelin.

Regional differences were very apparent in the growth of the civic public sphere during this phase. The national tensions within the duchies and between them and the kingdom of Denmark have already been mentioned, and there were also differences between Jylland and the Danish islands, not least with regard to religious revivalism. South-western Finland, whose focal point was the old university town of Turku (Åbo) had traditionally been Swedish in orientation, which was one of the main reasons why it was decided as early as 1812 that the capital should be moved to Helsinki after the latter had been architecturally refurbished in the style of St Petersburg, and the university followed in 1828.

Eastern Finland, the land of the *Kalevala*, was still quite different from the rest of the country in cultural terms. Later, when the struggle for the heart and soul of the nation became more serious, one of its manifestations would be the dispute over whether eastern or western Finnish should provide the norm for the national language – this tussle was eventually won by western Finnish. The most distinctive part of the grand duchy was the so-called Old Finland, the territory annexed by Russia in 1721 and 1743 and reunited with the rest of Finland in 1812. The focal point of Old Finland was Viipuri, a typical Baltic town through the ages where Swedish, Russian, Finnish and not least German and Jewish cultural elements met and intermingled. One manifestation of the German presence was the German names of the associations set up by German-speakers in the town: they constituted a parallel set of associations, as it were, to those in the rest of Finland.

In Norway, there were differences between Vestlandet, where small-scale agriculture was the norm and where associations which developed from the

bottom up were widespread at an early stage, and Østlandet, which had more large farms and more civil servants and which was dominated during this phase by associations that enjoyed the blessing of Christiania.

The distinct features of south-western Sweden have already been mentioned in connection with religious revivalism. Another important cultural boundary, to which many foreign travellers referred, was the one which divided Norway, Sweden and Finland into southern and northern halves. As someone observed, there were 'no oaks, crayfish or noblemen north of the Dala River'. In Norwegian Vestlandet and in Norrland, the peasantry was much more inclined to organise itself than its southern brethren. The 'authorised' associations like the temperance society were designed to be led by an upper class that did not exist in these northern regions. These were districts where distances were long and where the clergy were already influenced by religious 'reading'. When associations were introduced by pastors elected by their own congregations control promptly passed into the hands of the freeholding farmers.

The districts north of the Arctic circle were thinly populated and they were hardly touched by these manifestations of public opinion. The limited importance of the nation and the nation state for the identity of individuals who lived in these Arctic regions is reflected in the lack of formal organisation that characterised the revivalist movement which was launched in the early 1840s by a Swedish state-church pastor and learned botanist in Lapland, Lars Levi Læstadius, and which spread to adjacent parts of Finnmark and Norway by a quite natural process – and later to Sweden, Finland and even to the United States and Canada. The signs that the emerging nation states of Fenno-Scandia were beginning to construct a minority problem in the 1850s, when it became necessary for national boundaries also to function as economic frontiers, are of interest in relation to the indigenous population of the region, the Sami. In earlier times, it had been natural for Lapps from all the Nordic countries to migrate across frontiers as their economic interests dictated. It had been possible to 'combine' them, as it were – but now, in protectionist national states, governments wanted nations, not combinations.

### Scandinavia and the February Revolution

If we wish to capture the full extent of the effects of the February Revolution on the Nordic region in one sentence, we need only note that Johan Ludvig Runeberg's *Vårt Land* (*Maamme*, 'Our Country'), the future national anthem

of Finland, was sung publicly for the first time in 1848 and that absolutism collapsed in Denmark the same year.

In the case of Denmark, it can be said that the bourgeois ideology which had emerged and flourished during the preceding decades, the ideology of the free public society, became the basis of the state with the fall of absolutism. However, as is so often the case when fundamental change occurs, old alliances did not survive and the socio-political map was redrawn as part of a process of ongoing socio-economic change. The links which *Bondevennernes Selskab* had previously forged with the national liberals could not be sustained when the farmers began instead to develop contacts with the growing radical workmen's associations of the towns which, at least in København, demanded the introduction of a republic, the removal of all restrictions on the freedom to pursue a trade and the organisation of production on a collective basis. At the same time, the great landowners drew closer to the high bourgeoisie of the towns.

Once restrictions on the right to pursue a trade had been lifted, the door was open for the growing working class to organise itself in whatever ways it chose, and this led in the aftermath of the February Revolution to a form of liberalism which was increasingly defensive in comparison with earlier periods and which was represented by men who had once fought for their economic and social positions against the feudal-corporative order. Liberals now needed to conduct a defensive struggle in order to hold on to what they had won, and the goal and the method which the 'liberals of the fifties' pursued was to conquer for themselves the workmen's associations which rapidly sprang up during this period in the 'open' countries of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. They were largely successful in achieving this objective. In Finland liberalism manifested itself on a personal level.

From the 1860s onwards, the spirit of consensus was remarkably dominant in the Nordic region. The word 'worker' was often given a new meaning and came to cover everyone from the director/manager downwards. In a manner reminiscent of how Bible societies had earlier laboured with the notion of an overall educational solution, the 'worker problem' was pronounced solved, provided the 'work class' (not the working class) was formed in a bourgeois way. This strategy was also employed at the Nordic gatherings which began to be held in 1870. On a more mundane level, consumer co-operatives and sickness insurance funds were encouraged, not least in order to neutralise the incipient trade union movement, which the liberals recognised as the primary factor in creating a line of demarcation between capital and labour. The old estates and guilds were gone, but there were still classes, as was later said in

the 1890s when the ideal of consensus had given way to the notion of compromise between distinct groups which recognised each other's existence. In Denmark, when Louis Pio affiliated his socialist movement to the First International in 1871, it was soon entirely crushed by the state.

Despite the limited goals of most of the associations formed among workmen at this time, they still functioned as the nucleus from which the later socialist labour movement would grow. This point is best illustrated by the movement which emerged in Norway in 1848 under the leadership of Marcus Thrane, who derived his inspiration from British Chartism. The economic crisis of the 1840s helped Thrane to gather support from the underrepresented groups in society with remarkable speed in both the towns and the countryside so that his movement soon had about 400 local branches and 30,000 members.

The Thrane movement also reveals the differences between the uses to which the institutions of local government could be put in the two countries which made up the Norwegian-Swedish union. The Thrane movement, which was suppressed by the authorities after a couple of years, was composed in the countryside to a considerable extent of individuals who had been pushed out of participation in local government because of the decline in their economic position. In contrast to the situation in Sweden, they had no opportunity of putting forward their views at parish meetings, and it is therefore perfectly natural that the Thrane movement, which was so heavily based on the countryside, nonetheless sought contact with the workmen's associations of Sweden's towns and cities, which were largely made up of individuals who were also excluded from 'the system'.

When looking at the Norwegian farmers' movement which developed rapidly during the 1860s in the private sector and which was not particularly closely related to the earlier Thrane movement, it is striking that it was so greatly concerned with matters that Swedish and Finnish farmers could discuss at their parish meetings – things like setting up savings banks, insurance companies and other institutions designed to create a social safety net, in addition to anything the state might provide, for themselves and not least the members of their households.

After 1850, it is striking how rapidly Icelandic associations emancipated themselves from clergymen and other persons in authority and developed into genuine civic organisations. The temperance movement established in 1873 to cover the whole of the island drew together social, economic, political and national questions in a manner that was as self-evident as it was natural: its aim was both to reduce the level of alcohol abuse and to give the

Icelanders themselves control over the revenue derived from the distillation and consumption of aquavit.

The growing self-confidence of the farmers was manifested through the establishment of a number of folk high schools. They were very often inspired by Grundtvig's idea that the individual should educate himself and clearly distanced themselves from the traditional ideal of education. The nation that was in the process of forming itself consisted of 'people', and they – women no less than men – needed to be fostered, 'raised', so that they would be proper social beings in everyday life, and the academic 'paper chase' had no place in this process. The Danish folk high-school movement had its roots in the 1840s, but it gained its real impetus through the loss of the duchies in 1864: *Rødding Højskole*, founded in 1844, was moved from Schleswig and renamed *Askov Højskole*, located on the Kongeå so close to the new frontier that one could see 'the lost land' from its buildings, and in some respects it came to serve as a model for the rest of the Nordic region.

The cause of broader political participation was advanced in Denmark by the February Revolution. The effect was the complete opposite in Finland. Individuals who did not belong to a household that was already established in the grand duchy were forbidden to enter the country, and all associations based on ideas rather than purely practical matters had to be registered in 1848. This led in the following year to an ordinance concerning associations which meant that all societal activity of this kind was only permitted with the explicit consent of the state; this ordinance remained in force until 1906. The time-honoured student clubs which, as at Uppsala and Lund, had emerged organically over the years and which grouped students according to their region of origin – 'nations', as they were called – were abolished in 1852 and were not restored until 1867. Restrictions were also imposed on journeymen to move freely.

In the interval, academic youth, which the state needed so much for its informal and organised efforts to foster national consciousness, was obliged to remain within the boundaries imposed by the state-controlled faculties of the Imperial Alexander University in Helsinki, and all chairs in philosophy throughout the Russian empire were abolished in order to prevent the spread of false doctrines. A relaxation only occurred after the liberal-minded Alexander II ascended the throne in 1855. After the abolition of the guilds in 1868, the urban population had, of necessity, to be organised along more voluntary lines. However, the voluntary associations set up to help the lower strata in society were under strict supervision by the state: between 1869 and 1901 their rules and regulations were determined by the emperor and were published in the official Finnish statute-book.

The voluntary fire brigades mentioned earlier ultimately came to be influenced by Garibaldi's exploits, once they could develop properly and be called 'popular associations' in the 1860s, and engaged in weapons training and quasi-military exercises. In all the Nordic countries, the notion of defence in its wider sense of the defence of the nation drew its inspiration from events in Italy. The defence of the state had for centuries been a burden borne by the peasantry, and this was perceived as a strait-jacket in societies that were increasingly influenced by civicism.

In Denmark, the first successful war against Prussia over the duchies between 1848 and 1850, in which Norwegians and Swedes had also served, had shown what 'the brave ordinary soldier' could achieve (from 1849 onwards, he was recruited by universal conscription). It was natural in the rifle clubs that sprang up to demand 'one man, one gun, one vote' – a slogan which passed over the fact that the normal military principle of a chain of command applied to these clubs, even if they had their own, civilian, leaders. The enthusiasts for freedom and economy who were behind the rifle clubs borrowed from Switzerland the idea that each citizen should be armed as an alternative to the expense of maintaining armed forces of the traditional kind. The military machine Bismarck deployed during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1 deprived such ideas of their credibility.

In absolutist Denmark, religious revivalism had of necessity to begin within the state church for obvious reasons, and the natural strategy to pursue after the fall of absolutism was to try and democratise the state church – a realistic goal once the *sognebåndsløsning* (which allowed individuals to leave the state church and to withdraw from membership of their parish if they wished) had been pushed through. This abolition of 'spiritual serfdom', as it was called, meant that individuals within 'the people's church' could establish both free congregations, and congregational councils containing an elected popular element, if they so desired. To some extent, developments in Finland followed a similar pattern. It was naturally more convenient from the point of view of the Russian emperor in St Petersburg if religious revivalism could be kept within the confines of the state church rather than manifest itself through non-state institutions. This is the light in which we should view the church law of 1869 which gave the state church power over itself by endowing it with a management structure of its own. At the same time the law of 1726 concerning conventicles, which had banned all forms of religious worship outside the confines of the Evangelical-Lutheran state church, was rescinded.

The Norwegians had inherited the same ecclesiastical legacy as the Danes, and Norwegian revivalism, which was also inspired by Grundtvig's ideas and

which was particularly pronounced in that region of small-scale farming, Vestlandet, demanded the same freedoms as their brethren in Denmark. This led to a proposal in 1869 that congregational councils with an elected popular element should be established, but the suggestion was turned down by the country's conservative government. However, by this time, a different and strong current of opinion was making itself felt under the leadership of Gisle Johnson, a professor of theology, and he argued that the proper home of revivalism was within the state church, and this had led in 1868 to the establishment of the Luther Foundation, a centrally directed body inside the state church. The Luther Foundation gained most of its support in Østlandet, an area of large-scale agriculture.

Ever since the foundation of the Bible Society in 1815, attempts had been made to reform the 'mummified' – to quote the word used by its critics – Swedish state church as constituted in 1686. For example, George Scott, a sympathiser with Methodism and a friend and compatriot of Owen, the industrialist and temperance advocate whom we came across earlier, was active within the state church in Stockholm after 1830 and played a part in establishing the Missionary Society in 1835. He encountered so much criticism from both high church and liberal quarters that he was obliged to return to his native Scotland in the early 1840s, but his work lived on. The dominant position occupied by bishops within the Bible Society ultimately became untenable, and in 1856 Carl Olof Rosenius, who had been inspired by Scott's ideas and who was the son of a clergyman in Norrland, set up within the state church *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen* (the Evangelical Patriotic Foundation), which also came to serve as a model for the organisation Johnsen set up in Norway a little later. The law banning conventicles was abolished two years later, the first Baptist baptism immediately took place and in 1866 the Swedish Baptist Society was established as a free church, separate from the state church; we must look to Britain in the early eighteenth century for a parallel. In other words, Rosenius's attempt to set up an evangelical movement that was loyal to the state church had come too late. It was almost contemporaneous with the teetotallers' society established in Norway in 1859, an organisation constructed from the bottom up. In Finland the first Baptist congregation was established in 1871. The Bible Society had been founded in Turku as early as 1812 and the Finnish Missionary Society in 1859.

The popular mass organisations were beginning to emerge onto the stage. In the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they would turn Sweden into a sort of 'middle kingdom' in the Nordic region. Even after 1809, Sweden shared with Finland its time-honoured, legally based system of

independent local government open to all who held the right to vote, while it shared a large private sector of associations with Norway. There were, of course, differences. Finland had far fewer voluntary associations than Sweden. In Norway, like Denmark, the elected organs of local government were very small, whereas in Sweden the plethora of public and private organs enabled everyone entitled to vote within all kinds of organisation to invade local government meetings in both the towns and the countryside (in the late nineteenth century, the traditional forms of public 'farmer organisation' began to encounter competition from popular mass movements). The 'Sweden of the popular movements' had begun to take shape, and these movements would begin to flex their muscles around the turn of the century, while the organisational structures of the other three Nordic countries tended instead to pave the way for the aggregation of interests within strong political parties.



## The beginning of the Great Emigration

LENNART LIMBERG

Migration is a dynamic factor in economic and cultural development. From the Middle Ages onwards, when the countries of Northern Europe expanded their economic activities and strengthened their administration, they invited foreign experts.

The discovery of the New World, and the consequent desire to exploit its natural resources, strengthened another tendency of migration. Now it was not only a question of enticing skilled specialist workers, but of importing large numbers of manual workers. The export of slaves from Africa to America for a couple of centuries developed into the second biggest population movement in history, overshadowed only by the mass emigration of Europeans to the United States, which began in the mid-nineteenth century. This mass emigration resulted from the free movement of people and from other preconditions:

- A substantial population increase in Europe created a shortage of land and a growing proletarianisation of the rural population. The many land-reclamation projects failed completely to correct the imbalance. In most cases the governments did nothing to stop emigration.
- A transport infrastructure had to be created which in a relatively short time could bring millions of people to the ports and over the Atlantic. In this way the problem of the distance to the American continent could be overcome. During the Industrial Revolution there were developments in both land and sea transports. Steamboats and railways were also used to ship US-made products to Europe.
- The New World was ready to receive immigrants and assimilate them into society. In the United States economic expansion took place and social flexibility made it possible to absorb newcomers.

Denmark and Sweden had both acquired colonies in the New World during the seventeenth century and there was modest transfer of population. This

could be regulated or spontaneous. An unregulated immigration into the eastern districts of North America took place when Norwegian and Danish seamen stayed in the new territories after ending up in Dutch service, or they moved in from Denmark's possessions in the West Indies. The Danish presence here was never big, and the workforce in the sugar plantations was made up of slaves from West Africa.<sup>1</sup>

A regulated immigration was promoted by the Swedish state when the colony at the mouth of the Delaware river was founded with peasants from Sweden and Finland in order to burn-beat the land. The New Sweden colony was taken over by the Dutch in 1655, after only eighteen years, and soon came under British rule. Around 600 Swedish and Finnish settlers in the region were soon joined successively by English, Dutch, German, Irish and Scottish immigrants. Lutherans mixed with Quakers, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Anglicans and Moravians.<sup>2</sup>

Yet for a long time the Swedish state persisted in sending clergymen to its Lutheran church on the other side of the ocean. In all one hundred Swedish pastors served here during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Towards the end of the epoch, however, they could no longer preach in Swedish, but had to use English. An interesting collision of cultures occurred as a result of the power-struggle within congregations. Those pastors coming from the Swedish state church had been sent by the powers-that-be and acted as their messengers, with unbridled power and authority. However, the Swedish-American congregations had been influenced by the more democratic system of church government that they observed in their immediate environment, with elected representatives. When the Swedish pastors insisted on absolute power, their parishioners might without further ado leave the Lutheran church and become Anglicans or Quakers.

The last Swedish pastor in the area of New Sweden died in 1831; by then the congregation was Americanised and the influx of Scandinavians which was about to take place went to other areas in North America.

The early European mass emigration between 1847 and 1860 involved a total of 5 million people and was dominated by the Irish, with 2 million, and Germany, with 1.5 million. Emigration from Sweden began during this period, but was still modest. However, it gathered pace noticeably during the 1860s.

1 S. Petersen, *Danmarks Gamle Tropekolonier* (København, 1946), pp. 305–7.

2 A. Åberg, *Folket i Nya Sverige. Vår koloni vid Delawarefloden* (Stockholm, 1987); K.-G. Olin, *Våra första amerikafarare. Historien om finlandssvenskarna i Nya Sverige* (Jakobstad, 1988).

Between 1866 and 1870 emigration from the Scandinavian countries accounted for about 10 per cent of the total number of European migrants, but Scandinavia had only 3 per cent of the world's population. Starting in the second half of the 1860s, Norway, Sweden and Denmark were fairly early participants in the course of mass emigration and, compared to figures from elsewhere in Europe, this was their best period.<sup>3</sup>

One explanation for the Scandinavian countries' quick response to the possibilities offered by emigration was surely their geography. The three countries possess an extremely long coastline and the sea is never far away. Accordingly, those looking for transportation to the New World had a reasonably short distance to travel to a convenient port. Proximity to the sea had created a tradition of seafaring and a network for foreign trade. There were lively commercial contacts with North America. Seamen were international and mobile and in many cases they found work in the United States, becoming part of the group of early emigrants.

The preconditions for mass emigration to America were already in place by the middle of the century in Norway, Sweden and Denmark, but differences in population and in economic structure ensured that the great emigration started in different ways.<sup>4</sup> As a prelude, there was group emigration from all three countries which prepared the way for their successors and which chose the initial areas of settlement which also were to attract later emigrants. Several of these early groups of emigrants had a religious profile, which does not necessarily mean that there was a degree of painful religious oppression in the Scandinavian countries. An equally good explanation is that the religious sects had established good contacts among the free churches in North America. In this way they not only acquired knowledge about the new country, but also often received practical help to establish themselves.

This early emigration was made easier by the existing trade relations, which existed between the Scandinavian countries and the United States. Iron was exported from several Norwegian ports to the expanding economy of North America. The famous iron of Sweden was mainly shipped over from Gävle and Göteborg. These cargoes were heavy, but took up relatively little space on board; most of the ships were brigs and freight could easily be combined with a transport of about one hundred people. There was little

3 A. Svaldestuen, 'Nordisk emigrasjon – en komparativ oversikt', in K. Hvidt (ed.), *Emigrationen fra Norden intil I. Verdenskrig. Rapporter til det nordiske historikermøde i København 1971* (København, 1971), p. 16.

4 H. Norman and H. Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections: Nordic Migration to the New World after 1800* (Oslo, 1987), ch. 5.

comfort on board and the journey usually took about two months. Passport legislation in the Scandinavian countries does not seem to have stopped uncontrolled emigration.

Within and between the Scandinavian countries there existed so-called 'work migrations' (*arbetsvandringar*), i.e. seasonal work in another location from which the people later returned to their home area. Several scholars have regarded these work migrations as a precursor of emigration, but there is no evidence of a close connection between the two phenomena. The migrations went from the countryside to towns, and the large towns were the most attractive, transcending national boundaries. Natives of western Sweden were thus attracted to Kristiania, south Swedes to København, and there was a steady flow of migrants from Finland to Stockholm.

The great magnet in the Baltic region during the nineteenth century was St Petersburg: the administrative centre of a Great Power possessed a splendid imperial court. It was a garrison town and the biggest port in Russia with an expanding industry, too. Some 6,000 Swedes were living here in about 1850 and the Finnish church congregation numbered more than 16,000 in 1869.<sup>5</sup> One factor which may have contributed to Finland's late entry into the era of mass emigration could be that the Russian empire and its expanding economy offered good opportunities for energetic Finns.

### Information about America

Early school reforms in the Scandinavian countries were designed to implement universal literacy, and this was of significance when people wanted to get information while preparing their journey. The ability to read was already good before universal schooling since Luther had proclaimed that everyone should be able to read the Bible. But the teaching of modern languages was still a novelty even in the senior school in the mid-nineteenth century. English was looked upon as a language for seamen and merchants. Emigrants who made their way to North America were dependent on fellow-countrymen who had already settled in an attractive locality. The goal of emigration came to depend on the linguistic help one could obtain. On arrival national settlements were founded where people continued to speak their own language at the same time as English was slowly advancing. In this way the

5 M. Engman, *St Petersburg och Finland. Migration och influens 1703–1917* (Helsinki, 2003), p. 298.

choice of areas to settle made by the first pioneers became of great significance for the mass emigration which was to follow.

What did the Scandinavian emigrants know about America? No doubt there was enough written and published for anyone with an inquiring mind to put together a picture of the country. The American Revolution and its political experiments in the spirit of the Enlightenment were an interesting topic of debate. After the French Revolution had ended with the fall of Napoleon, the United States was the only country in the world with a republican and democratic constitution. Of course, self-righteous European bureaucratic circles spoke of mob rule and lawlessness in America, but the longer the 'experiment' continued and the more successful the United States became, the more evident it became that there was an alternative to the forms of government of conservative Europe.<sup>6</sup>

The political debate was carried on in the press, and apart from the newspapers, the nineteenth century saw a flowering of periodical journals which were more or less long-lived. In Norway alone, between 1830 and 1870, no fewer than 290 journals were founded. There was great curiosity about America and, in many articles which were published about conditions over there, the focus of interest soon shifted from ideological debates to realistic descriptions of daily life and exciting adventures.<sup>7</sup>

Knowledge about America and emigration also penetrated the general consciousness with the help of popular songs. In many cases these emigrant ballads became very popular. Even Hans Christian Andersen wrote a ballad about America's many delights, although with an ironic undertone. Of course such songs did not lead to a decision to emigrate, but they indicate that America had become established in the popular imagination. Between the political interests of the intellectual elite and the simplistic descriptions of America in the folk ballads one can detect the average emigrant's quest for economic facts and practical tips, which could form the basis for the decisive step regarding a new life.

Travel books and handbooks about America were published initially as translations, e.g. Frances Wright's *Resa genom Förenta Staterna i Nordamerika* ('A Journey through the United States in North America') in Stockholm in 1826. They were soon followed by original editions. In 1839 Ole Rynning's *True Account of America, for the Information and Use of Farmers and the Ordinary*

6 N. Runeby, *Den nya världen och den gamla. Amerikabild och emigrationsuppfattning i Sverige 1820–1860* (Uppsala, 1969), chs. 6 and 18.

7 S. Skard, *USA i norsk historie 1000–1776–1976* (Oslo, 1976), ch. 5.

*Man* was published in Kristiania. In 1847 the Dane L. J. Fribert published his *Handbook for Emigrants to America's West with a Description of the Journey There, as well as the Mode of Life and Methods of Field Cultivation with Special Reference to Wisconsin*.<sup>8</sup> In Sweden during the years 1849 to 1855 no fewer than nine different emigrant handbooks and descriptions of the United States were published, an eloquent testimony to the great interest in America.

As the titles show, the aim was to encourage emigration. The authors made a point of toning down the dangers described in the counter-propaganda, which gave grounds for the emigrants' vivid imaginings of wild Indians, poisonous snakes or an extreme climate. Positive information about the United States had been met with contrary accounts, pastoral letters from bishops or outcries from provincial governors. Even if established society was against emigration, no measures were taken to stem the outflow. Yet the criticism of emigration was both comprehensive and harsh.<sup>9</sup>

It is possible that the words of warning induced some people to stay at home, but these negative descriptions of America could easily be contradicted by letters from relatives and friends which streamed out from the new country. Sometimes the letters contained money as tangible proof of success and prosperity. The significance of these letters can hardly be exaggerated. Yet again it must be stressed that it was the first emigrants, those who arrived before 1860, who powerfully influenced the first mass migration.

To be sure, the very first emigrants to America had arrived significantly earlier, but the piecemeal emigration of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had little importance for the future. Only those who arrived during the first half of the nineteenth century came to influence the later mass emigration.

## Norway

The first little emigrant ship, the sloop *Restauration*, left Stavanger in 1825 with fifty-two people on board. The leaders of the group were Quakers, and they had made contact with like-minded religious groups in the United States. As early as 1821 they had sent out two scouts to North America to look for suitable areas to settle (one of the two was Cleng Peerson, who was to

8 P. E. Olsen, 'Visions of Freedom: Impressions of America in Nineteenth-Century Denmark', in B. Flemming Larsen and H. Bender (eds.), *Danish Emigration to the USA* (Aalborg, 1992), p. 16.

9 H. A. Barton, *A Folk Divided: Homeland Swedes and Swedish Americans, 1840-1940* (Carbondale, 1994), ch. 5.

become legendary). The life of the settlers of this first group became arduous, and it took another ten years before new groups made their way over the Atlantic. But from then on the emigration grew from year to year: a few hundred emigrants in the 1830s became 4,000 in 1849.<sup>10</sup>

In Norway people were soon talking about 'America fever', and the brochures giving information about the opportunities over there offered by emigration were greeted with words of warning from persons of authority and by politicians. Yet the Norwegian authorities took absolutely no measures to prevent or obstruct emigration.

The most important source of information about the United States for those who intended to emigrate were the letters from America which circulated in the villages after having been copied in masses of transcripts. In these letters one could read about the contrasts between the old country and the new. Instead of oppressive duties and taxes, people in the United States hardly paid any taxes at all. Instead of self-righteous civil servants people in the United States had officials chosen by the people. Instead of social divisions and limited political rights, the United States offered democracy and a classless society. Instead of a regulated economy there was free trade. Instead of a compulsory state church there was freedom of religion. And most of all, in America there was an abundance of fertile land at cheap prices.

These good arguments in favour of emigration were themselves insufficient, and must be seen against the background of high population density. During the nineteenth century Norway underwent one of the fastest population growths in Europe. Between 1815 and 1865 the rate of growth was 13.4 per cent every ten years. Opportunities for new cultivation were limited, and there was a critical shortage of land. The growing population could barely be fed by the increased cultivation of potatoes.

Most of the emigrants came from the mountain villages in southern and western Norway. Whole families with large numbers of children were emigrating. In many areas emigration was an essential safety-valve to lessen population pressure. It was seldom a question of hatred of the old country. On the contrary, we have many examples of how Norway's national day, 17 May, was celebrated at sea with songs, speeches and toasts.

Norway had no central emigration port; instead, relatively small sailing boats were fitted out in several towns for the summer voyage across the

<sup>10</sup> The major Norwegian study is I. Semmingsen, *Veien mot vest, 1: Utvandringen fra Norge til Amerika 1825–1865* (Oslo, 1941); I. Semmingsen, *Veien mot vest, 2: Utvandringen fra Norge 1865–1915* (Oslo, 1950).

Atlantic. From New York the emigrants made their way via the Erie Canal to the Great Lakes and the cheap land in the Midwest, a journey which could take another month. Wisconsin received the greatest number of early settlers from Norway, but many pushed on further into Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota. Most Norwegians became land-owning farmers and only a few of them settled in cities like Chicago in this period. One-third of the 18,000 Norwegian emigrants before 1850 chose a longer travelling route via Göteborg, Hamburg or Le Havre, since this was cheaper.

During the 1850s emigration was combined with the Norwegian shipping firms' transportation of Canadian timber. The Navigation Acts had finally been abolished in 1849 and Norwegian shipowners soon established themselves in Canada. Their ships carried emigrants to Quebec and took cargoes of timber back to Europe. Ticket prices for a voyage from Norway were low and during the decade up to 1865, 44,000 Norwegians travelled to the United States via Quebec, only 520 travelled by way of New York and 2,280 came via other ports. The Canadian authorities complained that some of the emigrants were so poor that they could not afford to pay for the journey by train to the United States. In these cases mercy was allowed to take precedence over legality and tickets were handed out, but on several occasions the threat was made that such free travel would have to stop.

Norway's economic transformation started in the 1850s. Communications were expanded, industries established and a rationalisation of agriculture was introduced. But emigration to the United States continued to grow. By 1865 a total of 78,000 Norwegians had emigrated to North America. But at the same time more than 25,000 Swedes immigrated into Norway, most of them workers who were essential to the growing Norwegian economy. This shows that economic migration between neighbouring countries could be an alternative to emigration to America. But it also shows that land-hungry Norwegians from a farming background chose to expose themselves to the hardships of the long voyage and to take their chances in the United States rather than to become wage-earners in the new economic structure in Norway.

## Finland

In the mid-nineteenth century emigration from Finland to America was still marginal. Mass emigration only started in the 1880s. Part of the explanation may be that there was an opportunity to exploit the expanding Russian labour market, to which the inhabitants of Finland had free access.



However, indirect emigration from Finland to the United States took place, and this was by way of work in northern Norway.<sup>11</sup> In the middle of the century there were several hundred Finns there, who had come to work in the copper mines and the fisheries. But copper extraction tailed off and the news that there was spare labour capacity in northern Norway reached the United States, where it had been difficult to recruit new workers for the mines during the Civil War. Recruiters were sent out from the American mining companies and Finnish workers in north Norway were pulled along by Norway's America fever. They mostly moved to Wisconsin and Minnesota to continue working as miners. In 1870 the number of Finnish immigrants in the United States was estimated at several thousands, but this group is difficult to locate in the statistics. They mostly emigrated via Trondheim and came to be registered as Norwegian emigrants on arrival in the United States. They would later entice new groups of emigrants from Finland to the mines of America.

Sailors who emigrated sometimes wrote letters home about their new life and there might be information about the United States in newspapers too, but to a large extent Finland lacked a tradition of transatlantic emigration in the 1860s. There was no stream of letters tempting their readers with descriptions of the blessings of the new country and no advertisements from established agents promised cheap and comfortable journeys. No farmers had founded Finnish settlements which could tempt followers from the old home areas. When crop failure and famine hit Finland in 1867–8 this did not lead to an extensive emigration to America which was Sweden's answer to the same problems. But in the long run the hardships caused by the famine undermined the rural population's belief in their own country and in the possibility of ensuring a secure future. The Finns also gradually became influenced by the wholesale emigration to America which was taking place from the neighbouring countries of Norway and Sweden.

## Sweden

Up to 1845 migration to North America was on a modest scale. It was dominated by artisans from the towns and practitioners of the liberal professions.<sup>12</sup> To be sure, a Swedish law regarding foreign passports was abolished

11 R. Kero, *Migration from Finland to North America in the Years between the United States Civil War and the First World War* (Turku, 1974), ch. 1; Norman and Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections*, p. 60.

12 N. W. Olsson and E. Wikén, *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in the United States 1820–1850* (Stockholm, 1995).

in 1840, but this did not open any floodgates. However, two groups emerged which were to influence future migration. In 1841 some graduates from Uppsala University went out to found a little colony in virgin territory in the spirit of Rousseauesque romanticism. With some knowledge about earlier German and Norwegian emigration, the group ended up in Wisconsin where they founded New Uppsala. At this time there were already ten Norwegian colonies in the Midwest.<sup>13</sup>

The area chosen was not particularly fertile, and the enterprise was a failure. Its financial situation only marginally improved as a result of the letters and articles which the project's leaders managed to publish in Swedish newspapers. Conditions in America were described in very positive terms and the letters from this first group inspired a group from Östergötland to found the colony New Sweden in Iowa in 1845. This venture met with success and within ten years attracted another 500 Swedes. Letters from this successful settlement were published in Swedish newspapers and became very influential. It was mostly the liberal opposition press which published articles about the emigrants' success in America. As a result, criticism was directed against conditions in Sweden, which was characterised by lack of political and economical freedom.

Thus events in the United States became part of the public debate in Sweden and were caused not least by the religious migration which began in 1846. Erik Jansson was a charismatic lay-preacher who acquired followers in Dalarna and Gästrikland. He broke completely with the state church and was threatened with imprisonment, in addition to which his followers were persecuted and mistreated. With the help of religious contacts in America, emigration was prepared. Participants sold their possessions and the money was placed in a common fund to pay for all Jansson's followers to sail off to a new start in the United States. They sailed from Gävle on ships loaded with cargoes of iron. In the next few years they were followed by more sympathisers. In all 1,500 people made their way to the newly established settlement of Bishop Hill.<sup>14</sup>

This colony came to be influenced by and to work closely with several of the Utopian experiments which emerged in the United States during this period. On arrival in New York and after having bought land in Illinois, they

13 A good outline of Swedish emigration is given in U. Beijbom, *Mot löftets land. Den svenska utvandringen* (Stockholm, 1996), and in L. Ljungmark, *Swedish Exodus* (Carbondale, 1979).

14 O. Isaksson, *Historien om Bishop Hill* (Stockholm, 1995).

also received support from the Swedish Methodists who already were active there. Little by little the colony flourished, but the initial difficulties during the voyage and setting up new homes on the prairie were enormous, and were only overcome by a glowing faith and a strong leadership.

As a result of their refusal to compromise, the sect attracted great attention in Sweden and this interest was kept alive after their emigration by means of the many letters, which were published in Swedish newspapers describing the colony's difficulties. And the Church of Sweden's struggle against the renegades went further. First, attempts were made to prevent more sympathisers of the 'false prophet' from leaving Sweden. Secondly, a 'right-thinking' colony landed in the immediate vicinity of Bishop Hill. A Swedish clergyman with 140 followers was dispatched to work out of Andover for the return of the lost sheep to the Lutheran faith.

Between 1846 and 1850 some 4,000 Swedes emigrated, almost half of them from Hälsingland-Gästrikland. The voyage usually went from Gävle on ships carrying iron. The transport relations which had been established for trading purposes played a major role in early emigration.

One of the shipping firms carrying iron over the North Sea from Göteborg developed into an emigrant shipping line and played a central role in the impending mass emigration. Vessels of the Wilson Line were regularly employed in the post- and passenger-trade from their home port of Hull to Göteborg and Kristiania. During the 1850s and the beginning of the 1860s many Swedish emigrants took the route via Hamburg, but at the same time the indirect line was being established which would become the classic Swedish emigration route: by train to Göteborg, then Wilson Line steamboat to Hull, by train to Liverpool and from there with one of the big Atlantic shipping lines.<sup>15</sup>

The Civil War in the United States did not halt emigration from Sweden, which may seem strange. However, the destination of the emigrants – the federal states of the Midwest – was far away from the war theatre. Moreover, the demand for workers in the United States increased when many soldiers were missing in the productive industry. Swedish emigration increased during the war and in the year 1866 comprised 4,500 people. Yet this figure was to appear very moderate in comparison to what was coming.

Swedish agriculture was hit by crop failures some years after 1867: first, on a regional basis in the north, then over the whole country. Margins were

15 M. Dunge, 'Wilsonlinjen och emigrationen', in P. Clemensson *et al.* (eds.), *Göteborgs-Emigranten* (Göteborg, 1994), pp. 112–18.

narrow in the old peasant society and many farmers lacked the reserves needed to survive a couple of lean or unlucky years. Knowledge about the United States was sufficiently great and well founded for people to be tempted by free access to fertile soil. The Homestead Act was the answer to the problem faced by many Swedish farmers, and between 1868 and 1870 around 70,000 Swedes emigrated. The emigration route of Göteborg–Hull–Liverpool demonstrated that it had sufficient capacity. The Wilson Line was soon able to treble its sailings and in Liverpool the new giant ships were waiting.

It was chiefly farmers who took part in this first wave of mass emigration from Sweden. The impoverished farm labourers were still unable to pay for tickets. For the most part it was a question of whole families emigrating and their goal was the fertile land in the Midwest. And it was not long before news arrived from the other side of the ocean that things were going well for the Swedish emigrants, and several anti-emigration newspapers began to depict emigration in a more favourable light.<sup>16</sup>

## Denmark

Emigration from Denmark was rather different from emigration from the neighbouring Scandinavian countries. The difference can be summed up in the words: a little later, a little calmer and considerably fewer.

The number of emigrants from Denmark grew only slowly and the statistics lack the dramatic peaks which are known from Norway and Sweden. In the early migration, there was already a strikingly large proportion of emigrants from the towns. Denmark had a more varied economic structure than its northern neighbours and the towns were situated close to each other. The influx of people into the towns which characterises the age of industrialisation had already begun. Even those emigrants who came from the towns had in general been born in the countryside and had already taken the first step to improve their conditions. Geographically speaking, the early emigration was dominated by people from the Danish islands and northern Jylland.

In Denmark too, transatlantic religious contacts played a major role when emigration began. The Baptist faith spread throughout the country and was

<sup>16</sup> L. Limberg and B. Torell, 'Göteborgs-Posten och emigrationen', in P. Clemensson *et al.* (eds.), *Göteborgs-Emigranten 6. Rapport från symposiet "Amerika tur och retur" i Göteborg 18–19 september 1996* (Göteborg, 1997), pp. 64–6.

followed by a religious emigration which began in 1854. Ten years later there were ten Danish Baptist congregations in the United States.<sup>17</sup>

The Baptists would also indirectly influence more comprehensive emigration by means of the activities of the Mormons in Denmark. Two of Brigham Young's closest associates were Danes, and the first translation of the Book of Mormon was into Danish. In 1849 the Mormons in the United States sent seven missionaries to Europe: five of them to Scandinavia. The two assigned to Norway and Sweden immediately got into trouble over their preaching against the established churches. Denmark, by contrast, had recently passed a law concerning religious freedom, and it was this country which was to become the main centre for preaching the new religion. The missionaries preferred to preach where there were already Baptists, as these people had already taken a decisive step denying the religious monopoly of the state church.

The Mormons wanted to assemble with their faithful followers in Utah, and as early as 1852 the first 218 Danes travelled over the Atlantic. During the following decade more than 2,000 newly fledged Danish Mormons travelled to America, comprising 80 per cent of emigrants from Denmark during this ten-year period. The voyage was paid for by their new church and this tempted many poor families, which often had numerous children. In 1862 another 1,556 Mormons travelled from Denmark, attracted by the prospect of obtaining not only a place in heaven after death, but also a free journey to paradise. But the way was long and filled with problems.

The Mormons assembled their emigrants in Liverpool. From here they obtained ships which were successively filled up with passengers. After landing in the United States they travelled by train to the Mississippi Valley, where they acquired equipment for the long journey over plains and mountains to the Great Salt Lake. Confronted by the obvious difficulties of this last stage, many wavered in their faith. Here they left their new church and headed for less strenuous goals.<sup>18</sup>

The Mormons even managed to recruit a little group of emigrants from Iceland, who left for America in 1857. A handful of Icelanders went out to Brazil in the 1860s, but had no successors. Emigration from Iceland to North America was both large-scale and decisive, but it only started in

17 The major Danish study is K. Hvidt, *Flugten til Amerika eller Drivkræfter i masseudvandringen fra Danmark 1868–1914* (Aarhus, 1971).

18 W. Mulder, *Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia* (Minneapolis, 1957; repr., 2000).

the 1870s.<sup>19</sup> One explanation for the late start was that Iceland, despite its geographical position halfway to America, was dependent on its Danish overlord for transport, and connections with the outer world went via København. Moreover, the authorities sold off crown and church land in order to increase the numbers of independent farmers, and the birth rate was kept down by a restrictive law prescribing high minimum ages before entering into marriage.

After the American Civil War and the generous distribution of land in the Homestead Act had become well known in Europe, emigration from Denmark also increased. The voyages commenced from Hamburg or København. The Danish emigrants tended to head to the Midwest, but eventually came to spread over more federal states than their northern neighbours. Utah has already been mentioned, but California exercised a strong attraction, too.

When analysing motives, Danish emigration offers a good example of a pure push-factor. In the war of 1864 against Prussia and Austria, Denmark lost not only Holstein, but also the whole of Schleswig. This area had at least 150,000 Danish-speakers who were now threatened with Germanisation. The young men risked three years of military service and a refusal to integrate into Bismarck's Prussia led to them being treated as second-class citizens. The German authorities put no obstacles in the way of a troublesome national minority wishing to emigrate.

The emigration of Danes from the duchy of Schleswig to America and to Denmark, which started in the 1860s, was to continue for the rest of the century. The German authorities chose to classify as secret all figures relating to this migration. It was only after the border adjustment of 1920 which followed after the German empire's defeat, that Danish historians were able to reconstruct the statistics. These show that the rate of emigration from the duchy of Schleswig was the highest measured in Scandinavia.

## Push and pull

What drove Scandinavians away from their homelands and across the Atlantic? The push-factors taken into account were generally poor living

19 H. S. Kjartanson, 'Icelandic Emigration', in P. C. Emmer and M. Mörner (eds.), *European Expansion and Migration: Essays on the Intercontinental Migration from Africa, Asia, and Europe* (New York and Oxford, 1992), p. 106; B. Vilhjálmsson, 'Utvandringen fra Island. En oversigt', in *Emigrationen fra Norden intil I. Verdenskrig. Rapporter til det nordiske historikermøde i København 1971* (København, 1971), pp. 160–3.

conditions rather than dramatic events of a catastrophic nature. Only in two cases does one find that compelling external events led to a comprehensive emigration. The German conquest of Schleswig in 1864 persuaded a large part of the Danish-speaking population to move, and the severe crop failures in Sweden in 1867 and 1868 forced many peasants to seek new opportunities.

Emigration was caused by a constant, but limited pressure. Poverty and lack of land were troublesome, but not unbearable. The religious and political authorities were not unmerciful, but rather conservatively unwilling to embrace change. The lack of freedom of trade might be felt as a problem, but industrialisation was beginning and new opportunities could be discerned. The causes of emigration are in most cases to be found in the temptation which America exercised. By the mid-nineteenth century many Scandinavians saw favourable opportunities opening up in the United States, and they took their chance.

Repulsion and attraction, the question of push and pull, is by and large two sides of the same coin. If one is living in poverty in Scandinavia, then naturally one is tempted by the opportunity of good earnings somewhere else. If one feels persecuted in either religious or political terms, there is an obvious advantage in settling in a country which confers religious and political freedom. And if there is a shortage of land at home, peasants will be tempted by free land on the other side of the ocean.

Information about all the good things which could be obtained in America was conveyed in various ways, but the most believable medium for ordinary people was letters from relatives and friends. The first communication of this kind from emigrants was therefore of the greatest importance for continued emigration. There were many letters of this kind, and they were read by many more people than simply the receivers. Statistics for the numbers of letters from the United States are available for the first time from the year 1872, and in Denmark alone they amounted to 100,000.

A similar type of direct information was promoted by the so-called 'yankees'. These were emigrants who had succeeded in the United States and who came home on a visit. They told people about their own success and the opportunities in America, assembled a group of emigrants and became their guides on the way to the new country.

The part played by the goldrushes in the history of emigration is significant, not particularly because they drew a stream of extremely mobile adventurers, but because the image of America as a land of riches and abundance was thereby strengthened. At a time when people knew their

biblical stories, visions of the 'promised land' were being turned into concrete reality.

The 1860s saw a couple of strong pull-factors exerting a decisive influence on mass emigration:

- The Homestead Act was adopted in America in 1862, guaranteeing the settlers free land up to 160 acres if they took over virgin territory in the Midwest and began cultivating the ground. For a land-hungry rural population, this represented an unheard-of temptation. Information about this opportunity was disseminated speedily via agents, via direct advertising and via letters.
- The American Civil War was followed by a powerful economic expansion and an acceleration in the building of railways. Even while the war was still raging a decision was taken to build up transcontinental lines. As a part of the investment, the railway companies were granted large areas of government land. It was in the railway companies' own interest that the areas along the railway lines should be cultivated and that goods and people be transported on the new tracks. Land was therefore sold on favourable conditions. The railways went in for aggressive marketing both in America and in Europe to win new settlers. They were also able to offer extra earnings for working on the actual building of new railways.
- The governments of the individual federal states also played an active role in the advertising campaigns which were directed towards the Scandinavian countries. As early as 1852 Wisconsin was trying to attract settlers by setting up an emigrant authority. Systematic advertising campaigns were run in German and Scandinavian newspapers. Propaganda was disseminated only during an introductory period of a few years, but this example was to set the pattern for other federal states. From 1868 Minnesota conducted a comprehensive campaign in Scandinavia to attract more emigrants to the new territories which were being opened. Those Scandinavians already living in the federal state played an important role in these efforts and their letters to relatives and friends had a contributory effect alongside brochures and newspaper articles. It might be difficult to judge who or what exerted the strongest pull: the railway companies, the federal state authorities, letter-writing fellow-countrymen or other parties with an interest in the emigrant traffic.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> This complex pattern has been described by L. Ljungmark, *For Sale – Minnesota: Organized Promotion of Scandinavian Immigration 1866–1873* (Göteborg, 1971).



- In the 1860s the emigrant shipping lines went over to the use of steamships of considerable size. They were now able to offer regular trips with an attractive degree of comfort. The Cunard Line attracted competition from new British lines: the Inman Line, the Allan Line, the White Star Line and the National Line. Large passenger liners, built by German shipping lines, were now also leaving from the German emigration ports of Hamburg and Bremen. The United States, by contrast, was far too occupied by the Civil War to keep up with this rapid development.<sup>21</sup> The over-capacity of the North Atlantic passenger trade which occurred in the 1860s was to lead to a price war. Tickets became cheaper and the shipping lines started advertising campaigns in which they enticed the customer with larger and faster ships and more comfort on board. Printed brochures even reached remote parts of Norway, Sweden and Denmark by means of agents and under-agents.

The marketing of America and the rivalry between the different players in the emigrant trade became so extensive that the authorities in the Scandinavian countries decided to protect their citizens against shady operators. Laws were passed in all three countries regulating the activities of agents and forcing them to guarantee that the product, i.e. the voyage, would comply with what had been promised. Laws of this kind were passed in Norway in 1867, in Denmark in 1868 and in Sweden in 1869. (At the same time lists of emigrants were produced which form an important primary source for research.)

An important contribution to continued emigration was the opportunity offered from the 1860s onwards to purchase tickets in the United States for travel over the Atlantic. These tickets were sent to family members, relatives and friends who were waiting in the old country for an opportunity to take themselves over to the new one. These 'prepaid tickets', at certain periods, would account for more than a third of the ticket sales.

Also during the 1860s, emigration was extended to include some new tempting destinations. Earlier British colonies were given the opportunity to recruit emigrants from Europe. After gaining independence in 1867, Canada became actively interested in attracting a part of the North American emigration to its own territories. Australia had attracted thousands of

<sup>21</sup> K. Hvidt, 'Informationsspredning og emigration med særlig henblik på det atlantiske transportsystem', in *Emigrationen fra Norden intil I. Verdenskrig. Rapporter til det nordiske historikermøde i København 1971* (København, 1971), pp. 140–2.

Scandinavian seamen and adventurers during its goldrush of 1851–2, half of them being Danes. But they were extremely mobile and when the gold ran out they generally moved on. Breaking up new ground and starting a farm required both investment and hard work. Moreover, the gold-diggers were all men and a farm required a division of labour between man and woman. From 1869 onwards Australia's federal states were allowed to run their own emigration policies, and Queensland immediately directed its propaganda towards Germany and Scandinavia. In 1861 the discovery of gold in New Zealand had shown the way for a possible emigration to these areas. Scandinavians accustomed to the timber trade were soon in demand in the forested areas of north and south Australia, both for tree-felling and for clearing land for agriculture.<sup>22</sup>

Up to the 1860s, South Africa had had a primitive economy and only attracted a small number of Scandinavian emigrants. However, a few of them who succeeded could send for more like themselves from their old home villages. At the end of the 1860s diamonds were found on a large scale in South Africa and this led to 'the Mining Revolution' and a vastly increased immigration, although the Scandinavian contribution continued to be small.<sup>23</sup>

Individual adventurers from the upper and middle classes also made their way to South America. In 1858 one of these returned from Argentina to Denmark, where he recruited emigrants on the islands of Møn and Lolland. He returned to Buenos Aires with over one hundred followers and founded a colony 300 kilometres south of the city. A gold-digging expedition on its way to California came to rest in Brazil in 1851, and seventy-four Norwegians chose to stay there, which presented them with insurmountable difficulties. Nor did things go much better for a group expedition from Sweden which began in 1868, comprising 168 people over four years.<sup>24</sup> Not until the 1880s and 1890s did Scandinavian emigration to South America develop, and then it was mainly to Argentina and Brazil.

22 O. Koivukangas, *Scandinavian Immigration and Settlement in Australia before World War II* (Turku, 1974); O. Koivukangas, 'The Longest Voyage of the Vikings: New Zealand – a Remote Alternative to America', in B. Flemming Larsen et al. (eds.), *On Distant Shores: Proceedings of the Marcus Lee Hansen Immigration Conference Aalborg, Denmark June 29–July 1, 1992* (Aalborg, 1993), pp. 124–6.

23 E. Kuparinen, *An African Alternative: Nordic Migration to South Africa 1815–1914* (Helsinki, 1991), ch. 3.

24 G. Friborg, *Brasiliensvenskarna. Utvandring, invandring, bosättning 1850–1940* (Växjö 1988), pp. 16–21.

Emigrants from Scandinavia could also make their way to economically expanding areas in Europe, but as the above examples show, the numbers were limited. Nothing could compete with the steady stream of emigrants to the United States.

### Identity and research

The growing numbers of Scandinavians in the United States led to the creation of organisations based on nationality in the 1860s. As long as emigrants from Scandinavia were relatively few in America, they had contact with each other. Scandinavian societies were founded and Scandinavian newspapers were published. The boom in nationalism which had started in Europe also came to influence life in the United States and Scandinavian movements were replaced by national ones.<sup>25</sup> As the stream of emigrants increased, the conditions were created for founding not only individual Lutheran congregations or societies, but religious communities or organisations which stretched over many federal states.

In 1860 the Augustana Synod was launched with thirty-six Swedish and thirteen Norwegian Lutheran congregations. This co-operation lasted for ten years, after which there was a partition into two national church organisations.<sup>26</sup> 1864 saw the founding, in Wisconsin, of the 'Danish-Norwegian Baptist Conference for the North-Western States' and this form of co-operation functioned until 1910, when this church too split up into two national organisations. In the 1860s the organisational foundations were laid for an impressive infrastructure with a large degree of differentiation: churches, hospitals, children's homes, old people's homes, publishing firms and schools. And the foundation was also laid for the feeling of belonging which would characterise the different groups of Norwegian-, Danish- and Swedish-Americans.

The feeling of national identity among the Scandinavian emigrants gradually produced an interesting feedback to the old homelands. Academic research into the Scandinavian emigration began in America and Norway was the first country to respond to these signals from the other side of the Atlantic.<sup>27</sup>

25 J. R. Jenswold, 'The Rise and Fall of Pan-Scandinavianism in Urban America', in O. Lovoll (ed.), *Scandinavian and Other Immigrants in Urban America: The Proceedings of a Research Conference, October 26–27, 1984* (Northfield, Minn., 1985).

26 D. Blanck, *Becoming Swedish-American: The Construction of an Ethnic Identity in the Augustana Synod, 1860–1917* (Uppsala, 1997), pp. 39–41.

27 A. Engen, 'Norwegian Emigration Research: Where Do We Stand Today, and What Should Be Our Future Fields of Work?', in K. D. Sievers (ed.), *Die deutsche und skandinavische Amerika-Auswanderung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Forschungsstand*,

In Sweden Vilhelm Moberg's novels of emigration became a great success and helped to increase interest in research into the great folk migration. A co-operative venture between the Scandinavian countries was launched,<sup>28</sup> which resulted in, among other things, an atlas of emigration showing the frequency of emigration from the Scandinavian area during the different decades of the period,<sup>29</sup> although there is only one map showing the situation before 1870.

An important contribution has been made by family-history research. Genealogists on both sides of the Atlantic have exploited all accessible archival materials in search of early emigrants and their enquiries have led to the publication of shipping lists and registers of emigrants. Their interest has also contributed to the founding of specialised institutions in all the relevant countries for the collection of and systematic arrangement of material of different kinds illuminating the great emigration. Sweden and Finland are especially favoured when it comes to genealogy, as the clergy of the established church also functioned as bookkeepers of the political authorities. Besides the usual registration of births, deaths and changes of addresses, there are household examination registers in which the pastors kept an account of visits from farm to farm in their congregations, noting details of their parishioners' literacy levels, state of health, vaccinations, etc. Recent research, however, has shown that the Swedish church records and the connected official statistics are not always reliable.<sup>30</sup>

Furthermore modern digital technologies have provided access to huge registers. This also allows comparisons, revealing that they may not be in full accordance. The reason for this is often lack of exactness in the original records or the possibility of avoiding registration altogether.

## Groups

Every instance of emigration involves a decision by an individual or a family to move which is based on a number of personal considerations, with many variations. These individual and unique cases collectively make up the great

*Methoden, Quellen. Mit Fallstudien aus Schleswig-Holstein und Hamburg* (Neumünster, 1981), pp. 47f.

28 K. Hvidt, 'Zehn Jahre Untersuchungen über die nordische Emigration. Eine Übersicht über die Forschung 1965–1975', in K. D. Sievers (ed.), *Die deutsche und skandinavische Amerika-Auswanderung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Forschungsstand, Methoden, Quellen. Mit Fallstudien aus Schleswig-Holstein und Hamburg* (Neumünster, 1981), pp. 40–4.

29 H. Norman and H. Runblom, *Nordisk Emigrationsatlas* (Uppsala, 1980).

30 M. Persson, *Coming Full Circle? Return Migration and the Dynamics of Social Mobility on the Bjäre Peninsula 1860–1930* (Lund, 2007), ch. 4.

stream of emigration. In order to be able to handle large amounts of facts, research has to draw up generalisations and statistical tables. It is also convenient to divide the driving factors of push and pull, and these concepts can then be used at both micro- and macro-levels. One weakness in all explanatory models is that they are based on logical thinking. The scholar must acknowledge that it is more difficult to capture the irrational factors and coincidences.

An interesting intermediate stage between individual fates and large-scale generalisations is occupied by studies which have been undertaken on special groups or categories of emigrants. It might be a question of occupational groups, of participation in the American Civil War,<sup>31</sup> of emigrants from a particular area<sup>32</sup> or quite simply a collection of people who have something in common.<sup>33</sup> To conclude, three such groups can exemplify this level of research, between the individual-historical and the world-historical.

Seamen are an interesting group, but just as difficult for contemporary research to deal with as it was for the authorities in their own lifetime to control their movements. It is known that thousands of Scandinavian seamen deserted from their vessels during the nineteenth century. This could be because of tempting jobs on land or the intoxication of gold fever in California or in Australia. But in the vast majority of cases it was due to moving to another shipping line or national flag. The seamen continued to practise their trade. Scandinavian shippers paid worse than the British, but the best-paid seamen of all were those on American vessels, where the wages were at least double what they could earn on Scandinavian vessels. Better food could also be a tempting prospect. For example, the Norwegian merchant fleet lost more than 4,000 seamen to rival countries during the decade up to 1865.

Scandinavian seamen were in great demand, and when the famous American clipper ships, which could achieve a speed of 20 knots under sail, were taking on crew, the shipowners looked for Danish, Norwegian, Swedish or Finnish seamen who could put up with being driven hard by some bold and reckless American captain.

31 R. Kvist, *För adoptivlandets och mänsklighetens sak. Svenskarna i Illinois och det amerikanska inbördeskriget* (Umeå, 2003).

32 J. Gjerde, *From Peasants to Farmers: The Migration from Balestrand, Norway, to the Upper Middle West* (Cambridge, 1985).

33 An example of a study of a very large group is U. Beijbom, *Utvandrarkvinnor. Svenska kvinnoöden i Amerika* (Stockholm, 2005).

Seamen were an international and extremely mobile workforce who have in fact always managed to establish themselves in other countries. They occasionally turn up as forerunners to the great emigration, but are in reality a category of their own and move along their own track in the history of migration.

The decision to emigrate was usually taken after mature consideration, even if conservative societies portrayed migration as the consequence of a thoughtless desire for adventure and misleading advertising. Many decisions were taken out of a wish to try something new in order to improve oneself. But improvements are not the same as changes. There were groups who left the old country, not to achieve change, but to avoid it.<sup>34</sup>

Groups of peasants would leave their native village because they did not wish to conform to the forthcoming changing conditions. They wanted to continue cultivating the land and to live in a village community. In order to preserve a particular pattern of life and protect their basic life-values they established themselves anew in a virgin land. Actually their motives for emigrating came very close to those of the experimental colonies, although their aims were the opposite.

One group which attracted much attention at the time were those who in one way or another needed a new start in life. The authorities in several countries wanted to have the opportunity to deport criminals to the other side of the ocean. In particular, the Danish police transported incorrigible criminals to America. This led to repeated complaints from the American authorities and on the Danish side there was an attempt to conceal the ticket purchases as gifts in one form or another.

It was far commoner to flee from an impending bankruptcy or a threatened trial. By travelling to America one could avoid a trial at home. One well-known example is the Swedish author, educationalist and social critic Carl Jonas Love Almqvist, who was threatened with legal proceedings for attempted murder and forgery and then hastily disappeared to the United States in 1851.

In propertied families, a bit of a clean-up operation was sometimes carried out when some 'black sheep' threatened to damage the family's standing. A ticket to America was a possible expedient to soften the scandal. In the higher social classes, the image of North America as a land of refuge could often be deep-rooted. Nathan Söderblom, a future archbishop in Sweden and

34 R. C. Ostergren, *A Community Transplanted: The Trans-Atlantic Experience of a Swedish Immigrant Settlement in the Upper Middle West, 1835-1915* (Uppsala, 1988).

founding spirit of the Christian ecumenical movement, studied at the University of Uppsala. In 1890 he was about to attend a Christian student conference in the United States, but had obviously omitted fully to inform his family of his intentions. His father wrote an anxious letter to a friend, asking: 'You also have a son in Uppsala. Have you heard what trouble Nathan has got himself into so that he has to go to America?'<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> L. Limberg, 'Almost a Century's Work: Preserving Swedishness outside Sweden', in P. J. Anderson *et al.* (eds.), *Scandinavians in Old and New Lands: Essays in Honor of H. Arnold Barton* (Chicago, 2004), p. 140.

## Everyday life

JAN EIVIND MYHRE

### The standard of living

A basic factor in shaping everyday life in the Nordic countries during the nineteenth century was the course and level of the standard of living.<sup>1</sup> The level of material wellbeing contributed to making up the boundaries of everyday life. Its development plays a vital role as to how people view the possibilities of changing their everyday lives. In this respect, the two generations from the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the Germany of Bismarck certainly saw important changes in the Nordic societies.

Save in some regions for some periods, there is little reason to speak about Malthusian conditions in Scandinavia after 1815.<sup>2</sup> This was true for much of the eighteenth century as well, but from around the 1820s, the supply of food (calories) per capita showed a marked increase, caused by, among other factors, the success of the potato. Within a few decades in the early nineteenth century, this apple of the earth became the staple food of Nordic households, in combination with grain (usually porridge or unleavened bread), fish and meat, the latter depending on where you lived and what your societal status was.

The best measure of a society past the Malthusian stage is the mortality rate. Already in the last decades of the eighteenth century Denmark, Sweden and Norway were showing signs of relatively stable low death rates, allowing

<sup>1</sup> See also Ch. 32 in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> See articles in *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 34:2 (1986): P. Boje, 'The Standard of Living in Denmark 1750–1914'; M. Essemyr, 'Food, Fare and Nutrition. Some Reflections on the Historical Development of Food Consumption'; S. Heikkinen, 'On Private Consumption and the Standard of Living in Finland, 1860–1912'; K. B. Minde and J. Ramstad, 'The Development of Real Wages in Norway about 1730–1910'; J. E. Myhre, 'Research into Norwegian Living Conditions in the Period 1750–1914'; and H. Norman and H. Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections: Nordic Migration to the New World after 1800* (Oslo, 1987), p. 37.



the population to grow every single year, while Finland and Iceland still had to wait some decades. After a few years of high death rates during the last years of Napoleonic Wars, a long decline in mortality began. Since the birth rate remained steadily high until the very last decades of the century, natural growth was considerable.

From an international perspective, the mortality rate was particularly low in Norway and Sweden, and strikingly low among infants. The infant mortality rate fell to 10 per cent and below in Norway as early as from around 1850. And within Norway, the rural districts had the lowest mortality.<sup>3</sup>

While improved nutrition obviously was an important cause of the fall in mortality for some historians, improved sanitary conditions, better public health e.g. vaccination, the long peace following 1814 and a milder epidemic climate rival nutrition as major explanations, the latter perhaps being the stronger candidate for explaining the initial fall in mortality.<sup>4</sup> Taken together, these factors mean that everyday habits of eating and cleaning acted as both causes and effects in the process of lowering mortality and raising the standard of living.

The old demographic regime, with crude death rates usually fluctuating around 30 per 1,000 and occasional years showing rates at 50 per 1,000, held sway in Finland and particularly in Iceland into the second half of the nineteenth century. In the three central Scandinavian countries, this was a phenomenon of the major towns and cities only. Stockholm had a regular annual death surplus until the late 1850s. In Kristiania (Oslo) and København occasional visits by cholera epidemics, the latest in 1853, were reminders of earlier centuries. Death in the cities was also a class mark. While a growing well-to-do bourgeoisie became established in urban society, the labouring classes in the larger towns probably saw few improvements in their living standards until the middle of the nineteenth century. The housing conditions in particular were poor, reaching a nadir around 1850.<sup>5</sup>

3 W. H. Hubbard et al. (eds.), *Historical Studies in Mortality Decline* (Oslo, 2002).

4 See R. Engelsen, 'Mortalitetsdebatten og sosiale skilnader i mortalitet', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 62 (1983), for the Norwegian debate on the matter. Concerning Sweden, see T. Bengtsson and R. Ohlsson, 'Sveriges befolkning – myter och verklighet', in B. Furuhausen (ed.), *Äventyret Sverige. En ekonomisk och social historia* (Arlöv, 1996).

5 J. Söderberg et al., *A Stagnating Metropolis: The Economy and Demography of Stockholm, 1750–1850* (Cambridge, 1991); J. E. Myhre, *Hovedstaden Christiania 1814–1900, Oslo bys historie*, 3 (Oslo, 1990); H. C. Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud 1700–1800, Dansk socialhistorie*, 4 (1979).

There was also a rise in real wages, clearly discernible from the 1820s in most of the Nordic countries, in the towns from the 1840s at the latest.<sup>6</sup> The overall picture therefore shows a definite improvement in standards of living, although hardly any equalisation. The main problem confronting Scandinavian societies between 1815 and 1871 was not famine, epidemics or widespread absolute poverty, but increasing social cleavages in both town and country. An increasing, rather well-off class of yeoman farmers and a class of burghers, slowly turning into an urban middle class, faced a growing rural and urban proletariat. The share of population receiving poor relief more than doubled in København between 1816 and 1860, to 9.2 per cent. The corresponding figure for Kristiania soared to 18 per cent in 1868.<sup>7</sup> The two large exoduses of the century, from country to town and from both to America, were the result of this trend.<sup>8</sup> The struggle for livelihood, and a more independent livelihood, also led to considerable internal migration in the direction where resources were still available, that is in the northern and interior parts of Scandinavia. Sweden was not fully 'colonised' until about 1870, measured by the occurrence of wolves.<sup>9</sup> The Norwegian and Finnish interior, and the coastal fisheries in north Norway, had room for more farmers and fishermen for still some years to come.

### The rise of bourgeois lifestyle

Nowhere were the parallel processes of proletarianisation and the emergence of the well-to-do middle class more evident than among the artisans.<sup>10</sup> From

6 However, a minority of the population lived mainly from monetary wages, even as late as 1870. Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud*, pp. 192ff.; T. Bergh et al., *Norge fra U-land til I-land. Vekst og utviklingslinjer 1830–1980* (Oslo, 1983); see also articles in *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 34:2 (1986).

7 V. Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Tiden 1814–1864', in A. E. Christensen (ed.), *Danmarks historie*, 5 (København, 1985), p. 129; E. Sundt, *Om fattigforholdene i Christiania* (Oslo, 1870; repr., 1978).

8 Norman and Runblom, *Transatlantic Connections*; O. S. Lovoll, *The Promise of America: A History of the Norwegian-American People* (Minneapolis, 1984).

9 B. Furuhausen (ed.), *Äventyret Sverige. En ekonomisk och social historia* (Stockholm, 1993); B. Furuhausen (ed.), *Äventyret Sverige. En ekonomisk och social historia* (Arlöv, 1996), p. 36; M. Engman, *Norden och flyttningarna under nya tiden* (København, 1997); S. Sogner et al., *Migrasjon i Norden* (Oslo, 1995–7).

10 T. Pryser, 'Artisans in Kristiania 1840–1885', *Commission internationale d'histoire des mouvements sociaux et des structures sociales. Petite entreprise et croissance industrielle dans le monde aux XIXe et XXe siècles* (1981); Sundt, *Om fattigforholdene*; E. Bull, 'Håndverkssvenner og arbeiderklasse i Kristiania. Sosialhistoriske problemer', *Historisk tidsskrift*, 45 (1966); Skovgaard-Petersen, 'Tiden 1814–1864'; L. Edgren, *Lärling, gesäll, mästare. Hantverk och hantverkare i Malmö 1750–1847* (Lund, 1987).

being one estate (*stand*) among others, the crafts changed with the rise of class society. Early in the century apprentices stood a good chance of becoming journeymen, who in turn could reasonably expect to reach the position of master. In the course of two generations a quite different threefold division had emerged in most trades. At the top were upper-middle-class capitalist employers and in the middle a group of lower-middle-class self-employed artisans. At the bottom there was a large class of wage earners, many of whom, however, still named themselves journeymen and refused to be called workers. In many ways they tried to copy the bourgeois lifestyle of their superiors. What were the main traits of this way of life?

It was an urban lifestyle, spreading along with advancing urbanisation, noticeable particularly in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The urban share of the population in Norway rose from c. 12 to 24 per cent between 1815 and 1875, in Sweden from c. 10 to 15–16 per cent and in Denmark from 21 to 25 per cent. Finland was only 7.5 per cent urbanised as late as 1870, while Iceland at that date had only three tiny towns.<sup>11</sup> Only few towns were of European size. København grew from 109,000 to 218,000 between 1801 and 1870 and Stockholm from 76,000 to 136,000, these two being the only cities with a European large-city culture. Kristiania grew amazingly fast, from 12,000 to 80,000, but remained provincial in outlook. Göteborg had by 1870 reached 56,000 inhabitants, Bergen barely 40,000 and Helsinki 26,000.<sup>12</sup>

In the urbanised Denmark and southern Sweden a bourgeois outlook to a certain extent spread to the upper echelons of the rural population, while in the rest of the Nordic countries town and country remained more or less two separate cultures, as we shall deal with below.

A main component of the bourgeois lifestyle was the control by the individual of his or her impulses, a manifestation of what has been called 'the civilising process'.<sup>13</sup> This process reached its most intense period in the

11 The figures from Denmark are from 1801 and 1870, showing administrative urban population only. So do the Finnish figures from 1870. The administrative urban population in Norway, by comparison, was 10 per cent (1815) and 18 per cent (1875). Sources in G. A. Blom (ed.), *Urbaniseringsprosessen i Norden*, 3 (Oslo, 1977): J. E. Myhre, 'Urbaniseringen i Norge i industrialiseringens første fase ca. 1850–1914'; B. Öhngren, 'Urbaniseringen i Sverige 1840–19120'; P. Boje and O. Hyldtoft, 'Økonomiske, geografiske og demografiske aspekter'; E. Jutikkala, 'Städernas tillväxt och näringsstruktur'; H. S. Kjartansson, 'Urbaniseringen på Island ca. 1865–1915'.

12 Boje and Hyldtoft, 'Økonomiske, geografiske og demografiske aspekter'; Myhre, 'Urbaniseringen i Norge'; B. R. Mitchell, *European Historical Statistics 1750–1970* (London, 1978). The figures for Norway and Denmark include suburbs.

13 N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford, 1994); Söderberg et al., *A Stagnating Metropolis*.

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but was clearly visible also two or three generations earlier.<sup>14</sup> This lifestyle is characterised by an emphasis on good manners, a certain formality in behaviour (even between close friends) and moderation or modesty when dealing with physical aspects of living, like eating, drinking or sexual behaviour. The distinction between men and women was greater than before or after in history. The bourgeoisie who set the tone in Kristiania from the late 1830s, consciously distanced itself from the unrestrained social life of its predecessors, where alcohol and food were consumed in abundance. The new fashion was to serve tea and twist; their social club was mockingly called 'The Twist' (*Kringla*).<sup>15</sup>

Bourgeois ideals and conduct to a certain degree spread to other parts of society, partly via imitation of bourgeois life styles, in part via political implementation of its ideology, and partly through direct personal influence running from higher-ranking to lower-ranking persons. The latter decreased as the century grew mature, with the decline of paternalism. This point must not be exaggerated, however. The Nordic countries in 1870 were still only on the eve of large-scale industrialisation, and proto-industry was largely paternalistic in its style of leadership. So were many farmer–crofter relations, many of whom were still not influenced by urban social relations.

The bourgeois lifestyle had a number of more or less identifiable traits to go with it. An emphasis was put on family life, with a particularly one-sided family role assigned to the women, while the role assigned to the men was an increasingly public one. The place of alcohol in society became very much a matter of debate. The world-view of the members of the bourgeoisie was individualistic, liberal, rationalistic and progressive. Their views on work, and its concomitant, leisure, were reflected in contemporary bourgeois art and literature, and in the recurrent rituals and celebrations.

Pivotal to bourgeois self-identity was the view of the family as the society's central institution, as the cradle of morality and civic spirit. The family was, of course, central to the Nordic societies in the previous centuries as well, but some new factors endowed it with increased significance in the nineteenth century. The fall in infant mortality meant that more children survived. Fertility being fairly constant, this meant that the nuclear families became

14 J. Frykman and O. Löfgren, *Culture Builders: Historical Anthropology of Middle Class Life* (New Brunswick, 1987); M. Hellspång and O. Löfgren, *Land och stad. Svenska samhällstyper och livsformer från medeltid till nutid* (Lund, 1976).

15 Myhre, *Hovedstaden Christiania*; J. E. Myhre, 'Sosialhistorie som sosietetshistorie. Om studiet av eliter', in K. Kjeldstadli et al. (eds.), *Valg og vitenskap. Festskrift til Sivert Langholm* (Oslo, 1997).

larger. Since the average household size declined – e.g. in Norway from 5.36 to 4.65 persons between 1801 and 1875<sup>16</sup> – households and families became more synonymous. Other relatives and domestic servants became fewer, although a maid or two remained an indispensable resource in any bourgeois household until well into the twentieth century.<sup>17</sup> In this demographic sense, but also in other respects, the families became more introverted during the century.

More security concerning the survival of children also meant more concern about their future and upbringing, although the worshipping of middle-class children and the saving of all children did not take on sizeable proportions until the last decades of the century. Children were to a large degree left to themselves.<sup>18</sup> Child labour was not as widespread as in England, for example, due to late industrialisation and early compulsory schooling.

In Finland in particular, the rise of the bourgeois family in the period 1840–60s took on a national dimension. The Finnish family was launched as a democratic and national challenge to the Swedish- (and Russian-)based families of the old oppressive regime.<sup>19</sup>

With the rise of a public sphere, in the early nineteenth century, the family among the upper and middle classes became a private resort for the men, in between their businesses, political engagements and various organisational activities. In an earlier age, private and public affairs had been much more mixed. Most such activities took place in the homes, where the women of the Enlightenment took part in the conversations. In the nineteenth century even women from the upper parts of society were exiled to the kitchen, and most private parties – after dinner – parted into a male and a female section.<sup>20</sup> However, the liberal economic policies of the nineteenth century, combined with the necessities of providing for a rising number of unmarried women, allowed quite a few women to participate in trade and crafts, and even enter

16 E. Ladewig Petersen (ed.), *Familien i forandring i 18- og 1900-tallet & mødeberetning* (Odense, 1986).

17 The domestic servants' share of the total Danish population decreased from 16 to 12 per cent between 1801 and 1870. Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud*, p. 102.

18 F. M. Martinson, *Growing Up in Norway, 800–1990* (Carbondale, 1992); B. Sandin, *Hemmet, gatan, fabriken eller skolan. Folkundervisning och barnuppfostran i svenska städer 1600–1850* (Lund, 1986).

19 K. Häggman, *Perheen vuosisata* (Helsinki, 1994); E. I. Kouri, 'Das Nationale und die Stellung der Sprache im Grossfürstentum Finnland', in K. Maier (ed.), *Nation und Sprache in Nordosteuropa im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 2012), pp. 287–8.

20 F. Sejersted, 'Den vanskelige frihet 1814–1851', in K. Mykland (ed.), *Norges historie*, 10 (Oslo, 1978); Myhre, *Hovedstaden Christiania*; Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud*, pp. 166f.

offices and classrooms, although the latter tendency was only in its infancy before 1870.

The narrow societal role assigned to bourgeois women did not in general extend to the countryside, where the economic contribution of the women was vital, both as keepers of the household, and in the daily work in the cow barn, at the well and in the fields. In the fishing districts the women were actually the farmers of the combined fisher-farmer households. In the towns, as well, quite a few women of the working class or the lower bourgeoisie worked for wages or assisted their husbands in the shops or workshops, apart from managing the household. The emerging ideal, however, was a bourgeois woman administering the household tasks, but only to a small degree participating in them. In 1870, however, running a household, urban or rural, was normally still a formidable task, since most food or clothes were still processed domestically. Only towards the end of our period were the tasks of butchering, baking, candle-making, spinning, weaving and sewing to a certain extent taken away from some of the households.<sup>21</sup>

At the onset of the nineteenth century alcohol was a scourge to lots of common people in the countryside as well as in the towns. Abuse of alcohol was quite common further up the social ladder as well. The liberalisation of the distilling of spirits early in the century made things worse. The 1830s may have witnessed the zenith of Norwegian alcohol consumption, as well as its crime rate. The strikingly successful struggle against the evil of drink was initiated by the emerging bourgeoisie, but later grew steadily as part of a widespread social movement. In Finland, temperance became something of a civic religion. The distilling business had to accept restrictions and became the exception from the rule of economic liberalisation. The crime rates dropped as well. Fighting alcohol was more than a moral crusade. Less drink and less violence was certainly good for running businesses as well as government.<sup>22</sup>

The temperance and teetotal movement was not primarily a religious matter, but it became interwoven with the religious movements in the Scandinavian countries, lay movements which became stronger with the liberalisation in the practice of lay services in the 1840s (Denmark and Norway). Several religious revivals reacted against the rationalistic bent of

21 A. J. Avdem and K. Melby, *Oppe først og sist i seng. Husarbeid i Norge fra 1850 til i dag* (Oslo, 1985), p. 59; G. A. Blom and S. Sogner (eds.), *Med kjønnspektiv på norsk historie* (Oslo, 1999); D. Gaunt, *Familieliv i Norden* (Malmö, 1983).

22 Söderberg et al., *A Stagnating Metropolis*; N. Christie, *Hvor tett et samfunn?* (Oslo, 1975).

much of the clergy. Others, like the Finnish revivals around mid century, were parts of the nationalist movement. Some revivals were quite pietistic in their tendency, while other religious movements, like the one connected with the Dane Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872), took a more humanistic orientation. All of them, however, contributed to a more serious and disciplined outlook on life, consistent with the ideals of the new bourgeoisie. Again, this was in accordance with the climate of economic pursuit. ‘Be stingy with your time’, was the motto of the Kristianian merchant Christian Strøm (1802–56).<sup>23</sup>

The bourgeoisie was to some degree affected by the religious revivals, but the widespread Christian lay movements mainly involved the common people, rural and urban alike. Religious piety actually created the beginning of the important social movements in the Nordic countries in the last decades of the century: the Swedish popular movements (*folkrörelserna*), the Norwegian countercultures (*motkulturer*, with a strong nationalistic bent) and Danish and Finnish equivalents. The bourgeoisie actually became a main target for these movements.

In an age where social differences increased, temperance was a uniting factor. More fundamental, however, were the tendencies towards a common modern outlook, which became more clearly visible from around the middle of the century. The idea of progress was a bourgeois attitude since before 1800; in economic matters it became apparent in the early decades of the nineteenth century. In the 1850s and 1860s, however, observers noted that even workers and farmers had adapted elements of the idea of progress. Agricultural progress and industrial exhibitions were focal points in this respect.<sup>24</sup>

In an era of burgeoning individualism, several factors contributed to controlling society, and keeping it together, socially speaking. Rising institutions, like the school, the prison, the asylum etc., were significant in this respect, but of more concern to us here are the everyday life elements acting as the fundamentals of society. In the early nineteenth century, time was local, usually given by local church clocks, which often were not very accurate, measured by sun time. Clocks and watches were not very widespread. This was to change significantly in the course of the century. The new factories in the second quarter of the century introduced time discipline, public institutions increasingly kept fixed opening hours, farmers began using

23 Original quote: ‘Vær gjærrig paa Tiden’. Myhre, *Hovedstaden Christiania*, p. 111.

24 E. Sundt, *Om husfliden i Norge* (Oslo, 1867; repr., 1975).

clocks when summoning their workers with the aid of the farm bell (*gårds-klocka*). The coming of railway and telegraph lines demanded the synchronising of time. The Norwegian telegraph system employed a common Kristiania time from 1866. The railway between Stockholm and Göteborg introduced a common time in 1862. Sweden became, in 1879, the first country in the world to introduce a normal time. Common time was internationalised through a convention in 1893.<sup>25</sup>

Public bookkeeping demanded, more than before, that people knew their date of birth and other vital dates of their lives. However, old pre-industrial and pre-modern customs still prevailed in many quarters. Journeymen and apprentices in the trades, for example, insisted on taking Monday off, 'Saint Monday', until well into the second half of the century.<sup>26</sup>

Several popular social rituals and events survived through the pressure of modernisation and individualism. The celebrations of midsummer or mid-winter were such events, which were particularly long-lived in the countryside. The old institutions of informal co-operation were still at work by 1870, but even in the remotest corners of the Nordic countryside, economic and cultural associations of various kinds had begun to replace some of them. In the towns market weeks or days functioned as events of social cohesion long after their economic roles had taken a downward turn.<sup>27</sup>

The associations in the countryside, populated mainly by farmers, were hardly a sign of *fritid* (leisure), although they must have had social functions. Leisure time was not exactly abundant for the propertiless classes of country or town and their propensity to organise formally was thus very low. There were exceptions, like journeymen in the towns and the amazing Norwegian Thrane Movement 1848–51, a radical political movement with 30,000–40,000 followers, rural as well as urban.<sup>28</sup> The advent of the modern factory created genuine spare time, albeit not much. Except for a few trade unions, leisure activities for workers seemed to a large degree to be spent at the local inn.

25 L. Lundmark, *Tiden är bara ett ord. Om klockornas makt och hur man bryter den* (Stockholm, 1993); M. Skoie, 'Da tiden ble normal. Innføring av felles tid i Norge på slutten av 1800-tallet', MA thesis in history (Oslo, 2002).

26 Edgren, *Lärling, gesäll, mästare*.

27 A. Steensberg (ed.), *Dagligliv i Danmark: i det nittende og tyvende århundrede, 1: 1790–1870* (København, 1964); Frykman and Löfgren, *Culture Builders*.

28 K. Tønnesson, 'Popular Protest and Organization: The Thrane Movement in Pre-industrial Norway, 1849–55', in F. Krantz (ed.), *History from Below: Studies in Popular Protest and Popular Ideology in Honour of George Rudé* (Montréal, 1985); T. Pryser, 'The Thrane Movement in Norway 1849–1851', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 18 (1993).



For the bourgeoisie, the decades from the 1830s and 1840s on were an age of massive organisational activity. Most of it had a rational purpose, even the early sports associations promoting public health and making stronger the country's ability to defend itself. To some sectors of the middle classes at least, the decades around the middle of the century marked the modest rise of a leisure culture, a culture which of course had long existed among the aristocracy in Finland, Sweden and Denmark, a class conspicuously lacking in Norway.

### From ranks to classes

In Swedish history, the period between 1809 and 1866 has been named 'the final epoch of the age of ranks' (*ståndstidens sluttskede*).<sup>29</sup> The dates refer to political events, but the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century definitely marked the beginning of a new order of social relations and their manifestations in everyday life. We shall deal with two major aspects of this process, the recession of paternalism in favour of market relations, and the widening of people's horizons, particularly in space.

In presenting the dissolution of paternalism, the development of the artisan trades once more offers a good example. In the early nineteenth century, most trades still practised the old system of journeymen and apprentices staying in the master's house as parts of the household, the latter being not only an employer but also the undisputed principal of the house, almost a guardian. The journeymen and apprentices were unmarried, with some exceptions. The master's wife would be in daily charge of the entire household. The youngest apprentice would be expected to light a fire in the stove in the morning (at least in the workshop), and also to perform other kinds of work bordering on the tasks of domestic servants. The system had social mobility built in. Apprentices might expect to become journeymen, and these stood reasonably fair chances of becoming masters, at which point they might set up a family.<sup>30</sup>

During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century the twin forces of capitalisation (aided by industrialisation from around 1840) and liberalisation helped to break up this system. From 1839 and three to four decades thereafter, with Norway, Denmark and Sweden first and Finland some twenty years

29 S. Carlsson and J. Rosén, *Svensk historia*, 1–2, 3rd edn (Stockholm, 1969).

30 Edgren, *Lärling, gesäll, mästare*; Bull, 'Håndverkssvenner og arbeiderklasse i Kristiania'; V. Dybdahl and I. Dübeck, *Håndverket og statsmagten 1700–1862, Håndværkets kulturhistorie*, 3 (København, 1983).

behind, the governments issued a number of laws abolishing the guilds and practically all restrictions on trade and commerce. In a long process, the speed and dates varying from place to place and from trade to trade, the subordinate artisans became wage earners. This moved them away from the employer's house, enabling them to marry when they wished, but reducing their chances of becoming masters themselves. In Malmö the crafts retained the ideal type as late as 1847, with the exception of the masons and the carpenters. In Kristiania, 66 per cent of the journeymen lived with their principals in 1801, against only 15 per cent in 1865. But whereas for 'modern' trades such as printers, painters and carpenters, the figures dropped from 75–100 per cent to almost nil, for 'old fashioned' trades like bakers and shoemakers the figures dropped much less, from 85 and 95 per cent to 36 and 42 per cent.<sup>31</sup>

The same tendency for employees to separate their private lives from their working lives was visible also elsewhere, like commerce and the old proto-industrial businesses (*bruk*). The trend worried some officials, who lamented the effects of the loss of social control: the Norwegian priest and social surveyor Eilert Sundt commented in 1870 upon the causes of rising poverty in Kristiania. He harked back to earlier times:

[W]hen our town was still so small, that people mostly knew each other and lived together like in a big family – a generation ago – there prevailed the custom that apprentices, journeymen and store clerks lived in the houses of their masters and principals and had full access to their family circles, whereas now young people themselves must provide board and lodging, company and entertainment. The temptations of public amusements have increased too much.<sup>32</sup>

Sundt is, of course, also describing the anonymity of everyday life in the growing cities of the Nordic countries.

The overwhelming majority of the population, however, still lived in the countryside. But even in the countryside a process of weakening the close personal ties between people of high and low rank took place, more pronounced in the south than in the north of Scandinavia. Peasants or farmers<sup>33</sup> in the south traditionally lived within the framework of the estate and the village. The major forces changing the daily lives of the Nordic rural population were the long-standing integration into a market economy and the enclosure movement. The effects of enclosure were most drastic in

<sup>31</sup> Edberg, *Lärling, gesäll, mästare*; Bull, 'Håndverkssvenner og arbeiderklasse i Kristiania'.

<sup>32</sup> Sundt, *Om fattigforholdene i Christiania*, p. 120.

<sup>33</sup> One might reasonably discuss which term suits best.

Denmark where the farmers were most dependent at the outset. Through this process the Danish farmer lost contact with the estate and the village,<sup>34</sup> embarking on a social journey that made him an agricultural petit bourgeois, and a member of the Danish middle class. In Norway, at the other extreme, there were no villages and only few large estates. Norwegian peasants were largely freeholders already by 1800. In some places, the farms were situated two or more at the same place. Enclosure put an end to this and made farming more efficient, but did not alter the social relations in the countryside very much. What did change the social circumstances in the Norwegian countryside was the rise, until c. 1850s, of a class of landless crofters, dependent on the farmers who owned the land. A rise of a rural proletariat of this or a related kind also took place in other Scandinavian countries, being one of the prerequisites of urbanisation.

Originally a strong paternalistic relationship, the decline in the number of crofters in the 1850s and 1860s – the crofters' ways of escape to America, to the towns or to other ways of making a livelihood – contributed to the weakening of the ties. An increasing dependency on cash wages made the rural workers more vulnerable in their livelihood, but also better equipped to travel overseas.

All in all, however, 1870 is far too early a date to proclaim the arrival of class society in all the Nordic countries. Paternalism remained strong in agriculture, as well as in most of the sawmills and ironworks and even the modern manufacturing industries, like the textile mills or the mechanical workshops. This means that, with the possible exception of the larger towns and cities, most people still looked to their principals and superiors for guidance and consent, all day and all week. Paternalism, however, was on the retreat, while more market-oriented, contract-like, class-based relations were gaining ground.

In the early nineteenth century, the mental horizons of most people, in economic, social or cultural matters, were largely local. This was partly a result of produce being to a considerable extent consumed locally, by the producers themselves or by nearby farmers or town-dwellers. But this statement certainly has its limits. Many fishermen and farmers travelled considerable distances to sell or buy, many journeymen had travelled widely (as they were expected to), merchants and sailors had seen much of Europe and even the wider world. Still, in large parts of Scandinavia – the interior of

34 Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i oprud*, p. 126.

Norway, Sweden and Finland in particular – the communities were rather self-contained. The markets, which were often located far away, were visited once or twice a year. In Denmark, adscription lasted until 1788. In Norway, there were formal restrictions on moving (*tjenesteplikt*) since 1754, somewhat loosened in 1818, but not abolished until 1854. The regulations were never very effective, but nevertheless obstructed internal migration. There was of course some migration to the towns in the early nineteenth century, but one cannot speak of ‘a very lively interaction of people between town and country’. This was exactly what Eilert Sundt did when describing Kristiania and its hinterland in the late 1850s.<sup>35</sup> Increasingly this description was well suited to large areas of Scandinavia from mid century onwards.

The everyday experience of many Scandinavians in the 1850s and 1860s was heavily influenced by better transport. The roads were improved, steamships arrived in the 1820s, and railways were running in Denmark from 1847, in Norway from 1854, in Sweden from 1856 and in Finland from 1862. The major towns saw gas lights in the streets. Thousands left their home parish for the towns or for America. A stream of letters travelled in the other direction, read by an increasingly literate population. The distribution of newspapers and magazines increased immensely in the two generations before 1870. The integration of the economy brought the rural and the urban population closer together. A symbolic event was the opening of many a town gate throughout Scandinavia.<sup>36</sup> Goods, services, information and people flowed more freely between towns and between town and country.

The emphasis on the two great migration flows in the nineteenth century, overseas emigration and the country-to-town exodus, has overshadowed a third one, namely immigration. The greatest flow was Swedes pouring into Denmark and Norway, but there were others: from Finland, Russia, Germany, Britain and elsewhere. Among other factors, this was made possible by the abolition of passports in the Scandinavian countries around 1860. Not all communities were strongly affected, but others were affected economically, socially and culturally in the course of their everyday lives.<sup>37</sup>

35 E. Sundt, *Om Piperviken og Ruseløkkbakken* (Oslo, 1858; repr., 1968); J. E. Myhre, ‘Det livligste vevsel-forhold, Flyttingene til Kristiania på annen halvdel av 1800-tallet’, in B. Gjerdåker (ed.), *På flyttefot. Innanlands vandring på 1800-talet* (Oslo, 1981).

36 Skovgaard-Petersen, *Tiden 1814–1864*; Myhre, ‘Urbaniseringen i Norge’.

37 E. Niemi et al., ‘I nasjonalstatens tid 1814–1940’, in K. Kjelstadli (ed.), *Norsk innvandringshistorie*, 2 (Oslo, 2003); H. Z. Sane, *Billige og villige. Fremmedarbejdere i fædrelandet ca. 1800–1970, Af indvandringens historie i Danmark*, 2 (Farum, 2000); I. Svanberg and M. Tydén, *Tusen år av invandring. En svensk kulturhistoria* (Stockholm, 1992).

In addition to a considerable rise in the standard of living, this widening of people's mental horizons influenced their daily lives, in particular their expectations for the future. New ways of eking out a living presented themselves. While some few farmhouses still lacked windows and contained smoke vents as late as 1850, this was soon to be but a memory. Better ovens and larger windows were introduced in both rural and urban houses. Some items formerly regarded as luxury goods spread downwards in the social hierarchy: coffee, tobacco, cotton textiles etc. Whereas two-thirds of private consumption in Denmark was spent on foodstuffs in the eighteenth century, the share had dropped to one half in the mid-eighteenth century. In Finland, however, the share by 1860 was two-thirds, alcohol and tobacco not included.<sup>38</sup>

While gas lights lit the streets of the larger towns by 1870, most settlements and households still lived in almost complete darkness during the winter half of the year. Most people had to make do with the light from the stove, the fireplace or from tallow candles; only the well-to-do could afford stearin candles or kerosene or oil lamps, which were introduced in the nineteenth century.

In many ways, the opening of a larger world was a prerequisite of local government, introduced in Norway in 1837, in Sweden in 1862, in Denmark in 1841 and 1867/68 and in Finland in 1865.<sup>39</sup> Local political participation demanded more than just the experience of the daily struggle for subsistence. It forced local people to look beyond their farms, to participate in – admittedly quite rudimentary – planning, valuable for the processes of modernisation and democratisation that lay ahead.

38 Johansen, *En samfundsorganisation i opbrud*, p. 206; Heikinen, 'On Private Consumption and the Standard of Living in Finland, 1860–1912'.

39 P. Aronsson, 'Local Politics: The Invisible Political Culture', in B. Stråth and Ø. Sørensen (eds.), *The Cultural Construction of Norden* (Oslo, 1997), p. 175.

## The education of new groups in society

LARS PETTERSON

### Popular education

In most countries, twentieth-century writings about the history of schooling have rested on an approach to history which might be described as 'finalistic'. In other words, the school system of the present day has been treated as the self-evident outcome of previous developments. This frequently leads to a deterministic form of historical writing which describes the evolution of the school system as an unbroken series of worthy reforms. The past is populated by benevolent reformers whose efforts point the way forward towards our own system of universal, compulsory education. This perspective and focus on the idea of continual reform have lent an air of humanity and rationality to school history. A variant of this approach emphasises different pieces of legislation about schooling in the nineteenth century and assigns a symbolic importance to particular years as marking stages in the development of the school system. In the case of Denmark, the year is 1814, a number of royal decrees about schooling were introduced – decrees which are usually portrayed as representing the definitive victory of enlightenment over superstition. In Norway, it is the year 1827 which carries the same symbolic significance in national historiography, while in Sweden and Finland it is the years 1842 and 1866 respectively (when ordinances about parochial schools were issued) which have been presented as milestones in the triumph of reason over blind beliefs.

It is true that the broadly based popular education is a product of the nineteenth century in the Nordic region, as in the rest of Europe. However, none of the ordinances mentioned above led to a drastic change in circumstances anywhere in the Nordic region. They had little or no impact on the level of literacy. Nor did they lead to universal, compulsory schooling. All that happened in these four milestone years was that the duties of the local

authorities in relation to the schooling of children were set out in a more regular and systematic fashion.

Only in absolutist Denmark did the ordinances of 1814 – whose most important provisions were merely a repetition of those in an earlier decree of 1806 – succeeded in creating something approaching an orderly system of general schooling for the mass of the people in both town and country. Even so, these royal ordinances were a rather watered-down version of the visions which had inspired their authors when the work of reform began in the 1790s, a time when revolutionary attitudes still dominated the thinking of many influential groups. Moreover, the reality of the Danish school system rarely matched the standards set in the royal ordinances.

At the time when Danish popular schooling was institutionalised in 1814, the school system in Iceland was in a state of decay. The only parochial school on the island, the one at Alftanes outside Reykjavik, had closed in 1812, and it was not until 1830 that a new parochial school for twenty pupils was established in Reykjavik.

In Norway, the law of 1827 concerning parochial schools only related to rural areas and was only partially put into effect in any case. The gulf between the level of knowledge demanded by the letter of the law and what the pupils actually learned in practice remained wide for many decades to come. There is nothing to suggest that these schools, which normally only provided teaching for part of the year since their personnel moved around from district to district, produced a higher level of knowledge and skills than did education within the household.

The situation was much the same in Sweden. Schooling for the masses in no way started with the ordinance of 1842: at that time, close to half of the parishes in Sweden already had some form of parochial school. Nor did 1842 lead to a dramatic increase in the number of schools: as late as 1870, far fewer than half the children in Sweden were registered pupils of a permanent school offering full-time teaching.

Finally, in the case of Finland too, the parochial school ordinance of 1866 did not lead to any immediate change. However, it is true that the initiative came from the highest quarter: at the prompting of Alexander II, the senate asked the cathedral to produce a report on the establishment of parochial schools in rural districts. Detailed proposals were drawn up by the clergyman Uno Cygnæus, and it was on this basis that the first parochial school ordinance was issued ten years later. The ordinance had no immediate, dramatic effects. According to the official statistics, there were only 148 teachers and 6,131 pupils at all the parochial schools in Finland in 1872.

The number of schools only began to increase rapidly in the 1880s, when school inspectors started to be appointed by the state, so that in 1890 there were more than 1,300 teachers and 28,700 pupils.

A fixation on particular dates can easily lead to an exaggerated emphasis on the role of the state in the development of parochial schools. In reality, state intervention was rare and limited during the first half of the nineteenth century. The link between the state and popular education was very weak in the Nordic region at the time when these decrees and ordinances were issued: the economic responsibility for the schooling of the masses was always the responsibility of local communities.

The state's role in all forms of education was limited. In addition to the parochial schools established by local communities, there was a rich flowering of charity schools and other institutions set up by philanthropic societies. Popular education included all the philanthropic educational establishments produced by the emergence of public opinion, evening schools, Sunday schools, infants' schools, reading societies and parish libraries. These bodies usually had a British model, ranging as they did from Methodist Tract Societies to Mechanics' Institutions. For example, the utilitarian Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in Britain had a number of Nordic counterparts. Its Swedish equivalent, which was set up in 1834, had the same name (*Sällskapet för nyttiga kunskapers spridande*). Its Danish and Norwegian counterparts – in Denmark, *Selskabet for Trykkefrihedens rette Brug* (the Society for the Correct Use of Freedom of Expression) of 1835, and in Norway, Henrik Wergeland's *Selskabet for Folkeopplysningens Fremme i Norge* (the Society for the Promotion of Popular Education in Norway) of 1851 – adopted different names, but performed the same role.

A strong focus on nineteenth-century reforms can also be misleading if it leads to the assumption that there was no teaching for the mass of the people before that time. Throughout the Nordic region, every individual had since the seventeenth century experienced a Christian upbringing which involved reading the psalm book and Luther's little catechism. The tradition of reading maintained within the church laid the foundation for a certain degree of universal education. The clergy kept a strict watch on the level of knowledge among the laity by frequently visiting households and questioning their members about the faith and through constant meetings for communal reading and religious songs. The skills and knowledge required were, of course, directly related to Protestant orthodoxy.

What was demanded was not literacy in the general sense of the word. The ability to read was remarkably widespread in the Nordic region in



comparison with other parts of Europe from the seventeenth century onwards, but the ability to write was no more common than, for example, in England during the early modern period. It was the task of the clergy to disseminate an ability to read among the laity and to check that this was maintained. There was seldom any question of increasing the number of people who could write. We are dealing here with a vertical channel of communication which functioned in one direction only. Ordinary people needed to be able to read so that the instructions of those in authority could be transmitted to them. Learning occurred through the study of a limited range of texts approved by the church: the psalm book, the little catechism and the various declarations of faith required in the different Nordic states. However, the church was never the most important link between the state and the individual. In this respect, the primary role was played by the household, and this meant that pockets of non-conformism survived. The persistent efforts of the state to integrate individuals as obedient subjects may have been far-reaching, but they could never be totalitarian. The individual was brought up in a household, and the mistress of the household was generally the person who inculcated the dominant rules and values.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, most inhabitants of the Nordic region were still semi-literate in the sense that they could read but not write. The ability to read was probably more widespread in Sweden than in any other part of the Nordic region, but it seems as if the ability to write was more common in Denmark. In the case of Sweden-Finland, a law had been introduced as early as the late seventeenth century stipulating that every household should be visited by a clergyman once a year and its members questioned on the faith. When the ritual of confirmation was introduced in Denmark-Norway in the eighteenth century, it was accompanied by an attempt to establish compulsory attendance at schools in addition to teaching within the home as a preparation for the first communion, while in Iceland teaching within the home was made compulsory.

It is not easy to determine when schooling within the household was replaced by a school-based system of popular education. There is no obvious turning point. The two forms of education co-existed for long periods of time, producing a mixed system of education in which it is difficult to disentangle its different elements. At all events, it is clear that no rapid change occurred in the Nordic region. There were great regional variations both within and between the Nordic countries. In general terms, it can be said that schooling within the household remained dominant in Sweden, Finland and Iceland throughout most of the nineteenth century, whereas

there had been a conscious effort in Denmark and Norway since the previous century to create a network of parish teachers and to build up a system of permanent or itinerant schools. The stipulations contained in the ordinances of 1739 and 1741 did something to regulate the rural school system in Denmark and Norway, but in Sweden and Finland the only piece of legislation in force was the decision taken in 1640 concerning children's schools in the towns. Throughout the Nordic region, schooling within the home was the dominant form of education in the countryside and also in the towns until schools for the poor and other children began to become common in the towns from the late eighteenth century onwards. The urbanisation of the Nordic region occurred at a late stage. It is true that one-fifth of the population lived in towns in Denmark as early as at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but the figure was just under 10 per cent in the rest of the Nordic region. In Denmark and Norway, schoolteachers were initially older pupils and peasants, who were generally self-taught. In Sweden and Finland, the schoolmaster was usually someone who had been ordained. There is nothing to suggest that the teaching in reading provided within the household was qualitatively inferior to what was given by parochial schools. There was a debate in Norway throughout the first half of the nineteenth century about whether it would not be better to abandon the ineffective system of itinerant schools and revert to teaching within the household – the system which was still overwhelmingly dominant in Sweden.

In the early nineteenth century, the preconditions for a system of institutionalised popular education were still unfavourable throughout Europe. The protracted Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars had impoverished the states of Europe and there was consequently no economic basis for publicly financed educational establishments for the broad masses of the people. Moreover, the reactionary currents of opinion that were dominant at the time were suspicious of any suggestion concerning the education and training of the lower classes. The Napoleonic Wars may have given an impetus to national consciousness in many parts of Europe, but the concrete results in terms of investment in schooling for nationalistic reasons were relatively insignificant in most places.

In this respect, developments in Denmark are quite remarkable and probably produced a level of writing literacy that was virtually unique. It is a common feature of the development of a school system throughout the Nordic region that the emergence of parochial schools meant much less for reading literacy than it did for writing literacy. In Sweden, an ability to read was generally a condition of admission to a parochial school until the 1860s.

It was uncommon for the church to mount a campaign to increase the level of writing literacy, but Denmark was an exception in this respect. As early as the last decades of the eighteenth century, the Danish church tried to make writing literacy more widespread. This is the reason why writing literacy increased more rapidly in Denmark than in the other Nordic countries in the course of the nineteenth century.

The period 1800–70 is the age when writing literacy became the norm in the Nordic region – a development which naturally involved a significant enhancement in the communicative competence of ordinary people. The parish schools established at the beginning of the century and the monitorial schools set up in the 1820s made the possibility of acquiring writing literacy more generally accessible in the countryside. This development was associated with a more far-reaching change: the transition from teaching within the household to teaching at school.

The growth of writing literacy naturally made it easier to regard communication as a two-way process, which in its turn made it easier to treat schooling as a matter of civic concern. There were also those who argued that the education of the masses was a democratic right. However, the authorities generally still saw education primarily as a means of sustaining the existing social order: the masses could more easily be kept under control if certain harmless pieces of knowledge were imparted to them and if they were made conscious of their own, subordinate, place in the larger scheme of things.

The motives for replacing teaching within the household with a school education were mixed and they were, of course, connected with what were regarded as the most important tasks of the education system. Many supporters of school education thought the separation of the child from its parents for teaching purposes was a fundamental precondition for effective education. However, they did not apply this view to all children: they regarded the affluent members of society as capable of taking responsibility for the upbringing of their children in the future as they had in the past. In contrast, they believed that the children of the lower classes were misled by their parents and therefore needed to be placed in a school environment.

In other words, two kinds of separation were envisaged: one between the different social classes and the other between the children of the poor and their parents. The element of social segregation presents a sharp contrast with the idea of citizenship which was now being advanced with increasing emphasis throughout the Nordic region. The middle class believed that civic virtues would be most effectively promoted if its own children did not come

into direct contact with the children of the underclass. That is why two parallel school systems were created, one for each class, and survived until far into the twentieth century. However, the most important form of segregation in the middle of the nineteenth century was the separation of children from their parents. It is probable that the most important motive for those who supported the creation of a parochial school system was the separation of the children of the underclass from the adult world. The goal was to institutionalise teaching, to separate the child from home and household and to place the children of the underclass in a special moral quarantine of their own.

The reason for this attitude towards the children of the underclass was that the system of norms embraced by their parents was regarded as incompatible with the ideal of citizenship. That ideal included the concept of individualism, but the poor were still trapped within patriarchal structures which upheld unchanging corporatist traditions, paternalistic care, stable power hierarchies and the guild system. Among the underclass, the individual was still firmly embedded in the collective unit of the household or the corporation. This meant that he was both in principle and practice subordinate and subject to the collective unit, but also that it looked after and protected him. A different, but closely related, reason was the need, which was mentioned with increasing frequency, for a labour force which could write but which was also without ties and preferably also obedient. A growing number of parents among the underclass now had work outside as well as within the old unit of production and reproduction, the household, and this added to the necessity of introducing parochial schools.

The parochial schools which emerged during the first decades of the nineteenth century and which were sanctioned by the state mostly adopted the so-called monitorial method of teaching. This was based on the principle that the schoolmaster delegated the great bulk of the teaching to 'monitors' and only played a supervisory role himself. This method of teaching was characterised by the maintenance of a strict hierarchy of rank, an impersonal system for conveying orders and a minutely regulated set of rewards and punishments. It originated in Britain and was suffused with the spirit of the utilitarian philosophy. It was believed that a single teacher could supervise hundreds of pupils.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, these British ideas came to play a wholly dominant role in the parochial schools of the Nordic region. National societies for the promotion of monitorial teaching were established in Sweden, Denmark and Norway and eventually also in Finland. More or

less independently of each other, they saw their task as to disseminate within their own countries the system of large-scale popular education devised in England by Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster. This system was already taking the Continent by storm, and national societies to propagate this new innovatory pedagogical method were set up everywhere under the leadership of the British and Foreign School Society, which drew its inspiration from the thinking of Joseph Lancaster. The Nordic societies maintained lively contacts with each other and also with the central society in Britain.

The growth in the number of monitorial schools was most rapid in Denmark, partly as a result of directives from the central authorities: King Frederik VI gave the monitorial method his full support. In 1819, only four years after the royal ordinances concerning parochial schools in the towns and countryside were issued, the use of the monitorial method was recommended at all the barracks schools in the country, and in 1822 a royal decree was issued for its adoption at all Danish parochial schools. In 1824, the method was made obligatory at the teacher-training seminaries. The monitorial method was adopted in virtually all urban schools and in most rural schools. It is estimated that in 1833 there were 2,461 parochial schools in Denmark and that the monitorial method was being used at about 2,110 of them. The remaining schools were usually too small to be suited for the use of monitorial teaching.

In Norway, the decrees issued by the Danish crown in 1814 never came into force because Norway ceased to be under Danish rule that very same year, and teaching at school remained uncommon for some time to come. The old Danish ordinances of 1739 and 1741 still set the norms which applied, and schools were generally itinerant in the countryside. The monitorial method was best suited to large educational establishments, and they were only to be found in the few towns that existed in Norway. There was a short-lived attempt to start a monitorial school in Larvik as early as 1814, but from the 1820s onwards Kristiania, Bergen and Trondheim were the main centres for this British educational method.

The first even reasonably reliable estimates as to the number of schools and pupils in Norway relate to the year 1837, when there were 7,000 'parochial schools' in the country, the overwhelming majority being small and itinerant. It has been estimated that monitorial teaching was used at this time in just over half of the urban parochial schools. It was much less common in the countryside, where no less than 87 per cent of children attended itinerant schools. It is estimated that one-fifth of children in the countryside learned to write, and 10 per cent of them to count, at an itinerant

school. The full-time urban schools produced better results, but 20 per cent of children in the towns did not attend school at all – a figure which reflects social conditions in Norwegian towns at the time. These conditions improved during the favourable economic climate of the 1840s – as is shown by the introduction of a law concerning urban schools in 1848. In 1860, when the monitorial method had been abandoned, a new law was passed concerning state-supported parochial schools in the countryside.

There were few parochial schools in Finland, and they were dependent on donations. Knowledge of the monitorial method reached Finland via Sweden and Russia, and monitorial teaching was used at the larger schools in Finland from the 1820s onwards.

The monitorial school represented a solution to the problem of educating the masses whose very structure clearly demonstrates that it was a product of the ideals and practice of British industry. The use of compulsion was to be avoided to the greatest extent possible, and schooling therefore had to be institutionalised and conducted within the framework of a network of schools in which teaching was reduced to learning by rote and subordinated to a sort of intellectual mechanisation derived in all its essentials from the techniques which had been developed in Britain to control the labour process within the new factories created by the industrial revolution. The members of the societies which offered mass education to the underclass at the cheapest price wanted the forms assumed by discipline and learning within the school to resemble as closely as possible the conditions which governed factory production. Schools were therefore organised like factories, even though factories were still rare in the Nordic region, and the product manufactured by these school-factories was a labour force.

The common assumption that there was a causal relationship between industrialisation and the institutionalisation of popular education does not apply in the case of the Nordic region. The monitorial method clearly reflected the ideals of industrial mass-production with its strict division of labour, but it is still the case that in the Nordic region the introduction of monitorial teaching anticipated the process of industrialisation by several decades.

The assumption that the parochial school system emerged purely as a result of demands for broadly based civic education is also without validity. The question of what was learned at the new parochial schools was entirely subordinate to two different questions: how the students were taught and where they were taught. The actual content of what was taught was remarkably similar to what it had been since the seventeenth century: the only additions were writing literacy and, in some case, mathematics.

The essential function of the parochial school was to assign roles to individuals which extracted them from all collective communities. Its purpose was to separate and to segregate. It completed the process of individualisation which had begun with the separation of work from the household.

It is clear that the parochial school system that emerged in the Nordic region during the nineteenth century was regarded as a solution to what was seen as the greatest problem facing society – the growth of an underclass which owned no property of its own and which was perceived as a threat to the survival of the existing social system. The parochial school, not least when it was accompanied by the use of the monitorial method, seems to have appealed to many because the reformers succeeded in presenting it not only as a universal cure for ignorance, disobedience and discontent, but also as a solution to the whole social crisis of the age, as an integral element in a strategy designed to re-establish order on new foundations. Those who sought to promote parochial schools had two motives. On the one hand they naturally wanted to give individuals an opportunity to create a more tolerable life for themselves, but – just as naturally – they wanted to safeguard the great social project which had just been initiated and to accommodate those social groups which did not own property within it.

### Secondary and further education

The cultural movement of romanticism developed, arising from many different sources, and assumed many different forms. As a historical phenomenon, the romantic epoch coincided with a period of particularly rapid and unpredictable change in European, and Nordic, history. This period, which can be crudely delimited by the years 1785 and 1850, witnessed the replacement of old social, political and cultural institutions and structures by new ones. In the Nordic region, romanticism developed two major tendencies: a search for both religious renewal and historical self-awareness. One manifestation of romanticism was therefore the religious impulse, the repressed longing to be united with God, not in a rational sense but emotionally, in the innermost part of one's being, in the simplicity of faith. The link between the earliest history of the people and the contemporary world was to be purged of all alien and artificial elements so that what was original and genuine might be allowed to develop its own inherent strength. Romanticism did not create the two concepts of nation and people, but it invested them with a new emotional content so that the two words were now spoken with a new pride and a new sense of enchantment.

There is probably no other individual who combined these two cardinal features of Nordic romanticism so comprehensively as the Danish thinker, Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig. His efforts to rouse the people to a new level of religious and national feeling made him the herald of a new age. The idea of a lost golden age permeated the thinking of the Nordic romanticists. The old Christian myth of progression to paradise through the three stages of innocence, the Fall of Man and redemption was given a new resonance under the impact of social change. Grundtvig sought to combine a living Christian faith with a Old Norse, pre-Christian, spirit in order to create a new golden age. Religion had become ossified in moribund theological formulas and the spiritual life of the people had become dormant. A new reformation would make the Lutheran spirit live again within the church and a new Nordic renaissance would make the Old Norse world reappear in all its glory. The primary instrument for achieving all these goals was to be education – not, of course, in the old grammar schools where the teaching of Latin was dominant, but in completely new establishments which would carry the proud name of folk high schools. They would be the places in which a nation roused from its slumbers would receive teaching, a teaching that would not be based on books but on the living, spoken word of the people's own language, and they would be 'schools for life' where a central role would be played by the personal encounter between teacher and pupil. They would provide the individual with an opportunity to develop in his own way those types of knowledge which neither the parochial nor the grammar school could give. Education would have a 'historico-poetic' content and would express the unique character of the Danish people.

Grundtvig's ideas in no way constituted a complete, consistent doctrine. His great pedagogical concept was riddled with paradoxes and was unrealistic in many respects. Without the assistance of more practically minded men like Christen Kold, his ideas would never have been more than a grand vision. The farmers' high schools which Kold set up from the 1850s onwards came to serve as a model for the many folk high schools and the hundreds of free schools which sprang up around the country.

The task of the folk high schools was to provide adult males, and later adult women, with a civic education. It was never envisaged that they would set examinations or issue certificates of educational achievement.

The folk high-school movement had several sources of inspiration. One important impulse lay in Denmark's exposed geopolitical position in relation to Germany in the middle of the nineteenth century, which led to efforts across the board to enhance to the utmost the national and cultural



awareness of the farmers. The defeat in the year 1864 gave added impetus to the folk high-school movement. Only fifteen so-called 'farmers' schools' were founded before 1864, but expansion was rapid after that: eight new folk high schools were established in 1864–5, no fewer than forty-two in 1866–8 and a further ten in the following years.

The folk high schools were soon opened to women as well as men. From the very outset, male pupils were taught during the six months of the winter, and it was therefore natural to think of using the summer months for teaching women.

The folk high-school movement was sustained by a self-confident class of freeholding farmers who had growing resources at their disposal. The movement was never as 'popular' as its leaders tried to suggest. The only educational establishments open to the growing underclass of agrarian society were the ill-equipped parochial schools.

Folk high schools began to be set up in Sweden after the parliamentary reform of 1865, which greatly enhanced the social importance of the property-owning farmers and which therefore also created a need for a higher level of civic education among them. As in Denmark, the Swedish and Norwegian folk high schools were initially private ventures, though they almost always received financial assistance from local government and agricultural societies. State support did not begin until the 1870s.

The intellectual current which set its stamp on the state secondary education system in the Nordic countries from 1800 onwards was neo-humanism. It first gained a foothold in Denmark, but by the 1820s it had become the dominant educational ideology throughout the Nordic region.

The emergence of civicism, which had its roots in the civic patriotism of the Enlightenment, with its demands for the inculcation of civic virtue challenged both the church and the aristocratic ideal of education. A view of humanity which was influenced by neo-humanist thinking and which manifested itself both in a Rousseauian interest in education and in political egalitarianism began to make itself felt in Denmark even before 1800. In 1790, shortly after the school commission which would ultimately transform popular education in Denmark was set up, another commission was appointed to prepare proposals for a reform of secondary schools. The latter had hitherto mainly functioned as places where future clergymen were educated. A new plan was devised and tested experimentally at various secondary schools in Denmark and Norway, but ordinances of 1805 and 1809 eventually applied it to the whole of the Danish state.

These reforms reshaped the Danish secondary school. It was no longer an exclusively church school: the supervisory position of the clergy disappeared, and all ecclesiastical ceremonies and special divine services ended. The decline in the church's influence over the school system did not, however, lead to any immediate questioning of the dominant position of classical languages in the curriculum. Latin and Greek still remained the main subjects to be taught during the eight years of study.

In the neo-humanist tradition, the classical and Christian legacies were easily combined – the meaning of classical studies was determined by where the emphasis was placed. The purpose of education was to raise the soul from the dust and make it aware of its divine origin, to train the soul for an existence both in this world and in heaven. Education was seen as an absolute necessity for the creation of a harmonious and fully equipped human being, and the classical world, as interpreted through the eyes of romanticism, provided the model. The harmonious figures of antiquity were to be copied, since they demonstrated the nature of human perfectibility,

The ideal of perfectibility emerged in Germany in the course of the eighteenth century. It was purely a product of neo-humanism and referred not only to the improvement and ennoblement of the individual but also, at least in theory, to the efforts of the whole human race, regardless of social rank, to achieve perfection. In reality, of course, only men came into the picture, and they were recruited from a very narrow social circle. Nonetheless, the striving for human perfection was a manifestation of an enchanting vision of human educability. 'Education' became then the means by which perfection was to be promoted.

In the Nordic region as elsewhere, the neo-humanist concept of education, which had been given a firmer structure by Johann Gottfried Herder and Wilhelm von Humboldt, exercised an influence which stretched far beyond the pedagogical field. The Scandinavian word for education, *bildning*, had a double meaning, and both could be associated with the different goals of schooling. It meant not only to improve but also to form, to give shape to something, and was thus directly connected with the classical ideal of education. The cultivation of the human soul and its spiritual purification involved a process whose goal was the perfect human being.

It was only in the 1830s that neo-humanism began to be criticised in Denmark, as the necessity of classical languages in the formal education of those preparing for academic studies was questioned for the first time. The number of those preparing for academic schools in Denmark fell to just under twenty throughout the whole kingdom at this time, and it was clear

that further reforms were needed. In the 1840s there were new attempts at reform under the influence of Herbart and the Prussian school system. The school law of 1850 codified what had already become practice in many places. Modern languages, above all German with French in the second place, were placed on the curriculum and given a more prominent place than Latin and Greek. The old arrangement under which the university examined applicants and decided whether to admit them was swept away, and replaced by matriculation examinations held at the secondary schools under the supervision of external examiners.

Iceland was only marginally affected by the debate about secondary education in Denmark. After the amalgamation of the two Icelandic bishoprics in 1802, there was only one grammar school in Iceland. This closed in 1804, but the Bessastaðir school was founded outside Reykjavik the following year. From 1830 onwards, external candidates who wished to qualify as clergymen were also able to take the matriculation examination set at the school.

In Norway, attempts to create two distinct types of secondary school encountered a number of difficulties. The grammar school, which was designed to prepare its pupils for university studies, sometimes had to be combined with the civic school, which aimed through its emphasis on modern languages and practical skills to equip its pupils for working life. The 1840s witnessed a boom in timber and herring exports and the new social conditions which prevailed in the expanding Norwegian towns of the period were reflected in this new emphasis on practical as well as academic knowledge.

The Haugean movement, which had made an important contribution to the establishment of schools in the countryside, formed a close-knit group in the towns with a strong interest in education. The new Norwegian middle class of shipowners, merchants, factory owners and professional men joined with the old 'lords' and government officials to form a spiritual collective, a combined economic and learned middle class, which constituted itself in every Norwegian town as a cultural elite that maintained a strict barrier between itself and the uneducated. This came to be the first occasion on which the Norwegian middle class organised itself on its own. All around the country, societies were founded in which the middle class established itself as an educated, bourgeois elite that was both socially and conceptually exclusive in offering no place for the lower ranks of the old burgher estate.

Different types of secondary school offered different routes to the matriculation examination which made entry into university possible. The school a

pupil attended was usually determined by his parents' social position. The level of mobility between the different types of school was extraordinarily small. This created social barriers which did not fit in with the idea of equality that was gaining ground in liberal circles. As a result, the arrangements governing secondary education introduced in Norway in 1869 integrated grammar and civic secondary schools to a far greater extent than anywhere else in the Nordic region.

The old Swedish school law of 1649, which distinguished between primary and secondary education, remained in force for 200 years in both Finland and Sweden. There were growing complaints in the early nineteenth century about the grammar schools, above all for their failure to meet the needs of the economy. A new school law, the first in Sweden for over eighty years, was issued in 1807. It made few fundamental changes beyond placing the study of modern languages, in the first instance German, with French in second place, on the curriculum. To some extent it also imposed new educational requirements, partly by placing more emphasis on Swedish language, mathematics and history and by introducing the study of natural phenomena, and partly by extending the scope of what was called *skrivarklassen* in 1649 and *apologistklassen* in 1807. These arrangements remained in force in Finland, with minor amendments, until 1843, when the first statute concerning the country's elementary schools was issued. It replaced the old Swedish pattern of *pedagogier* and *trivialskolor* with lower and higher elementary schools.

In Sweden at least, complaints continued to be heard, and their main thrust was that so-called 'learned' education had been made worse without doing proper justice to 'non-learned' or vocational education. The next school law of 1820 tried to tackle the problem by establishing two distinct types of school: higher and lower academic schools for 'learned' education and *apologistskolor* for general vocational education, the so-called civic education. This law strengthened the position of classical languages at 'learned' schools, and marked the breakthrough of neo-humanism in Sweden.

However, lively opposition to this system of education soon made itself felt on the grounds that it turned separation into a principle and segregated even the children of the more affluent groups in society into different worlds. The existence of such diametrically opposed pedagogical attitudes led to protracted debate and a remarkable trial of strength between the spokesmen of the new and old systems between 1825 and 1828 on the education committee – known as the 'genius committee' because the most prominent academics and civil servants of the time all sat on it – set up to investigate the

issues involved. The outcome was a compromise; the committee proposed that the different types of school should become separate 'lines of study' within the 'integrated' secondary school which the committee wished to establish.

The trend of the age was towards a clear segregation of the social classes for educational purposes accompanied by integration for children of the same class. The circular of 1849 and the statute of 1856 concerning secondary schools united the whole school system, except for the parochial schools, into so-called elementary secondary schools. This was an important step towards producing an integrated and homogeneous social elite, whose children had hitherto been separated in schools for men of 'the economy' and men of 'learning'.

After some attempts to implement the statute of 1856, a new statute was issued in 1859 which finally introduced an effective integration of the secondary school system. It stipulated that the division between the so-called Latin and practical lines of study would begin in the third grade, but the latter was abolished in 1869 and after that the division began in the new second grade.

Other educational reforms in the latter half of the nineteenth century included the transfer of responsibility for the matriculation examination from the universities to the secondary schools in 1862, the introduction of a period of teacher-training in 1865 and the addition of a 'demi-classical' line of study (i.e. Latin without Greek) in 1869. Boys and girls studied under quite different conditions. Until they passed into the highest grades of grammar school, boys attended state-financed secondary schools at which fees were not paid. As for girls, at mid century, there were still only five private, fee-paying girls' schools in the whole of Sweden, all located in large towns. However, in 1861 a state-financed girls' secondary school was founded. It was linked to the Royal Women's Teacher Training College established in the same year.

Neo-humanism and civic patriotism, which exercised such a strong influence on the school system throughout the Nordic region around the turn of the century, had by the 1860s come into ever more open conflict with its original goals as the privileged sections of society crystallised into clear social groups. This development had important consequences for the nature of the educational system. This was most striking as the different types of school took shape during the latter part of the century: the outcome was the same in every Nordic country, namely secondary schools for the middle class and parochial schools for the underclass.

## Universities in transition

There are good reasons for saying that the year 1800 marks the beginning of a new phase in the history of the Nordic universities. Developments on the larger political stage brought with them great changes for the Nordic universities in the early years of the century, and a little later institutions of higher learning came to occupy a central position in the political process throughout the Nordic region. The number of universities within the lands ruled by the Swedish crown was reduced from four to two within a short space of time: Turku (Åbo) was lost with Finland in 1809, and so was the university at Greifswald when the Congress of Vienna confirmed the transfer of Swedish Pommerania to Prussia in 1815. Change was almost as great in the old Danish-Norwegian state. Sorø Academy was closed in 1796, but after a long struggle King Frederik's University was founded at Kristiania in 1811. This gave Norway a permanent university of her own. Three years later, it was lost for the kingdom of Denmark through the caprice of history.

When the practice of holding inter-Scandinavian student conferences was initiated in the 1840s, students started to play an important role in politics, and the conferences also made a large contribution to the creation of the image of the Nordic region as a homogeneous cultural area.

The years around 1800 also marked the breakthrough of romanticism at Nordic universities. The breach which this involved with rationalism and the worldly outlook of the Enlightenment was particularly marked. The empirical sciences based on the accumulation of dry facts, which had enjoyed such triumphs and produced such prominent figures as Carl von Linné in the eighteenth century, now had to surrender their primacy to philosophical speculation which sought to penetrate to the inner core of truth. Prosaic reason had to give way to brilliant inspiration, and for the time being at least the universities rejected all demands for the specialisation and professionalisation of university education.

The universities were slow to adapt to the transformation of society which was taking place around them. During the first decades of the century, the primary purpose of university study remained what it had been before, namely to offer a preparation for a career in the church or the civil service. The ideological function of higher education continued to be regarded as more important than its practical utility.

The empirical sciences were particularly despised in Denmark and Sweden, and when change came it began outside the world of the universities. While the sons of the clergy and the aristocracy continued undisturbed

to acquire the foundations for their ideological role in life and learned how 'to be gentlemen' at the universities, a number of new educational institutions were established to offer courses in technical, agricultural and mercantile subjects. In terms of status, they were underprivileged in comparison with the universities, but they provided the sons of the burghers and farmers with a training more suited to the pursuit of practical economic activities. For example, a veterinary college was set up in Denmark as early as 1773, and a technical college followed in 1804 at Aalborg. In 1808, the first teacher-training college was established and the institution already in existence at Kiel for the study of forestry was detached from its previous association with the army. The year 1829 witnessed the creation of a polytechnic college and a military academy was set up the following year. Most of these vocational institutions were founded through private initiatives, but ultimately obtained financial support from the state.

Developments followed a similar pattern in Sweden where a whole range of new educational institutions were established in a short space of time – the Caroline Institute for the training of physicians at Stockholm in 1810, the Agricultural Academy in 1811, the Central Institute in 1813, the Veterinary College in 1821, the Mining College at Falun in 1822, the Technological College in 1827, the Chalmers Handicraft College in 1829 and the Pharmaceutical Institute in 1837. The struggle over the status of these newly established 'colleges' was sometimes a bitter one. This applied particularly to the Caroline Institute (*Karolinska Institutet*): rationalist aesthetes at Uppsala University regarded it as a simple school for artisans which ought not to be allowed to confer medical qualifications.

The efforts of the universities to protect traditional 'learned' studies were a direct manifestation of German neo-humanism and romanticism. The romantic or idealistic philosophy which was dominant in Nordic universities at this time saw the natural sciences as trivial, vulgar or purely devoted to practical utility. It is significant that when the first conference of Scandinavian natural scientists was held in 1839, the meeting took place in the commercial town of Göteborg, not a university town. The phenomena of the material world were not regarded as real in the same sense as the pure ideas which emanated from God and therefore as being devoid of any true interest.

The intellectual elite sought to segregate itself from two quite different enemies – not only, as was to be expected, from the great mass of the uneducated, but also from rival circles among the educated classes. The romanticists saw themselves as the heralds of a new age illuminated by the sunshine of Schelling's philosophy and adopted a very hostile attitude

towards utilitarians and exponents of Enlightenment values, which still survived, even if they were lying low. The romanticist elite tried to isolate itself in the realm of philosophy and pure thought, which they regarded as a sanctuary of truth, justice, morality and, last but by no means least, speculation about the idea of matter.

This struggle between the romanticists and their enemies is the key to the unequivocal support which university teachers gave to the concept of learned public education. Such an education would focus on the ideal and the general rather than on simple material utility; it would value free thought more highly than free trade, morality more highly than the law, the inner life of the human being above his social existence and it would aim exclusively at preparing the individual for a lifetime of service to the state. The formal education which the state provided and funded for its future servants should be based on classical languages, the humanities and philosophy. It was this education which would imbue the future servants of the state with the intellectual ideals and ethical norms that were required for admission to membership of 'the educated estate', an elite which stood above all sectional interests. A morally elevated and well-educated body of servants of the state representing the 'higher and broader interests' of society would be able to play a mediating role in all the controversies which affected society. However, this would only be possible if both the servants of the state themselves and the knowledge which they held in trust remained uncontaminated by what the romanticists contemptuously dismissed as 'party spirit'.

The universities thus claimed to be independent and above all the conflicts which divided society as a whole, and this naturally meant that their political role ought to have been limited and primarily concerned with conserving the fundamental verities. In practice, however, the academic world was naturally drawn into the transformation of society which was taking place around them, and there were indeed occasions on which university teachers and students were in the very vanguard of change.

Finland was the Nordic country in which the university played the most central role in the development of society. The old Swedish university statutes of 1655, which gave the universities a wide-ranging jurisdiction over academic affairs, were abolished in Finland in 1828, when the university was detached from its traditional links to the church and moved from Turku to Helsinki – a move that clearly underlined its enhanced importance within the state. Emperor Nicholas I had decided the previous year that the university should be relocated in the grand duchy's new capital, and the imposing building in which it was housed, a prime example of representational



architecture, was placed directly opposite the palace occupied by the grand duchy's government, the senate, and adjacent to the cathedral, the central shrine of the Protestant church in Finland. Its location was eloquent testimony to the aspiration to give Helsinki a university worthy of the capital city of a people which had been raised to the ranks of the 'nations' by Alexander I. The future servants of the state were to be given an insight into the 'nature' of the state at an institution bearing the stately name of Emperor Alexander University.

The authorities in Finland clearly ascribed the greatest importance to the university, and it was no less significant as a forum for the country's incipient national movement. The university, which was not placed under the direct authority of the Russian governor-general, was virtually the only place in Finland where public opinion could find an outlet. Fredrik Cygnaeus, Elias Lönnroth, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, Johan Vilhelm Snellman and Zacharias Topelius were all active at the university and they were all, except for Runeberg, rewarded with a chair.

The demand for linguistic change in Finland, which emanated from intellectual, Swedish-speaking circles at the university, had its origins in the belief that language is the most important cultural characteristic binding a nation together. The Finnish language was seen as a manifestation of the nation's unique character, of its soul. This emphasis on the Finnish nation and the Finnish language at the university was by no means incompatible with Russian interests, so long as it was combined with loyalty to the emperor. That loyalty was called into question when the effects of the February Revolution made themselves felt in Finland and ignited a manifestation of patriotic enthusiasm at the university. The party which the students organised on 13 May 1848 to mark the coming of spring turned into the first occasion on which their emancipatory aspirations were expressed in a serious fashion. This did not escape the attention of the authorities in St Petersburg, who saw it as evidence of the receptiveness of both students and university teachers to Western influences and as a demonstration against the prevailing system of government. As a result, the university was placed under strict supervision and the regional student fraternities, which had not been allowed to use their old Swedish national names since the university's move to Helsinki, were banned for several years because they were regarded as especially important forums for national agitation. The Hegelian Johan Vilhelm Snellman was the object of the disapproval of the powers-that-be for many years, and he did not obtain the chair which he had long coveted until 1856. By that time, however, he was already trying to put his

programme into effect through his work as a journalist and senator rather than through his position at the university, and the latter had come to occupy a less central position in Finnish social debate.

It was only in 1863, when Alexander II summoned the four Finnish estates, that the university finally lost its position as the most important political forum of the Finnish nation. Until that time, the absence of a strong bourgeoisie and the relative unimportance of the Finnish nobility had conferred a status on Finnish university teachers and students which had no counterpart in the rest of the Nordic region. On the other hand, the Finnish university never became a research institution to any significant degree, even though the new statutes of 1852 introduced the faculty system and swept away the corporatist remnants which had survived the move to Helsinki in 1828. Moreover, the education it offered was still most suited for training future servants of the state.

In this period, the universities also came to play new roles in the other Nordic states. Students contributed significantly to political developments through the Scandinavian student conferences held in the 1840s, and this helped to draw universities and students to the attention of the general public. Students were now united in support of a political programme and this gave them both a prominent position in public debate and a self-esteem that entirely changed their way of life.

The attempts of Danish intellectuals to gain support from the other Nordic countries against the military threat from Germany over the Schleswig-Holstein question began to bear fruit around 1840. The Danish–Swedish student conference held at København in 1842 took on a markedly political character and listened to a speech by Frederik Barfod on the theme ‘Nordic unity is Nordic freedom’. Another conference was held at Uppsala in 1843, and there were many participants from København and Lund – and even a few from Helsinki, who incidentally were suspended for a time after their return home. The movement reached a new high point in 1845 at a conference in København, when Orla Lehman spoke to an audience of 1,500 Nordic students, including a few from Kristiania. Nordic unity was toasted and cheered, and threatening noises were made in relation to both Germany and, to a lesser extent, Russia.

The national liberal movement strengthened the self-esteem of Nordic students, since they loved to see themselves as the guardians of light cradling the budding future of the nation in their arms. General liberal agitation also pictured students as representing the hope of the nation.

The culmination of the Scandinavianist student movement occurred in the wake of 1848, the year of revolution, and of the subsequent Danish–German

war over Schleswig-Holstein. Scandinavian student conferences were held later in the 1850s and the 1860s and attracted many participants, but it seems as if most of the original fervour had now disappeared. Scandinavianism suffered a mortal blow when the Danes were left to stand alone against Prussia and Austria in the war of 1864. However, student radicalism lived on. In Sweden it took the form of gestures of solidarity for the unification of Italy and Poland's struggle for liberation and in Norway of increasingly open criticism of the terms governing the union with Sweden.

The Swedish universities of Uppsala and Lund were no more orientated towards research than the university at Helsinki. Located in the countryside away from the country's expanding economic centres and weighed down by tradition, both universities were disinclined to accept demands for change. The highest forms of education offered in the country were still provided at what Esaias Tegnér, both a bishop and professor at Uppsala, described as academic peasant villages. The leading position of Stockholm in both political and economic terms made it seem self-evident to many liberals that there ought to be a university in the capital, and some even spoke of closing down both Lund and Uppsala and starting again in Stockholm. An increasingly large group of liberals demanded that the universities should be 'nationalised' and moved. The demand for a university in the capital was a self-evident element in the national liberal programme throughout the 1830s.

There was also a protracted struggle over the archaic corporatist jurisdiction which the universities exercised. In 1852, the government issued new statutes for the two universities which, among other things, swept away such jurisdictional powers. After lively debates in the 1850s, a royal statute of 1862, which came into force in 1864, placed responsibility for the examination which concluded secondary education in the hands of the grammar schools instead of the universities. As a result, it became a matriculation examination that did not necessarily have to lead on to university study. Swedish universities remained closed to women, at least officially until the 1870s.

Danish higher education was adapted more rapidly than its Swedish and Finnish counterparts to the new ideas emanating from Germany which are generally associated with Humboldt and the University of Berlin. From 1838 onwards, a number of professions – like veterinary surgeons, pharmacists, lawyers etc. – were given the right to have their preliminary examinations at København University, and this meant that the university had now also begun to assess meritocratic ideals in relation to new groups whose privileges were the result of their university studies.

In the case of Iceland, the higher clergy continued to be educated at København. The majority of the 200 or so Icelandic students registered at København University between 1800 and 1870 returned to Iceland after the completion of their studies and became clergymen or civil servants. In the 1830s, at the same time as nationalist currents of opinion began to make themselves felt in Denmark, an Icelandic independence movement began to emerge among the Icelandic students in København and one of their demands was the establishment of an independent institution of higher education in Iceland. However, in the case of the clergy, there were already two ways of obtaining the qualifications required without leaving Iceland. One was to receive all their theological training from the pastor in their home parish and then, as a sort of external candidate, to take the appropriate examination before someone who had a degree in theology (from København); the other was to work as clergymen after passing the matriculation examination at Bessastaðir school in Iceland.

In 1811, three years before the disappearance of the Danish-Norwegian unitary state, Norway obtained a university of its own at Kristiania. This new university and the four so-called 'learned' schools at Kristiania, Bergen, Trondheim and Kristiansand which offered an examination in the arts were the only institutions for the training of civil servants in Norway, though the museum at Bergen was later turned into an independent research institute.

The sort of education which future servants of the state received at Kristiania was rather different from that given by their counterparts in Sweden. The legitimacy of the position which civil servants occupied in the state rested on the Eidsvoll constitution itself, and their education was therefore characterised by a considerably more liberal spirit than was the case in Sweden, even if their progressive attitudes were generally more modest than the sort of radical liberalism developed by Henrik Wergeland and his supporters and disciples.

Anton Martin Schweigaard, the first realist active in the field of Norwegian jurisprudence, deserves a special mention among the Norwegian university teachers who made a particular impact on university teaching and public debate. Around the middle of the century, Schweigaard was a typical representative of the popular, socially aware current of thinking within Norwegian academic life. If one wants to select a Swedish academic who embodied the idea of state supremacy to serve as a contrast to Norwegian attitudes, the choice is an easy one. No one could be more suitable than Christopher Jacob Boström, the conservative philosopher and the most influential Swedish thinker of this time. He developed his own idealistic

bureaucratic philosophy in which the state was called 'the highest society'. It goes without saying that in his philosophy the possibility of conflict between society and 'the highest society' was quite unthinkable. According to Boström's ideals, the state only had a single interest in relation to education, and that was to train its own future servants so that they were able to raise themselves above private and material concerns into the sphere of the state, rationality and ideas. Boström's ideas came to exercise a virtually unchallenged domination within Swedish university philosophy until the end of the nineteenth century.

### The Nordic education system, 1800–70

The education system crowned at its apex by the universities had many common features throughout the Nordic region, largely because the ideological influences affecting all the Nordic countries were the same. The pedagogical features of the two parallel school systems established during the nineteenth century were essentially identical in all the Nordic countries. The sort of popular education offered in special schools for the masses was inspired by British models, while secondary and tertiary education were markedly influenced by German ideals in every Nordic country. German pedagogical thinking, above all that of Johann Friedrich Herbart, imbued the spirit of secondary schools throughout the Nordic region, while the system of monitorial teaching devised by Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster was the decisive influence in the parochial schools which emerged. In other words, the dominant influences on both secondary and parochial schools were derived from outside the Nordic region. The only exception in this respect was the folk high school – an educational establishment which not only had purely Nordic, or rather Danish, origins but which also only came to exist in the Nordic region.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the universities virtually constituted enclaves of German culture in a Nordic environment. The relatively significant differences which can be observed between the different Nordic universities naturally had their origins in the changing political circumstances which prevailed in each of the Nordic countries, but they also depended upon the particular features of German university statutes and German educational traditions were regarded as most worthy of emulation.

## Arts and architecture

GÖRAN LINDAHL

### Architecture and art, 1800–70

The upheavals of the war against Napoleon led to the break-up of the two Scandinavian monarchies: Sweden and Denmark. Finland was set free from its old union with Sweden and Norway from its connection with Denmark. From a constitutional standpoint, neither Finland nor Norway became wholly sovereign states. On a more pragmatic level, however, they came to function as such. Both countries required capital cities with the requisite official state buildings. This led to the setting up in both Finland and Norway of those building projects which were seen as most necessary and prestigious.

### Finland

From a chronological point of view, the work began in Finland. Shortly after the Russian takeover and the peace settlement with Sweden in 1809, Helsinki (Helsingfors) was designated the capital city of Finland. This underlined the fact that there would be no turning back, and that Finland as a grand duchy within the Russian empire would nevertheless be guaranteed a comparatively independent existence. The choice of Helsinki was, from a political standpoint, self-evident. Turku (Åbo) was too close to Sweden. In this way, a long-cherished Russian desire was fulfilled. Two cities, Helsinki and Tallinn (Reval), now lay opposite each other on either side of the Gulf of Finland, both designed to flourish and to protect the imperial capital of St Petersburg, situated in the innermost part of the bay.

It was no small task to erect the new capital city. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Helsinki was an insignificant town with barely 4,000 inhabitants, and severely damaged by fire into the bargain. What was needed was not merely a large investment of money but a completely new town

plan and with it some idea of what a dignified city centre worthy of a capital should look like. The committee in St Petersburg which handled Finnish affairs, and which was headed by Emperor Alexander's confidant Gustav Mauritz Armfelt, was given a free hand. Armfelt appointed his old friend Johan Albert Ehrenström as director of the building work. Ehrenström was born in Helsinki, but after a chequered career he was now working in Stockholm. He had been close to Gustav III, was a convinced royalist and had no difficulty transferring his loyalty to the Russian emperor, Finland's new overlord and benefactor. One imagines that Ehrenström had a general idea, right from the start, of what the centre of a royal city should look like. The circle around Gustav III had constantly discussed building issues. These had involved the central parts of Stockholm and had been inspired by the plan drawn up by Nikodemus Tessin at the beginning of the eighteenth century, which, after many years, was once again seen as a model to follow. However matters now stood as regards feasible models, it turned out that Ehrenström got on particularly well with the man he himself had chosen to turn the plan into reality: Carl Ludwig Engel.

Engel was born in Berlin in 1778 and had been in Prussian service before taking charge of building operations in the city of Tallinn in 1806. Ehrenström got to know him, saw some of his drawings and found them to be of high quality. Shortly afterwards, in 1816, Engel was installed in Helsinki with the task of planning the new city and building its centre. He remained there until his death in 1840, by which time the work was to all intents and purposes completed. The first buildings to be erected were those which, from a Russian standpoint, were the most urgently required. Some were of military significance, in particular a barracks and a warehouse for provisions. At the same time a start was made on a whole block intended to house the administration of the grand duchy. The Senate House turns its main façade out towards the central square, which was designed as the leitmotif of the city plan to which the most important streets lead and around which the most distinguished buildings were to rise. The space leading out towards the square was intended first and foremost for the senate, the assembly which would function in that setting as a government and the representative of the emperor. Its intended function also gave the building its architectonic stamp. There is an impressive staircase up to the magnificent rooms which are a clear indication of the presence of the emperor. For the classically trained architect it was also self-evident that the façade should consist of Corinthian columns.

The new university building was erected on the opposite side. The task of the Imperial Alexander University was not only to educate the civil servants

that Finland required, but also to develop Finnish culture. There was, it was felt, no contradiction between intellectual creativity and loyalty to the emperor. The university façade that faces the square resembles, in its main features, the Senate House opposite. It is certainly simpler, but not for reasons of frugality. Its intended function was different: intellectual work, rather than the exercise of power. Ionic columns were chosen for the middle of the façade, and in the language of classical architecture which meant simple, undecorated forms.

The new city church was erected at the back of the square and was named after Emperor Alexander's successor on the throne, Nicholas I. Engel's starting point here was a building-type with a classical background that developed during both the Renaissance and the baroque periods – the church occupying a central site, crowned with a high dome. The Nikolai church has been changed in a way which does not entirely correspond with Engel's wishes. Nevertheless, it responds well to its main architectonic task, which is to dominate not only the square but the city as a whole. There was also a definite ideological content: the Christian religion constituted the overarching value system, which was intended to permeate the lives of the senators as much as of the university teachers and the whole city.

Engel's contribution came to extend beyond the square itself. The streets of the town plan began to be filled with houses, some designed by Engel himself, others by architects who were his collaborators and apprentices. The university library was erected in the square, essentially as an extension of the university building itself, and was a building of exceptional quality and probably his finest creation. Here, Engel has reached back to a type of Roman building which was certainly well known, but which was nevertheless seldom employed: warm baths (*thermæ*). In them he found a form which suited his purpose, a domed central room surrounded by two side-rooms. What Engel had in mind was not a research library in the modern sense but a suite of rooms, which, in a grandiose manner, illustrated both the value of literary culture and the patronage of the emperor.

It is also of interest to note what this new city centre does not contain. Obviously, there is no parliament building. On the Finnish side there were certainly some who aspired towards some sort of national assembly, but for the moment they were content simply to aspire. Another feature which is lacking is an imperial palace. Plans do exist, but they are rather for a castle some distance from the city in a more rural setting, where it might be possible to lay out a park. Nothing came of it, which suggests that there was really no perceived need for it. The emperors enjoyed visiting Finland,



but as benevolent travellers in a country where they were held in high esteem by all classes of society. Nor was there any theatre in the monumental centre. To build one was seen as a necessity by the citizens. With an imperial residence planned, the matter was apparently shelved.

To a large extent, Helsinki city centre with its buildings can be seen as the emperor's gift to his grand duchy. Without this generosity such an expensive building programme would not have been possible. We must also of course take into account Engel's unusual stamina. His remit was not only to draw up plans and design façades, but also to give detailed form to a series of diverse but demanding rooms in their various contexts: the stairwell and reception room of the Senate House, the university lecture hall, the library halls and the majestic domed interior of the cathedral. We can add to this that his activities later extended beyond Helsinki. Engel, his disciples and his successors eventually came to transform almost all the towns in Finland. Fires afforded an opportunity for intervention which sometimes involved complete rebuilding from scratch. The pattern remained the same, as clear from the plan which was adopted after the fire at Turku in 1827: broad streets, some of them planted with trees and thereby suited to checking fires; large city blocks crossed by open thoroughfares; and low, simple but nonetheless classically designed wooden houses. But of course good ideas about fire safety and aesthetic order were not enough in themselves. It was also a question of power. Turku's radical plan was forced through by the Russian governor-general Arsenij Zakrevskij, who in this case complied with the requirements which had already been formulated for Russian towns. To the elderly Ehrenström he was simply a boorish soldier, but Engel pointed out the positive opportunities for city building works. And undoubtedly this goal was achieved.

## Norway

There are similarities, but also differences, between the course of events in Finland and what was happening at the same time in Norway. In 1815, when Norway's severance from Denmark and union with Sweden was ratified, the Norwegians had already had time to gather together in a constitutional assembly and had drawn up a new constitution to demonstrate their country's independence. Norway and Sweden became two sovereign kingdoms, united in certain respects and particularly through a common royal house. This implied a relationship of a different kind from what had been established several years earlier between Russia and Finland, and thereby also different

opportunities for building. The local scene also appeared different from a practical standpoint. Kristiania (Oslo) was a city of around 8,000 inhabitants which already had an established centre. No large-scale intervention was possible there, nor was there room for new buildings of a more comprehensive nature.

The largest new building project involved a royal residence. The motivation for this was not any predilection for monarchical display, but rather a notion of equality with Sweden. It was thought that the monarch could reside alternately in Stockholm and Kristiania. The job was handed to a Danish nobleman, Hans Ditlef Frantz Linstow. Born in 1787, he had studied at the Academy of Art in København before moving to Norway, where he became an officer and later a teacher at an art college which he had founded himself. In 1823 he was summoned to Stockholm to show King Karl Johan his draft proposals for a palace extension, and also to hold discussions with Swedish architects.

Linstow returned home with a detailed proposal for a main building with side wings and pavilions. There had been discussions of English models, and at the very least there was much to be learned from the classic work *Vitruvius Britannicus*. But the most remarkable feature of the proposal was that it featured a rural palace situated on an eminence outside the city, a place which, according to Linstow, the king himself had pointed out. The foundation stone was laid in 1824, but before many years had elapsed, the work was cancelled due to lack of funds. The building was a Norwegian affair and was supposed to be paid for by the Norwegian state. Sweden had neither motive nor opportunity to intervene, nor was there any equivalent to the imperial generosity which had been demonstrated in Helsinki.

After a few years, work began again, but now with a much less ambitious building in prospect. *Kongeboligen*, the King's Residence, as the Norwegians preferred to call it, was officially opened in 1848. Despite the reduction in scale, the result was still impressive: a building which in principle was put together in the same way as the Senate House in Helsinki, i.e. with a midsection graced by columns. It is even more dominant than the Helsinki building, with its Ionic columns free-standing like a gallery, in stark contrast to the very simple side façades.

While the building of the palace was in progress, yet another Danish architect, Christian Heinrich Grosch, had established himself in Kristiania. Born in 1801, he had studied at the Academy in København, and in contrast to that jack-of-all-trades Linstow, he was a true professional in his trade. Immediately after his arrival in Kristiania he was entrusted with a series of

commissions, and in 1828 he was bound unambiguously to the city as its *stadskonduktör*, i.e. city architect. He was handed the task of building the long-desired Norwegian university. Plans had been in existence for a long time, and the formal foundation of the university went back to the period of Danish rule, hence the name King Frederik's University. After long-drawn-out preparations the foundation stone was laid in 1841. By then Grosch had had time to consult one of the foremost contemporary authorities, Karl Friedrich Schinkel in Berlin, who expressed his admiration for the drawings he was shown but also suggested adjustments, which were carried out to the better.

Like the palace, the university was located outside the city. The plantation of trees in front of the university building was intended to stretch up towards the palace and unite with the park there. But even more worthy of note is that Grosch, in his design of the required premises, freed himself of the concept that it should be possible to accommodate everything in one monumental building. Instead, he divided them into three discrete buildings, separated from each other. The middle one, which was also the largest, was reserved for the natural sciences and the lecture halls, laboratories and collections which these subjects required. One of the two side-buildings was earmarked for the library and was designed with the utterly practical goal in mind that its stacks should hold as many books as possible. There was no thought given here to resplendent halls, nor was there any imperial generosity to rely on. Yet the new university was not entirely without lavish interiors. They can be found in the side-building opposite, called the *Domus Academica*, which in addition to the lecture halls and administrative offices houses the delightful assembly hall. Like its opposite number in Helsinki, the room is in the form of a semi-circle on the classical model, but smaller and more intimate.

In this way, the university buildings bear witness to a clearer intent to prioritise practical requirements. The architecture of the institution was intended to develop in this direction during the nineteenth century. Grosch also allowed himself some deviations from the classical norm in the composition as a whole, which his contemporaries were aware of, but which today hardly attract any attention. The stately portico of the midsection does not lead to any assembly hall: its role is simply to hold the entire assembly of buildings together architectonically. The assembly hall was located instead, as mentioned earlier, in one of the wings; nor was it aligned with the portico there, but positioned to one side. All these features can be interpreted as the beginnings of a disintegration of the classical

system of rules which the art academies had for so long been teaching, and of which Grosch himself was a master.

The relationship between Linstow and Grosch was rather strained. In one respect, however, they came to co-operate in a fruitful manner, and that was in the connections between the large new building projects and the city. Linstow's suggestion of a unified square surrounded by buildings was met with a total lack of interest, unlike his idea of a single thoroughfare linking the palace and the university together with the city. This simple and, at first sight, obvious step gave Norway's capital an outstanding axis, and in addition a locus for the siting of several monumental buildings and for growth in the city centre generally. The name *Karl Johansgate* is perhaps justified, but the king was no master builder on the lines of the emperor, neither in his Swedish nor his Norwegian capital.

The difference between Finland and Norway is also manifested in the way that town-building developed outside the capital. Norway had no equivalent to the regular town plans which were realised in many towns in Finland. To some extent it depended on differences in situation and topography, but to a larger extent on the fact that Norway lacked the strong central administration which was such a feature of the Grand Duchy of Finland.

## Denmark

With about 100,000 inhabitants, København, around the year 1800, was the largest capital city in Scandinavia. Everything had been concentrated here. København was not only the city that housed the king and administration, it was also the commercial centre and the most important fortress and naval base. This rich and culturally vigorous city suffered several disasters. The royal palace burned down in 1794, and in 1807, when the rebuilding was going on, the city was exposed to a destructive bombardment by the British fleet. There was a risk that Denmark would align itself with Napoleon, and the British were ensuring that the Danish fleet would not be able to operate against them. Thus, when the war was over, a comprehensive building programme was needed to repair all the damage caused by fire and explosions.

One individual came to play a dominant role in this work: the architect Christian Frederik Hansen. He was older than the architects mentioned previously, having been born as early as 1756, and as a professor at the Academy of Art in København he had taught both Grosch and Linstow. He also had behind him a comprehensive body of work in Hamburg and

Altona when, in 1799, he was summoned to København to take charge of the rebuilding of the ruined palace of Christiansborg. Frugality dictated that the remaining walls were utilised as much as possible. The result was an imposing building, higher and more tightly squeezed round a central courtyard than classical proportions actually prescribed, but impressive in its effect. The character of the main façade was determined by the columns of the midsection, the same time-honoured motif that Engel and Linstow would also make use of.

A chapel was added to the palace as a building of its own right. There were no walls here to start out from, so Hansen could follow his own vision. His point of departure seems to have been the Roman baths – antique forms of this kind guided classically trained architects and gave them a groundwork for new commissions. One can compare the palace chapel in København with the library in Helsinki – there, too, the baths had given the architect a point of departure for his work. Engel's building is larger and more richly decorated. One encounters more peaceful harmony in the chapel's interior. The décor plays a subordinate role: the impression it makes is created by the proportions of the constituent parts and the quiet and even light which falls through the lofty windows.

A church building of a quite different nature stands out as Hansen's masterpiece. The bombardment in 1807 had destroyed the Church of Our Lady, København's cathedral. The rebuilding of the church according to Hansen's designs commenced in 1811; the consecration took place fifteen years later. The interior is completely dominated by the nave. It is surrounded on both sides by low arcades, over which rows of tightly spaced Doric columns rear up. Over them soars the coffered barrel vault, giving the space its sense of unity and grandeur. The narrow side-aisles fulfil the practical requirement of facilitating communication. They also have an aesthetic function. The large windows of the outer walls are not visible from the nave. Light streams in through the columns, filling the nave and removing any impression of confinement. One becomes aware that this great religious space is not closed, but opens out towards the sides. The barrel vault was also supplied with openings, on the classical pattern. They constitute the visible sources of light, but would not be capable on their own of illuminating the extensive space.

During his long life – he died in 1845 – Hansen was to leave his mark on Danish architecture. He did this both through his own buildings and through the status he acquired in Danish society. As a professor he helped to ensure that the Academy of Art in København kept its position as a leading and

highly popular institution for the teaching of architecture and art. He also became a civil servant with the task of supervising all public building projects in Denmark.

During the 1820s, then, all the damage that København had suffered in the war was put right. New building projects came into being. A new, semi-classical, semi-Gothic main building for the university with a comparatively modest assembly hall was ready by 1836, designed by the comparatively little-known Peder Malling. Not until twenty years later would the question of the university library building be solved, and then in a way which pointed to new directions in architecture. But amongst all this building there was still no parliament house. Until mid century Denmark's form of government was a royal autocracy, although admittedly of an extremely civilised nature. There was no perceived need to build for the purpose of popular representation. People of a strongly artistic bent could leave their mark on individual buildings. But obviously they had no control over the building's purpose. There, by contrast, one comes up against the various political systems and the leading clients who commissioned these projects, with their intra-Scandinavian similarities and differences.

The most important building projects were assigned in København, and it was also here that the few well-trained architects worked. Yet it would be misleading not to emphasise at the same time that in the countryside, on the islands and in Jylland (Jutland), a comprehensive programme of reform was under way. This affected agriculture, both in terms of changing the patterns of ownership and by promoting new methods of cultivation. Denmark, deprived of Norway, strengthened its position by means of internal reforms. As time went on, this activity brought new building projects in its wake, in the country districts, in the provincial towns and eventually in København too.

## Sweden

The Napoleonic Wars hit Sweden hard. Finland had not been a province in its own right, but a part of the Swedish kingdom. Stockholm was the capital of Finland as well as of Sweden. It also soon emerged that Norway would not be any kind of substitute for Finland. Norway constituted a more or less independent state. Apart from the shared royal house, the links between them were few, at least in comparison with how relations had been with Finland. Sweden had to solve her own problems.

Stockholm, the capital, was naturally affected by Finland's new orientation eastwards towards St Petersburg, but it had not suffered war damage in the way that København had. Nor was there any need for a building programme driven by political changes. There already existed a palace of even vaster dimensions than Christiansborg, buildings for other functionaries and rooms where each of the four estates of the *riksdag* could meet by themselves.

What was needed, on the other hand, was military rearmament. During the war, the country's very existence had come under threat, as the new King Karl XIV Johan with his European experience was well aware. With Russian troops in Finland and on Ahvenanmaa (the Åland Islands), the military-political situation had changed. Karl Johan became the driving force behind a comprehensive programme of reform. Moreover, his authority in this field was undisputed. Military training played a leading role, of course, but building projects were also involved. Stockholm was affected both by the building of fortifications in the archipelago and by the arrival of several installations on the outskirts of the city. In a few cases, a start had already been made earlier. This applied to the stately barracks for the mounted Life Guards, an elite force of enlisted men, and also to the officers' college at Karlberg, where a country mansion from the seventeenth century was surrounded with long wings. Now a military hospital was built too, complete with a façade of columns which says little about the building's practical purpose. Architects who had been trained in the eighteenth century were at Karl Johan's disposal, but his favourite was a newcomer, Fredrik Blom. He was a soldier and a technician, not schooled as an architect in the old-fashioned manner, but he would show himself capable of carrying out numerous commissions on behalf of civilian society too. Born in 1781, he belonged to the same generation as Engel and Linstow. In comparison to them, his interest in the technical side of building stands out.

The largest building project of the period did not affect Stockholm. It consisted of two different undertakings, each of them large-scale, which were coupled together with economic and military goals. As early as 1810, the decision had been taken to dig a canal straight across the country, thereby connecting the Baltic to the Kattegat. A series of lakes, particularly Vänern and Vättern, could be used, but the canal would have to be dug out between them and locks built. Private financiers were enlisted but nevertheless it was still a question of a government enterprise. Detachments of soldiers made up a large part of the workforce and the work was led with military discipline by the promoter himself, the then Lieutenant-Colonel Baltzar von Platen. The highest point of the canal stands 91 metres above sea-level, which demanded

the building not only of individual locks, but of whole staircases of them. It meant building in stone on a grand scale, and with an attention to detail which came quite close to architecture. In order to solve technical problems von Platen made contact at an early stage with British engineers, who represented the most advanced road- and waterways-building technology of the time. One of the leading authorities, Thomas Telford, was involved in the planning stage and visited Sweden twice. The whole length of the canal was opened in 1832.

The building of the canal had been started before the political and military situation became clear. After this happened, the canal project was coupled with the plan of defence whose implementation was now a priority. Karl Johan realised how difficult it would be to defend the Swedish coastline. The enemy should be confronted well inland, where the roads were long and tiring. The main plank of the country's defence should be a centrally located fortress, where troops could be assembled and supplies stored. In 1820, on a promontory on the western side of Lake Vättern, just where the canal flowed into the lake, work was commenced on the building of a mighty fortress which was given the name of Karlsborg. The impression it conveys is more that of a fortified town. Ramparts and stone-built defences follow the line of the promontory and form a triangle each side of which measures around 700 metres. Inside the fortifications the buildings were grouped according to a simple grid plan. An early addition was a majestic arsenal which was followed by a barracks, a dormitory built into the fortress, a magazine, a hospital and a church. Both the planning and the building were led by fortification officers. They were military technicians who also had some training in architecture. If anything they saw themselves as superior to the academically trained architects with their slavish attachment to a classical heritage. In Karlsborg, the demand for precision in building in stone was taken to extremes, and this would later come to be utilised for other, purer architectonic tasks.

Moreover, building in Sweden was also characterised by a striking degree of decentralisation. As in Denmark, there had been reforms in agriculture. This meant new building constructions all over the country and especially in Skåne, where the significant local resources were put to good use. The demand for technical innovations affected the production of iron in Bergslagen, and in Norrland new settlements expanded out into the wilderness. With the odd exception, it would not be until the end of the nineteenth century that Stockholm became the place where the large-scale building projects were commissioned.



## Classicism in art

The dominant type of classicism during the first decades of the nineteenth century tended to favour sculpture over painting. It was not a question of any programmatic rank-ordering. Clearly, however, the aesthetic ideals of the period found more congenial expression in sculpture than in anything that the painter's craft could offer. Also, with sculpture one could approach that affinity to the ancient world which the representatives of new classicism so dearly wished for. As far as Scandinavia was concerned, it was also significant that an artist from there, Bertel Thorvaldsen, became a European celebrity, overwhelmed with commissions and showered with honours.

Thorvaldsen was born into a poor family in København in 1768. His father was an Icelandic immigrant. Thorvaldsen himself reckoned his true birth from the time of his arrival in Rome in 1797. A world opened up for him which knew no boundaries in time or space, a concept of the beauty of ancient art which to some extent built on the facts of archaeology, but which was also a romantic ideal. With his first mature work, the sculpture 'Jason with the Golden Fleece' in 1803, Thorvaldsen matched the expectations of his public. They admired the serene and harmonious elements in his work. Thorvaldsen himself, on the contrary, was not satisfied: there was an incomplete sense of movement in Jason's posture, and the impression of total harmony had not been achieved. He did however manage to achieve this in a series of later works. In these, one sometimes senses a mood of solemn grandeur, and sometimes a stillness which can appear dream-like. Time did not stand still, but was passing slowly.

This is not the place to examine Thorvaldsen's prodigious oeuvre more closely. There is however good reason to look at those sculptures which were commissioned by him for Our Lady's Church in København, and which were intended to attest that this temple was a Christian church. The statues of the twelve apostles subordinate themselves to the architecture and allow the free-standing image of Christ to stand out as the centre of the whole building. Thorvaldsen's Christ has been called sentimental or sickly-sweet. This is however not its striking characteristic. The statue projects forward a good distance from the altar, near the congregation but elevated some way above floor-level. It is in order to turn towards the ordinary visitor to the church, and not least the children, that Christ bows his head. The welcoming gesture of the outstretched arms and the facial features combine in a union of mildness and total calm which moves the onlooker deeply and stays in his mind. Hansen's architecture and Thorvaldsen's sculptural artistry combined

to make Our Lady one of the supreme works of its time, not just in Scandinavia but in Europe.

Danish painting during the first half of the nineteenth century also occupies a special place in Scandinavian art. Here, however, it was not a case of one individual name but rather of a whole group of artists, some of them linked with each other, others working entirely on their own. What united them was a common basic thesis, an objective, confidential, sometimes warm relationship to what was being portrayed: scenery, interiors, individual human beings. There are similarities to Dutch art of the seventeenth century, but the exactness of execution is greater in the Danish art with regard to both form and colour. In the Danish paintings we meet a clarity of depiction which, in an artist like Wilhelm Eckersberg, could be sharpened to the utmost precision. This is all undoubtedly realism, but, so to speak, refined and portrayed in excellently well-balanced compositions. One finds in them the formal ideals of classicism but not its idealisation and type-casting.

This art, with its mood of calm and harmony, was produced in what was a difficult time for Denmark. One imagines that it was more of a Utopian vision than a reflection of social conditions at the time. Nevertheless, certain more concrete preconditions for this painting can be identified. The central institution for art education, the Academy of Art in København, had to meet very high demands placed on it. It offered the possibility of a traditional training in which classical aesthetics and the realistic study of life could be united. Nor had the most important consumers of art, the København middle classes, lost all their wealth, despite the losses they had suffered. They had an awareness of culture and perhaps also something of the same refinement which the works of art express.

The same balance between idealism and realism meet in more monumental form in the work of the Norwegian painter Johan Christian Dahl. He was well-acquainted with Danish art from his years at the Academy in København and he has sometimes been compared to his contemporary and friend Eckersberg. They were both born in the 1780s. However, his subject matter is quite different: the world of the Norwegian mountains, whose grandeur he portrayed in powerful paintings. He collected impressions during his rambles in the mountains, but produced the finished works in his home in Dresden where he lived for the greater part of his life. Attention has been drawn to the mass of lightning sketches he made of clouds in different weather conditions. They can of course be interpreted as an attempt at realism, but Dahl also wanted to learn how to control these constantly changing phenomena and, in the true classical spirit, find their definitive form.

## From idealism to realism

The aesthetic strength and practical utility of classicism emerge from several of the examples which have been given. Such viewpoints have retained their validity and are still asserted nowadays. It is equally reasonable that they should be questioned, and this was occurring increasingly during the 1830s and 1840s. There was a need not only for an individually expressive art but also for a versatility which could connect to other historical periods than antiquity, or to traditions with a local stamp. From such standpoints, classicism could stand out as a straitjacket, its system of rules too inflexible and impersonal, its ideals and educational methods helplessly bound to the past. There are early examples of a nascent breakaway movement from classicism which, around 1850, became more numerous and soon came to dominate. The picture of this change and what happened later is more diffuse than the picture of the years when neoclassicism ruled almost unchallenged. The course of events also stands out as more tied to the efforts of individual artists and architects, sometimes engaged in vehement polemic with official educational establishments or with the bureaucracy of government building departments.

It should also be mentioned that there was no boundary around the year 1870. On the contrary, trends which appeared in the mid-nineteenth century did not reach their fullest development until the end of the century. What is said here about developments after about 1850 must therefore be of a more sketchy nature.

Subsequent developments can be described, with a large degree of oversimplification, as a progression from idealism to an ever more consistently formulated realism. The concept 'idealism' is taken here to mean the classical, more or less clearly artificial antique world from which all forms of art took their sustenance. The word 'realism' stands for more complicated phenomena which can seem separate from each other, but which are united by a new way not only of seeing reality but also of describing it and of utilising its artistic possibilities.

In the field of architecture this realism led to an increased interest in building from a technical-functional point of view. This coincided with more specialised demands than before from society in general. New goals were to be achieved with other demands on technical functionality with regard to accessibility, hygiene, ventilation and heating. An early example was the building of hospitals. The first large project of this kind was the Municipal Hospital in København which went into service in 1863, and which was remarkably well planned.

Among several possible examples here, we shall direct our attention to a building from the same period with another function, but which was distinguished by a similar desire to abandon the classical system of rules: the parliament building or *storting* in Kristiania.

It is quite remarkable that it was not until 1856 that the parliament, which for a long time had been the main actor in Norwegian politics, decided to acquire a new building in place of the functioning provisional ones. A competition was advertised and the winner was the Swedish architect Emil Victor Langlet. He was born in 1824, and by the time of his appointment he had lengthy studies behind him: first, at the Academy of Art in Stockholm, which had just been radically reformed, and thereafter in Paris, Rome and north Italy. What Langlet sought, like many of his generation, was not only solutions to technical and functional problems but a new art of building, which in an artistically convincing way would incorporate what was necessary in practice. The parliament building illustrates and gives precedence to the local programme that Langlet had to meet. One can see the two debating chambers for the *lagting* (upper house) and the *odelsting* (lower house), which together make up the *storting*, as well as the surrounding long wings for meeting rooms and offices. Langlet had envisaged polychrome tiled façades which would have been more lavish than what was actually built. He succeeded to a greater degree in realising his intentions in the interior. What was technically motivated is made evident and enriched by new types of decorative shapes.

The parliament building is not in the least related to any Norwegian architectural tradition. It can more easily be seen as an expression of an international striving for novelty. At the time, however, national demands made themselves felt to a high degree. Architecture and art were also capable of contributing to the development of national values. A Norwegian example is provided by the exceptionally comprehensive work carried out on the cathedral in Trondheim, now usually known as Nidaros Cathedral. At the same time as the parliament building was under construction, plans were made to restore, or more accurately to reconstruct, the cathedral, a task which was to occupy several generations of antiquarians, architects, sculptors and stained-glass artists. Restoring the cathedral meant both giving the country a fitting venue for religious and national events and linking up with the Middle Ages, the Norwegian's kingdom's age of greatness before the years of 'decline' under Danish overlordship.

The search for the nation's distinctive character followed several routes. All art-forms were subjected to historical scrutiny. The buildings of earlier

times were studied, particularly with respect to their national or regional variants. The historical repertoire of Norwegian architects was broadened, until finally it took on a breadth which only the true virtuosos could encompass. The results of ever more comprehensive architectural-historical studies were included in this broad register, utilised in different combinations and united by personal creativity of design.

The painters followed the same route, acquiring more and more exhaustive knowledge of historical events and milieux. The painting of historical scenes became one of the most important genres of the nineteenth century, and in the scope of its ambition, without counterparts in earlier times. An unusually monumental example of this was provided as early as the 1830s by the suite of frescos in Uppsala Cathedral with scenes from Gustav Vasa's career. The artist, Johan Gustaf Sandberg, fulfilled his commission by narrating the story with as much historical correctness as possible. The result was a series of realistic but strikingly undramatic scenes. This, for its time, large-scale exhibition underlined those aspects of Sweden's sixteenth-century nation-building and its monarchy anchored in the common people which were felt to be a suitable national model for the nineteenth century.

Those architects and artists who, with the help of both research and imagination, sought to reconstruct Old Norse society, its imaginative world, art and building craft, went their own way. Not unnaturally, archaeological studies played an important role for them. More surprising is how these studies were combined with a desire to break new ground in moral and aesthetic terms. Both a new attitude to life and new artistic forms of expression were expected to grow out of the common Old Norse past. The actual results hardly matched the visions which enthusiasts conjured. However, a few examples will give some idea of the earnestness of their endeavours. The earliest works include the Swedish sculptor Bengt Erland Fogelberg's monumental statues of the Old Norse gods Odin, Thor and Balder, executed in the 1840s. These works still fascinate, not least because they clearly show both a lingering attachment to the world of classical forms and a desire to find a new language which was to be more true to the task in hand. Similar ambitions marked the research which was undertaken to find traces of an indigenous Scandinavian tradition of building in wood. This would in its turn, they believed, form the basis for a new art of building, in which the technical and aesthetic values of wood would be fully exploited.

The search for the truly Nordic could also take the form of studying one's contemporaries. In certain parts of Scandinavia and within certain sections of the population a primitive simplicity had been retained which served both for

realistic depiction and for presentation as a model to be followed. Farms in Norwegian mountain valleys which were flourishing – in their way – but isolated, and the large villages of Dalarna gave artists and researchers their strongest impressions. Paintings of folk life and studies with an ethnographic bias could reinforce each other here.

Finally, one should mention an artist who moved freely between different genres: the Swedish painter Johan Fredrik Höckert. He was of the same age as Langlet, born in 1826, and after his studies at the Academy he had taken himself off to Munich. Rome did not tempt him, but he was all the more attracted to Paris, which would become the major destination for a later generation. More important however in this context was his journey to Lapland in 1850, and the harvest of sketches and impressions which he collected. With these as his raw material he later painted, in his Paris studio, the great composition 'Church Service in Lövmokk Mountain Chapel'. The folkloristic interest is there, but the dominating feature is an engagement with his human subject matter. The light that falls in through the chapel windows unites the little congregation and creates a mood of rapt attention and thoughtfulness.

The historical painting 'The Burning of Stockholm Castle 1697' shows a more dramatic setting. But it not only narrates a famous event from the past as imagined by a historian and with plausible detail. It also suggests a wider context: just as in the painting, historical figures step forward out of obscurity, occupy the stage for a short while and then again disappear into the darkness.

## Literature

SIGURD AARNES

## Denmark

The first half of the nineteenth century was one of the richest periods in Danish literary history. A decisive stimulus here was the influence of German romanticism, which came into play immediately after the turn of the century, first and foremost via the Danish philosopher and scientist Henrich Steffens (1773–1845). In 1802 he caused a sensation with a series of lectures at København University which were published in 1803 under the title *Indledning til filosofiske Forelæsninger* ('Introduction to Philosophical Lectures').

Among his listeners was the young poet Adam Oehlenschläger (1779–1850), who derived from these lectures the stimulus which would later inspire his productive career as a romantic writer. In these writings he created a new Danish poetic language which would have a long-lasting effect on Scandinavian lyricism. Oehlenschläger made his debut in 1803 with *Digte* ('Poems'), which among other things contains the programmatic poem of Scandinavian romanticism, *Guldhornene* ('The Golden Horns'), and the chamber play *Sanct Hansaften-Spil* ('Midsummer-Eve Play') – with Goethe and Tieck as his closest models. In 1805 there followed *Poetiske Skrifter 1–2* ('Poetic Writings') with, for example, the poem-cycle *Langelands-Reise i Sommeren 1804* ('Langeland Journey in the Summer of 1804') and the chamber play *Aladdin* (English translation 1857, 1968), whose subject matter was taken from the *Thousand and One Nights*.

Oehlenschläger's *Nordiske Digte* ('Nordic Poems') of 1807 contains the seminal historical tragedy *Hakon Jarl hin Rige* ('Earl Hakon the Rich', English translations 1857, 1874, 1905). Oehlenschläger crowned his most fruitful period with the romance-cycle *Helge. Et Digt* ('Helge. A Poem') in 1814, containing material from Danish legends. With this romance-cycle he founded one of the main genres of Scandinavian romanticism.

Another person who conveyed German romanticism to the Danes and who had been translated long before, was the bilingual (in Danish and German) Adolph Wilhelm Schack von Staffeldt (1789–1826) with his two collections of poetry *Digte* ('Poems') in 1804 and *Nye Digte* ('New Poems') in 1808.

In his very first writings, Oehlenschläger had moved from German Universal Romanticism to German National Romanticism. The same is true of Danish romanticism's other leading figure, the clergyman and writer of psalms Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872). This finds expression, for instance, in his intense preoccupation with Norse mythology in *Nordens Mytologi* ('Nordic Mythology') in 1808 and in 1832.

A religious crisis in 1810–11 persuaded Grundtvig to enter the service of the church, and led to his magnificent and original collection of psalms, *Sangværk til den danske Kirke* ('Collection of Songs for the Danish Church'), published between 1837 and 1841. But Grundtvig also produced an extensive collection of 'worldly' writings, collected in *N. F. S. Grundtvigs Poetiske Skrifter 1–9* (1880–1930; 'N. F. S. Grundtvig's Poetic Writings'). In terms of both his psalms and his popular and often-heard song lyrics – not least in the Danish folk high-school movement of which he was the ideologue – Grundtvig has had a lasting influence on Danish people's understanding of what education, Christianity ('the Church's view', 'Grundtvigianism') and poetry are. With his translation into Danish of the lay of *Beowulf* (1820), Grundtvig also became one of the founders of Anglo-Saxon philology.

Someone who was close ideologically to Grundtvig's romantically tinged 'national Christian' view of life was the lyric poet and novelist Bernhard Severin Ingemann (1789–1862). Following in the footsteps of Walter Scott, he wrote a series of novels with themes taken from Danish history, *Valdemar Seier* (1826; English translation 'Waldemar, surnamed Seir, or the Victorious', 1841). Closely linked to Ingemann's – and Grundtvig's – popular educational and lifelong project about the Danish people's religious and moral reawakening is the novel-cycle *Holger Danske* of 1837 ('Holger the Dane'), named after a mythical hero in the *Chanson de Roland*. Outstanding in its pious, childlike simplicity is Ingemann's collection of seven *Morgensange for Børn* of 1837 ('Morning Songs for Children') and *Syv Aftensange* of 1838 ('Seven Evening Songs').

A convention of Danish literary-historical tradition is to regard the mid 1820s as a watershed when impulses from Hegel's philosophy together with British, French and German romanticism (Byron, Hugo, Heine, Hoffmann) come crowding in, first and foremost through the agency of the leading Danish critic of the period, Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791–1860).



Together with romanticism there follows a more disjunctive, self-reflective attitude in relation to the older generation of romantics' longing for harmony, a switch of focus from the world of the past and of fairy tale to the everyday, which is now experienced as 'interesting', another of the fashionable words of the period ('poetic realism'). But these changes do not yet signify any decisive break with the basic idealism of the romantics. Typical of the period are Heiberg's vaudevilles like *Kong Salomon og Jørgen Hattemager* (1825; 'King Salomon and Joergen the Hatter'), Thomasine Gyllembourg-Ehrensverd's (1773–1856) short story *En Hverdags-Historie* (1828; 'An Everyday Story') and Poul Martin Møller's (1794–1838) genre depictions *Scener i Rosenborgs Have* (1820–1; 'Scenes from Rosenborg Garden') and the great short story of 1824, *En Dansk Students Eventyr* ('The Adventures of a Danish Student').

The dramatist and critic Henrik Hertz (1798–1870) wrote comedies typical of the period, e.g. *Sparekassen* (1836; 'The Savings Bank'), the ballad-drama *Svend Dyrings Huus* (1837; 'Svend Dyring's House') and the aesthetic *Gjenganger-Breve* (1830; 'Letters of a Ghost'). The most significant lyricists of that generation are Christian Winther (1796–1876) and Emil Aarestrup (1800–56). Winther is known in particular for the epic-lyrical verse narrative *Hjortens Flugt* (1855; 'The Flight of the Heart') and for his love poetry (the poem-cycle *Til Een* ('For One')), scattered through various anthologies from *Digtninger* (1843; 'Poems') onwards. Eroticism is also a main theme in the lyrics of the physician Emil Aarestrup in *Digte* (1838; 'Poems'), with their virtuosic use of language.

From a present-day perspective, the clergyman, short-story writer and poet Steen Steensen Blicher (1782–1848) stands out as one of the most fascinating authors of the romantic generation. His highest achievements were in his refined short stories, a genre he helped to introduce to Denmark (*Brudstykker af en Landsbydegns Dagbog*, 1824; 'Fragments of the Diary of a Parish Clerk', English translations 1845, 1968, 1991). But Blicher was also a fine lyric poet (*Trækfuglene*, 1838; 'The Birds of Passage'), with a sharp eye for the unique, melancholy beauty of Jylland's heath-covered landscape, a part of the country he introduced into Danish literature.

Also a part of the romantic generation were the only two Danish writers who are famous worldwide: the fairy-tale author Hans Christian Andersen (1805–75) and the poet-philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–55). Andersen's fame rests on the 156 artistic tales he published in small pamphlets between 1835 and 1875. In a few isolated examples he built on folk tales he had heard as a child, e.g. *Lille Claus og store Claus* ('Little Claus and Big Claus') or popular

legends like *Elverhøj* ('Elfin Hill'). But in most instances he composed freely, though at the same time helping himself to elements from folk-belief.

Andersen also wrote both travel literature (*En Digters Basar*, 1842; 'A Poet's Bazar', English translation 1988), autobiographies (*Mit Livs Eventyr*, 1855; 'The Story of My Life', English translation 1871) and novels (*Improvisatoren*, 1835; 'The Improvisator', English translation 1845, and *Kun en Spillemand*, 1837; 'Only a Fiddler', English translation 1845). In these genres, too, Andersen is creative linguistically and in terms of his narrative art, and has influenced later Danish and Scandinavian prose.

Kierkegaard's name belongs first and foremost in the history of philosophy, as one of the founders of existentialism. But he also has a place in Danish literary history as one of Denmark's greatest prose writers. Like some other great poet-philosophers in the history of philosophy, Kierkegaard makes use of stories with fictional characters or fictional events in order to illustrate his thoughts. In the philosophical novels *Enten – eller* (1843; 'Either/Or', English translation 1944) and in *Stadier paa Livets Vej* (1845; 'Stages on Life's Way', English translation 1940) he orchestrates a complicated interplay between different narrative voices which in their interaction try out different existential positions (Kierkegaard's aesthetic, ethical and religious stages).

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, the supply of important new talent ebbs away in Danish literature, and it seems that the Golden Age is about to end. But important works are still being written by older authors. Romanticism rings out in the romance-cycle *Valdemar Atterdag* in *Lyriske Digte og Romancer* (1861; 'Lyrical Poems and Romances'). The considerable output of the lyricist and dramatist Frederik Paludan Müller culminates in the great didactic heroic epic *Adam Homo* (1842–9; English translation 1981). Here, the writer follows his anti-hero throughout his whole lifespan and into death and final judgement, when, in the tradition of romantic heroes, he is saved by the prayers of the woman whom he had deceived in his youth.

At roughly the same time, Mathilde Fibiger (1830–72) puts women's position in society on the agenda with her pseudonymous epistolary novel *Clara Raphael. Tolv Breve* (1850; 'Clara Raphael. Twelve Letters'). The journalist and author Meir Aron Goldschmidt (1819–87) extends the potential of Danish prose in his satirical comic paper *Corsaren* (1840–6; 'The Corsair'), and writes the socially critical novel of manners, *Hjemløs* (1853–7; 'Homeless', English translation 1861). While Hans Egede Schack (1820–59), with his novel *Phantasterne* (1858; 'The Fantasts'), gives an anti-romantic picture of fantasy as a basis for living one's life.

From the middle of the century Danish romanticism ebbs away into a 'folksy romanticism' in which lesser talents come to dominate: the dramatist and lyricist Jens Christian Hostrup (1818–92), with *Gjenboerne* (1844; 'The Neighbours'), fable and children's writer Hans Vilhelm Kaalund (1818–85), author of *Fabler for Børn* (1845; 'Fables for Children') and the clergyman Christian Richardt (1831–92) with his lucid Christian poetry, e.g. *Nyere Digte* (1864; 'Newer Poems').

## Norway

From the late Middle Ages until 1814, Denmark-Norway was one kingdom with Danish as the common written language and with a common literature to which Norwegian-born writers like Holberg and Wessel had made fundamental contributions during the eighteenth century. As a result of the Napoleonic Wars, Denmark-Norway was split up in 1814, and Norway entered into a loose political union with Sweden (until 1905). Despite this, the old literary community between Denmark and Norway continued to function until the late nineteenth century, at the same time as an independent Norwegian national literature was beginning to take shape.

Literary output in Norway during the fifteen years after 1814 was modest. The most significant talents were Henrik Anker Bjerregaard (1792–1842), author of the 1824 vaudeville *Fjeldeventyret* ('The Mountain Adventure') and Maurits Hansen (1794–1842), whose many prose works included short stories like *Luren* (1817; 'The Alpenhorn') and novels such as *Keadan* (1825).

Not until about 1830 did Norway acquire two important romantic poets in Henrik Wergeland (1808–45) and Johan Sebastian Welhaven (1807–73). Universal Romanticism made a rather late arrival with Wergeland's gigantic but uneven epic *Skabelsen, Mennesket og Messias* (1830; 'Creation, Man and Messiah'). Wergeland was first and foremost a lyric poet. His greatest achievements are in his mature, Universal Romantic lyrics, where he shows a strong similarity to Shelley, e.g. *Poesier* (1838; 'Poems'), *Jan van Huysums Blomsterstykke* (1840; 'Jan van Huysum's Flower Piece'), and in the deathbed poems of 1844–5.

Wergeland's extensive production of some seventy individual works also includes drama, epics, historical writing, works of popular education and an autobiography, *Hasselnødder* (1845; 'Hazelnuts'). Wergeland was heavily involved in politics as a liberal, influenced by the French Revolution and the July Revolution, but as a popular educator he was the bearer of an inheritance from the time of the Enlightenment. It is as much because of his

contribution in these areas as because of his literary production that Wergeland has become, beside Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, the national poet of Norway, celebrated annually on Norway's national day, 17 May.

In relation to Denmark, Wergeland wished to establish a cultural identity on an individual, national basis, but his formidable opponent, the lyric poet, critic and philosophy professor Welhaven, declared that in such a crude society as Norway's, it was still necessary to maintain links with the more developed aesthetic culture in the former superior power, Denmark. A struggle over this issue between a 'party of intellect' under Welhaven, author of the sonnet sequence *Norges Dæmring* (1834; 'Norway's Dawn'), and a 'party of Norseness' under Wergeland occupied the period of the 1830s.

In his own lyric output, consisting of five collections of poetry between 1838 and 1859, and his critical works, Welhaven links up with Danish models, first and foremost with his relative Johan Ludvig Heiberg. In a series of ballads with subject matter taken from Norwegian legends, Welhaven incorporates Norwegian linguistic elements into his Danish written language in a stylistically confident manner, and thereby cautiously ventures into one of the routes that the Norwegian language would later come to adopt.

Apart from the Universal Romantic elements in Wergeland's lyrics, it is first and foremost National Romanticism (in the German version: Herder, the Brothers Grimm) that asserts itself in Norwegian literature. In all the Scandinavian countries National Romanticism brings in its wake a collection of legends, folk tales and popular ballads. In every country these become an important strand in a cultural nation-building process. But these collections came to be most meaningful of all in new states like Finland (*Kalevala*) and Norway, where a national identity was in the process of formation.

Most important of the Norwegian collections is *Norske Folkeeventyr* (first edition 1843–4, main edition 1851; 'Norwegian Folk Tales') by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812–85) and the theologian Jørgen Moe (1813–82), and Asbjørnsen's own edition of Norwegian legends, *Norske Huldre-Eventyr og Folkesagn* 1–2 (1845–8; 'Norwegian Folk Tales'). The folk songs, *Norske Folkeviser* (1853), were edited by the clergyman and hymn-writer Magnus Brostrup Landstad (1802–80) in collaboration with Olea Crøger (1801–55), the daughter of a clergyman. In addition, the Norse philologist Sophus Bugge (1833–1907) collected and edited *Gamle norske Folkeviser* (1858; 'Old Norwegian Folk Songs').

Norwegian *bokmål*, which, with its origins in the Danish written language, was developed in the first half of the twentieth century, has one of its main points of origin in the language of Asbjørnsen and Moe's collection of folk tales. The other official Norwegian written language, *nynorsk*, which was

accorded equal status with *bokmål* in 1885, was constructed in the 1850s by the autodidact Ivar Aasen (1813–96) with its basis in the most archaic west Norwegian dialects.

Aasen himself was the first person to use this new language for literary compositions in his vaudeville *Ervingen* ('The Heir') in 1855, and the collection of poems called *Symra* ('Anemone') in 1863. *Symra* is composed of formally strict, didactic lyric poetry, of which some individual poems, e.g. 'Among the Rocks of the North Sea's Blue Water', have become the common property of large sections of the Norwegian people right up to our own time. Both Moe and Landstad were also lyric poets. The latter is the most important Norwegian hymn-writer of the nineteenth century, and the author of the official Norwegian hymn-book, the *Kirkesalmbog*.

Influences from Danish and other European romanticism are evident both in Welhaven's critical works and in the writing of Aasmund Olavsson Vinje (1818–70) and Camilla Collett (1813–95). Vinje's works are extremely complex and range from sublime romantic nature lyrics (*Diktsamling* 1864; 'Poems') to ironic and critical essays in his travel writing (*Ferdaminnne frå Sumaren*, 1860; 'Travel Account from the Summer of 1860') and the English-language *A Norseman's View of Britain and the British* from 1863. Vinje's one-man periodical *Dølen* (1858–70; 'The Dalesman') contains some of his best lyrics and essays.

Norway's first important female author, Camilla Collett, fought for the emotional, and later also economic and social liberation of middle-class women in her prodigious output of essays and in her didactic novel of 1854–5, *Amtmandens Døtre* ('The District Governor's Daughters', English translation 1992). Her analysis of 'Women in Literature' in the 1877 essay-collection *Fra de Stummes Leir* ('From the Encampment of Mutes') is an early pioneering work of feminist literary criticism.

The 1850s saw the emergence of a new, important generation in Norwegian literature, the leading figures being the dramatist and lyric poet Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) and the lyric and epic poet and dramatist Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832–1910). Both Ibsen and Bjørnson began their literary careers in the field of historical drama, with the Dane Adam Oehlenschläger as their closest model. In the course of the 1850s and 1860s, Ibsen wrote nine historical plays, eight of them on subjects taken from Norwegian history. The most important are the tragedies *Fru Inger til Østeråid* (1854; 'Lady Inger of Oestrat'), *Hærmændene på Helgeland* (1858; 'The Vikings at Helgeland') and *Kongs-Emnerne* (1863; 'The Pretenders'), all three in English translations from 1890.

However, Ibsen had his Scandinavian breakthrough with the closet dramas *Brand* (1866; Eng. translation 1894) and *Peer Gynt* (1867; English translation 1892). With its universal theme of mankind's problems, its spectacular settings, derived in part from Norwegian folklore, and with Edvard Grieg's music, *Peer Gynt* has become Norway's 'national drama'. In his discussion of the problems of personality in both *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*, Ibsen was strongly influenced by Danish romanticism (Heiberg, Kierkegaard, Paludan Müller, Schack). Up to the mid 1870s, Ibsen also wrote verse, which was published in his only collection *Digte* of 1871 ('Poems', English translation 1986).

Bjørnson first came to the attention of the Scandinavian public with his peasant tales *Synnøve Solbakken* (1857), *Arne* (1859) and *En glad Gut* (1860; 'A Happy Boy', English translation 1866 and 1870), which have some of his finest lyrics embedded in the texts, later, in 1870, collected in *Digte og Sange* ('Poems and Songs', English translation 1915). Bjørnson's historical dramas have not survived to the same degree as Ibsen's, but significant among his works are both the Schiller-inspired trilogy *Sigurd Slembe* (1862) and *Marie Stuart i Skottland* (1864; 'Mary, Queen of Scots', English translation 1897).

## Iceland

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Iceland, like Norway, was a part of Denmark, and as in Norway, the literary flowering which Iceland experienced in the course of the century came to play an important role in the lengthy process of breaking away from Denmark politically. Iceland only obtained full national sovereignty in 1944.

A prerequisite for literary production in modern Icelandic was the cultivation of the literary language carried out by Jón Thorláksson (1744–1819) and Sveinbjörn Egilsson (1791–1852) in their translations of European classics (Homer, Milton, Klopstock) early in the nineteenth century. The society *Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag* (the Icelandic Literary Society), founded in 1816, and the journal *Skírnir*, dating from 1827, also played an important role in Icelandic cultural nation-building.

The decisive breakthrough for romantic literature in Iceland came with Bjarni Thorarensen, who had met with romanticism under Steffens's tutelage in København in 1802. Bjarni Thorarensen is best known for his patriotic songs *Eldgamlá Ísafold* ('Ancient Iceland') and his strange commemorative poems, especially *Oddur Hjaltalín*.

Another periodical, *Fjöltnir* (1835–47), was to make a major contribution to the Romantic Movement. Among the latter's founders were Iceland's most

important romantic lyric poet of the first half of the nineteenth century, Jónas Hallgrímsson (1807–45). He cultivated the patriotic lay in his *Ísland*, but otherwise he is best known for his nature-poems *Dalvisa* ('Valley Verse'), poems of labour and festivals *Sláttuvísur* ('Haymaking Verses'), *Vísur Íslendinga* ('Verses for Icelanders') and for the deeply personal poem *Ferðalok* ('Journey's End').

One of the unique traditional verse-forms of Icelandic literature is *rimur*, long epic poems in different metres, known from as early as the fourteenth century and generally cultivated in Iceland until well into the nineteenth century. The most outstanding later practitioner is the autodidact Sigurður Breiðfjörð (1798–1846), author of *Núma rimur* (1835; 'Nume's Verses'). Another important poet of the same kind is Hjálmar Jónsson frá Bólu (1796–1875), with his popular *Ljóðmæli* (1879; 'Poems').

Icelandic romanticism manifests itself first and foremost in lyric poetry. Not until the 1840s and 1850s do other common European genres such as the short story and novel make their appearance. A pioneering contribution is Jónas Hallgrímsson's short story *Grasaferð* ('Gathering Icelandic Moss'), printed in *Fjölnir* in 1847. But it was Jón Thoroddsen (1818–68) who wrote the first Icelandic novels *Piltur og stúlka* (1850; 'A Lad and a Lass'), and *Maður og kona* (1876; 'Man and Wife'). Jón Árnason's editions of Icelandic folk tales (1852, 1862–4) also have an obvious link to European romanticism.

By the middle of the nineteenth century a new generation of romantic writers were entering the field of Icelandic literature, the foremost names being Benedikt Sveinbjarnarson Gröndal (1826–1907), Steingrímur Thorsteinsson (1831–1913) and Iceland's other national bard, apart from Jónas Hallgrímsson, Matthías Jochumsson (1835–1920). Benedikt Gröndal cultivated several genres in his extensive writings, but his greatest achievements are as a humourist in verse and prose like *Heljarslóðarorusta* (1861; 'The Battle on Hell's Field'), where he uses the old *lygi sagas* (untrue stories) form to handle a contemporary theme.

Steingrímur Thorsteinsson (1831–1913) was a lyric poet and is best known for his nature-poems like *Við hafði* ('By the Ocean') and his patriotic songs, connected with Iceland's struggle for full sovereign independence, e.g. *Vorhvat* ('Spring Awakening'). Matthías Jochumsson wrote the earliest Icelandic play which has survived *Útilegumennirnir* (1864; 'The Outlaws') and, for the most part after 1870, gave vent to a large outpouring of lyrical writing, e.g. Iceland's national anthem *Ó, Guð vors lands* (1874; 'O God of Our Country'). Grímur Thomsen (1820–96) was an important critic and lyric poet, with his satire on the upper classes *Á Glæsivöllum* (1865; 'At Glitter Fields').

## The Føroyar Islands

From the end of the Middle Ages onwards the Føroyar Islands (the Faroes) were administered by Denmark, and the official written language was Danish until well into the twentieth century. In 1846 the Føroyar clergyman Venceslaus Ulricus Hammershaimb (1819–1909) created a separate Føroyar written language. He also brought out a groundbreaking Danish-language *Færøsk Anthologi* ('Faroese Anthology') in two volumes, published in 1886 and 1891. However, a separate Føroyar literature in the mother tongue only appeared in the years after 1870 (Fridrikur Petersen, Rasmus Christoffer Effersøe, Joannes Patursson).

The Føroyar contribution to world literature consists first and foremost of the great treasure-trove of orally transmitted medieval ballads, which people have danced to on the islands right up to our own times. In the course of the nineteenth century these were collected and published by several hands, among them Hammershaimb. A modern edition, *Føroya kvæði: Corpus carminum Færoensium*, was published between 1941 and 1972 by Christian Matras and Napoleon Djurhuus.

## Sweden

The Romantic Movement in Sweden coincided with several decisive events in the country's history: the final collapse of Sweden's aspirations to be a Great Power with the loss of Finland to Russia in 1809, and the coup d'état the same year which did away with the autocracy and ushered in a constitutional monarchy with freedom of the press. At the same time Stockholm with its court ceased to be the cultural centre of Sweden, and for a time the centre of gravity shifted to the university cities of Uppsala and Lund.

When romanticism reached Sweden, around 1810, it brought with it a literature which was not wholly foreign to the literary establishment. Romanticism had in fact had its forerunners, like the anti-classicist Thomas Thorild (1759–1808), Johan Henrik Kellgren (1751–95), and most of all the Finnish-born Frans Michael Franzén (1772–1847), 'the first Swedish romantic' (E. N. Tigerstedt). As early as the 1790s Franzén had attracted attention with his musical love-poem *Selmasångerna* ('Songs to Selma'), his ballads and his drinking songs, which were later collected in *Skaldstycken* ('Poems'), published in Turku (Åbo) in 1810.

Romanticism also reached Sweden – which had earlier been strongly dominated by French influences – from Germany and, as elsewhere in



Scandinavia, we can distinguish between a Universal Romanticism and a National Romantic orientation. Both forms first put down roots in small student groups in the university city of Uppsala: Universal Romanticism in the so-called *Auroraförbundet* (the Aurora Society) with the periodical *Phosphoros* (1810–14) as its organ, and National Romanticism in *Götiska Förbundet* with the periodical *Iduna* (1811–24).

The young romantic ‘revolutionaries’ had a powerful literary establishment ranged against them in the shape of the Swedish Academy (founded in 1786), which was for many years under the conservative leadership of Carl Gustaf af Leopold (1756–1829), and which in its prize-giving capacity managed for years to maintain a French-dominated classicism as the official literary norm. Several of the most important writers of this new age – Erik Gustaf Geijer, Johan Olof Wallin, Esaias Tegnér and Frans Michael Franzén – won the Academy’s prizes in their younger days and in their writings came to occupy an intermediate position between classicism and romanticism which is characteristic of this period in Swedish literary history.

This intermediate position and the academic stamp in general distinguishes Swedish romanticism from romanticism in the other Scandinavian countries. ‘The typical Swedish romantic is the professor who, from his lectern, addresses reverently-listening disciples, as if he were inspired by a deep distaste for the ignorant masses outside’ (E. N. Tigerstedt). It is also characteristic of the period that Tegnér, Wallin and Franzén were all theologians and that all of them ended their careers as bishops in the Swedish state church.

The central person in *Götiska förbundet* was the future history professor Erik Gustaf Geijer (1783–1847), who is best known as a leading cultural figure and an important historian, author of *Svea rikets hävder* (1825; ‘Annals of the Kingdom of Sweden’) and *Svenska folkets historia* (1832–6; ‘History of the Swedish People’). As a lyric poet, Geijer’s name is associated with poems like *Vikingen* (‘The Viking’), *Odalbonden* (‘The Yeoman Farmer’) and *Den lilla kolargossen* (‘The Charcoal Burner’s Son’), all of them published in one edition of *Iduna* in 1811. Along with Arvid August Afzelius, Geijer also edited *Swenska folk-wisor från forntiden* (1814–16; ‘Swedish Folk Songs from the Past’).

Esaias Tegnér (1782–1846) was in his youth a member of *Götiska Förbundet* and first attracted attention with poems like the stately and idealistic *Det Eviga* (‘Eternity’), printed in 1810. In 1811 Tegnér won the Swedish Academy’s major prize for the last great poem in Swedish literature written in alexandrines – the strongly nationalistic *Svea*. In addition to these texts, Tegnér’s poetic reputation is bound up with some personal confessional poems such

as *Mjältsjukan* ('Spleen'), *Den döde* ('The Dead Man'), and his brilliant occasional poems for official events: *Epilog vid Magisterpromotionen* ('Epilogue at the Conferring of Master's Degree in Lund') of 1820, *Sång vid Svenska Akademiens femti års minnehögtid* ('Song for the 50th Anniversary of the Swedish Academy') of 1836, and his published letters.

But the works by Tegnér which penetrated furthest beyond the borders of Scandinavia were his idyll in hexameters, *Nattvardsbarnen* ('The Children of the Lord's Supper') in 1820, which was translated into English by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in 1842, and first and foremost the 1825 romance-cycle *Fritiofs Saga* ('Frithiof's Saga', of which there are several English translations), with subject matter from an Old Norse saga of ancient times, and with Oehlenschläger's *Helge* as its closest model in the genre. Standing in the same intermediate position between classicism and romanticism as Tegnér is Sweden's greatest psalm writer of the nineteenth century, Johan Olof Wallin (1779–1839), the prime mover behind the Swedish church's official hymn-book of 1819.

The central figure in *Auroraförbundet* was Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom (1790–1855), effectively seconded in his defence of the society's ideology by the critic, text-editor and literary historian Lorenzo Hammarskiöld (1785–1827), editor of the periodicals *Polyfem* (Polyphemus) and *Svensk Literatur-Tidning* ('Swedish Literary Newspaper'). Atterbom's main work is the great allegorical fairy-tale play *Lycksalighetens ö* (1824–7; 'The Isle of Bliss'). Written in verse, with shifting metrical forms, it tells of King Astolf who is joined with the beautiful queen Felicia on the Isle of Bliss, but the dream cannot last, Astolf dies and Felicia returns to the celestial bliss whence she came. A natural interpretation is to understand the play as a representation of 'the tragedy of poetry' in a prosaic world. Among Atterbom's other works are *Blommorna* ('The Flowers') – a long series of short, allegorical flower poems, published in *Poetisk kalender* (1812–22, collected edition 1837; 'Poetic Calendar') – and the groundbreaking work of literary history, *Svenska siare och skaldar* ('Swedish Prophets and Poets') from the years 1841–55.

Sweden's other great romantic poet, the social outsider Erik Johan Stagnelius (1793–1823), made his debut anonymously with the epic *Vladimir den store* (1817; 'Vladimir the Great'), written in hexameters, with subject matter drawn from the Christianisation of Russia. But his main work is the mighty poetry anthology *Liljor i Saron* (1821; 'Lilies of Sharon'), which also includes the religious drama *Martyrerna* ('The Martyrs'). To an extent unparalleled in any other work of Scandinavian romanticism, this drama displays a cultivated

neo-Platonic view of reality, coupled with Schelling's philosophy of nature and oriental elements such as gnosticism, cabbalism and astrology. Among Stagnelius's last works are the allegorical drama *Bacchanterna eller Fanatismen* (1822; 'The Bacchantes or Fanaticism'), based on the ancient myth of the Bacchantes's struggle against the singer Orpheus.

The heyday of Swedish romanticism was short-lived, confined as it was basically to the 1820s. As early as the 1830s there were signs of a change of mentality, which Swedish literary historians have traditionally ascribed to the economic and political liberalism which made its presence felt from this decade onwards. In politics, the romantics had been conservatives. Now there emerged a politically liberal opposition which had campaigned for press freedom, free trade and more humane penal laws. The central forum was Sweden's first 'modern' newspaper, Lars Johan Hierta's *Aftonbladet*, founded in 1830.

On the literary front, this liberal opposition had as its goal a moderate realism, a *poesi i sak*, as the poetic voice of the new age Carl Jonas Almqvist (1793–1866) expresses it in a renowned essay *Om poesi i sak* (1839; 'On the Poetry of Facts'). A consequence of this new situation was that the romantic and classicist wings merged to form a common front against the incoming liberal realism. Almqvist is one of Swedish literature's most puzzling personalities, a fascinating transitional figure between romanticism and realism. In Swedish literary history he is traditionally often regarded as a precursor of August Strindberg. In *Amorina. Den förryckta frökens levnadslopp och bedrifter* (1822; 'Amorina. The Mad Girl's Life and Uncommon Exploits'), Almqvist blends lyric, epic and drama in an authentically romantic manner to create a chaotic outcome. *Songes* (1839) is a collection of short versified impressions, intended to be performed to musical accompaniment.

In the course of the 1830s, however, Almqvist switches to the novel, and in 1832 (influenced by Walter Scott's use of the form), he begins his great work *Törnrosens bok* (1832–51; 'The Book of the Wild Rose'), a series of short stories, novels, dramas, short lyrics, verse epics and treatises in which the individual volumes are bound together by a common narrative situation. The best-known parts of the series are *Jaktslottet* (1832; 'The Hunting Seat'), in which the common narrative element of the whole collected work is established, and *Drottningens juvelsmycke* (1834; 'The Queen's Jewel'), which takes place in and around the Swedish court of Gustav III.

Almqvist's short novel of contemporary life, *Det går an* (1838; 'Sara Videbeck', English translation 1919), was to be a social catastrophe for him, as in it he depicted an unmarried woman and man cohabiting. The book's reception

forced Almqvist to flee to the United States in 1851. At his death Almqvist left behind an extensive manuscript of 'poems in exile'. The work was published in the twentieth century and has proved endlessly fascinating to subsequent readers.

With Almqvist, and to an even greater degree with the popular Fredrika Bremer (1801–65), author of, amongst others, *Teckningar ur vardagslivet* (1828; 'Sketches of Everyday Life') and *Grannarna* (1837; 'The Neighbours'), the novel came into its own as the favourite genre of the bourgeois reading classes. Bremer's successors were August Blanche (1811–68), famous for his depictions of Stockholm, Sophie von Knorring (1797–1848) and Emilie Flygare-Carlén (1807–92).

New anti-romantic demands for a moderate realism in poetry, 'to achieve what is beautiful through what is true', were raised around 1860 by a student group in Uppsala, *Namnlösa sällskapet* (the Nameless Society), or *Signaturerna* (Pseudonyms), after their joint publication *Sånger och berättelser av Sju signaturer* ('Songs and Stories by Seven Pseudonyms') in 1865. The most important member was Carl Snoilsky (1841–1903), who with his *Dikter* (1869; 'Poems') and *Sonetter* (1871; 'Sonnets') was to renew the Swedish lyric.

In his own individual way the lyric and epic poet Viktor Rydberg (1828–95), through his great and many-sided literary output, links the period 1800–70 with the subsequent 'modern breakthrough'. Rydberg is 'the last great idealist in Swedish literature' (E. N. Tigerstedt): *Vad rätt du tänkt/vad du in kärlek vill/vad skönt du drömt, kan ej av tiden härjas* ('What you have rightly thought/what you seek in love/ the beauty you have dreamt, cannot be ravaged by time'; Cantata for the 400th Anniversary of Uppsala University).

Rydberg was a pivotal centre of power in Swedish spiritual life from the mid 1850s until the period around 1870. A work which is characteristic of his position between the old and the new life of the emotions is the novel *Den siste athenaren* (1859; 'The Last Athenian'), which deals with the period of overlap between Christianity and the older beliefs in ancient Rome. In his treatise of popular theology, *Bibelns lära om Kristus* (1862; 'The Bible's Teaching about Christ'), Rydberg gets to grips with the central religious dogma of Christ's divinity in a way which made a deep impression on his contemporaries. But Rydberg also wrote 'bestsellers' like *Singoalla* (1857), about the forbidden love between a knight and a gipsy girl in a medieval setting. But most of Rydberg's extensive writings, and the most important of them – including his finest achievement, the lyric poetry – belong to the period after 1870.

## Finland

Because of the Napoleonic Wars, Finland was conquered and united to Russia as a grand duchy in 1809. Until then she had been a part of Sweden and the official language was Swedish. Finnish as a written language had existed since the Reformation, which marked the first golden age of the budding Finnish nationalistic culture. The 'father' of written Finnish was the reformer Mikael Agricola (c. 1510–57), who had studied in Wittenberg under Luther and Melancthon. Soon, however, the policy of the Stockholm government in favour of Swedish almost stifled these beginnings in infancy. Until the nineteenth century, Finnish was mainly used in religious literature and elementary textbooks. Under the Russian tsar, the country continued, in cultural terms, to be a branch office of Swedish literature until well into the nineteenth century.

Until the 1820s the centre of literary activity was the country's only university in Turku (Åbo), which was transferred in 1828 by order of the Russian tsar to the new capital Helsinki (Helsingfors). Frans Mikael Franzén (1772–1847) has already been mentioned above in the context of Sweden. In Turku in the 1820s, there was a group of Swedish-speaking authors, the so-called *Åboromantikerna* (Åbo romanticists), who published *Aura*-Calendar (1818–19) and *Mnemosyne*-paper (1819–23). Their leaders were the historian Adolf Ivar Arwidsson (1791–1858) and Reinhold von Becker (1788–1858), the editor of the *Turun Viikko-Sanommat* (1820–7, 1829–31; 'Åbo Weekly News'). None of the group's members were important poets.

The most famous Swedish-speaking poet of the nineteenth century was Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–77). He laid the foundations of an independent Swedish-language literature in Finland. He was also an active member of the *Lauantaiseura* (Saturday Club), founded in the 1830s by teachers and students at the Helsinki University in order to promote the national Finnish culture.

Runeberg was influenced, among other things, by Serbian folk poetry, and in his first collection of poems, *Dikter* 1–2 (1830, 1833), he went in for a simpler, less rhetorical lyricism, in opposition to Tegnér and 'Tegnérism'. But it is with his epic romance-cycles that Runeberg emerges as one of Finland's and Sweden's most important poets and as one of the founders of a Finnish national consciousness: the 1832 idyll in hexameters entitled *Älgskyttarne* ('The Elk Hunters'), the mighty romance cycle *Kung Fjalar* (1844; 'King Fjalar') and, above all, *Fänrik Ståls sägner* 1–2 (1848, 1860; 'The Tales of Ensigen Stål'). The last-named poem-cycle contains narratives about the Finns' heroic defence of their country in the war of 1808–9 against Russia.

*Fänrik Ståls sägner* has been of decisive importance in the process of building a Finnish nation, and the introductory poem *Vårt land* (1848, in Finnish *Maamme*, 'Our Land') became later the Finnish national anthem.

Other prominent Swedish-speaking authors before 1870 were historian Zacharias (Sakari) Topelius (1818–98) and the philosopher and statesman Johan Vilhelm Snellman (1806–81). Topelius is particularly well known for his historical novels, for example *Fältskärms berättelser* (1853–67; 'The Barber-Surgeon's Tales'). He was also an important writer of children's books (*Läsning för barn*, 1865–96; 'Reading for Children'), and contributed to the literary prestige of this genre in Scandinavia. Topelius's and Snellman's works, like those of Runeberg, were translated into Finnish and became very popular among the majority of the population. Later Snellman changed course and became a leader of the Fennoman movement, like some other Swedish-speaking intellectuals. He also founded a Finnish-speaking periodical *Maamiehen ystävä* (1843; 'Farmer's Friend'), and supported others like *Kanava* (1845) and the newspaper *Suometar* (1847). Together with the other Fennoman leader, the historian Yrjö Sakari Koskinen (formerly Georg Zacharias Forsman, 1830–1903), he maintained that the basis of Finnish national consciousness is to be found among the common people, in their language and culture. Koskinen also wrote, in Finnish, for example two studies on the Club War (1857–9) and a large history of Finland (1869–73). Due to the Fennoman movement some 200,000 Finns changed their Swedish names into Finnish ones.

There were also female authors. Frederika Wilhelmina Carsten's (1808–88) *Murgrön* (1840; 'Ivy') is regarded as the first novel published in Finland. The other Swedish-speaking novelists of the mid-nineteenth century were Wendla Randelin (1823–1906), Charlotta Falkman (1795–1882) and Fredrika Runeberg (1807–79). Zacharias Topelius, for his part, published several historical novels. The most talented Swedish-speaking playwright and poet was Josef Julius Wecksell (1838–1907). His play *Daniel Hjort* (1863) can still be seen in Finnish theatres.

The Finnish cultural nationalism was strengthened by the favourable attitude of the Russian government. *Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura* (the Society for Promoting Finnish Literature) was founded in 1831, and later a chair for Finnish language and literature was established at the University of Helsinki (1850). All this was closely related to the struggle for the long-hoped-for predominance of Finnish – which was spoken by the large majority of the population – over Swedish.

The first flowering of literature in Finnish was in the mid-nineteenth century, inspired by National Romanticism in the spirit of the German

philosophers, above all Hegel and Herder. Since the Middle Ages Finnish has been rich in folklore – as elsewhere in Europe. A great number of folk poems and stories were collected and published since the 1820s as ‘The Ancient Poems of the Finnish People’, now filling thirty-three volumes. The most famous collection of the ‘Finnish national epic’ *Kalevala* (1835, extended edition in 1849) was translated into numerous languages. *Kalevala* became a symbol of Finnish nationalism. It was collected and edited by the physician and later professor of Finnish language and literature Elias Lönnrot (1802–84) on the basis of shorter heroic lays which he had written down on his collecting trips in eastern Finland. Beside the collection of lyric poems *Kanteletar* (1840), it has been a major influence in art and music (e.g. on Jean Sibelius). Like Runeberg’s *Fänrik Ståls sägner*, they played a central role in Finland’s nation-building process in the nineteenth century.

Finnish *belles-lettres* were not established until the 1860s. Many of the writers, like Paavo Korhonen, Olli Kymäläinen and Antti Puhakka, were of humble backgrounds. Jaakko Fredrik Lagervall and Pietari Hannikainen wrote plays, and Juhana Fredrik Granlund and Erik Alexander Ingman wrote poems. Key names here are Aleksis Kivi (1832–88), author of the first novel in Finnish *Seitsemän veljestä* (1870; ‘Seven Brothers’), and the lyric poets A. Oksanen (Swedish name August Ahlqvist, 1826–89) and Julius Krohn (1835–88). Kivi’s *Seitsemän veljestä* is still considered one of the greatest works in Finnish literature.





PART VIII

\*

THE NEW POLITICAL ORDER



Map 43.1: Map of Scandinavia 1860

## The constitutional situation

TORKEL JANSSON

### The international background

The gradual recognition and growth of the societal free sphere produced a triangular tug-of-war, which assumed different forms in different places and at different times, over the manner in which the absolutist state should be dismantled: the Congress of Vienna of 1815 and its attempts to create a Restoration Europe; the July Revolution of 1830 and its efforts to establish a bourgeois monarchy; the more Utopian and socialist February Revolution of 1848; and, finally, the Paris Commune of 1870–1, which served as an inspiration for socialist ideas also in Scandinavia. In the person of the Finnish clergyman and economist Anders Chydenius, the Swedish realm had had its spokesman for economic liberalism before Adam Smith published his celebrated works. About the same time the Dane Jens Schielderup Sneedorff had grappled with the problem of the role and place of a public sphere in an absolutist state. It was now no longer possible anywhere to put a brake on the ideas of *laissez-faire*. In the social sphere the same ideology demanded new forms of association based on the notion of individualism, and this also applied to the forms adopted for political activity. Those with an opinion about what the content of the new politics should be ranged from reactionaries influenced by the debates that took place at the Congress of Vienna to cautious conservatives like Edmund Burke, to liberals of different and changing shades of opinion, to an equally variegated tiny group of socialists. In the cultural sphere, the kind of romanticism inspired by Herder with its focus on the people but also on the individual and emotion rapidly gained ground. It soon became one of the most important elements in that new national consciousness which permeated so much of the political debate. Another element was philanthropic humanitarianism.

Ever since the French Revolution, there had been attempts in different parts of Europe to grapple, on the basis of the concept of the individual, with

the forms which the public sphere might assume at the central level. Both the consequences of the July Revolution in France and the implications of the Great Reform Bill in Britain were the subject of lively discussion in the debates about the form that representative political institutions might take. The same is true of the constitutions introduced in many places as a result of the events of 1848. For obvious reasons, conservative circles which favoured reform within the limits of what was politically realistic found these constitutions more congenial than the consequences of the February Revolution in France. The short-lived experiment of the Paris Commune, and the manner in which it was crushed, hardly served as a positive inspiration for the nature of new forms of government. Its significance was of a different, socio-psychological character in that it provided in the long run a solid foundation for the self-image of the working class.

The debates which took place on the Continent after the disappearance of town corporations and the emancipation of the peasants concerning the best way to organise local government on a representative basis had an impact on thinking in the Nordic region. It was natural for Scandinavian observers to take an interest in how Baron vom Stein attempted to recreate effective organs of regional administration in Prussia. As on the Continent, the British model of local government also sometimes cropped up in discussion as something to fall back on in the absence of native traditions. It was natural, not to say imperative, in those areas in which 'communalism' had for centuries functioned as society's only form of public sphere to ask how the units of local administration could be guided into an effective relationship with the state. As for the most important single task of local communities, namely the care of the helpless and the destitute, the British Poor Law of 1834 and the view of humanity which it expressed were both an alarming and an attractive model.

### General political demands: from subjects of the state to citizens of the nation

There were great differences between the Nordic countries in the constitutional sphere, but the similarities also need to be emphasised. One telling example illustrates this point. After 1809, Finland retained the Swedish law code of 1734 and the Gustavian constitution 1772/1789 but entered a period known as the 'constitutional night', since parliament did not meet until 1863 and the grand duchy was governed by a senate of ministers appointed by the Russian emperor. The new constitution adopted in Sweden in

1809 mixed native traditions with Montesquieu's ideas about the separation of powers: it kept the time-honoured parliament of four estates, but created a council (*konselj*) of ministers who were appointed by the monarch, while being responsible to the estates for the advice they gave him. Finland and Sweden therefore seem to present a sharp contrast in constitutional terms, but it has to be emphasised that in Sweden much of the political debate which had formerly taken place within parliament was now conducted outside it. The discussion of such questions as the abolition of the guilds and free trade, the emancipation of women, schooling and poor relief, crime and punishment, national and municipal representation etc. nearly always began and was continued in the pages of an ever-stronger press and an inexhaustible stream of pamphlets. The state's right to suppress a particular edition of a newspaper (1812–45) became more important to Karl XIV Johan as a means of controlling freedom of expression than any power to prevent parliamentary debates which merely continued discussions that had begun in the press could ever have been. His son, Oskar I (1844–59), was less timid in this respect during the liberal first four years of his reign. In Finland, the emperor-grand duke and the men he appointed listened to the discussions which took place in the cathedral chapters, the agricultural improvement societies and at the university. In this way, they learned the views of more or less the same social groups as made their voices heard through institutions of a more parliamentary kind in other countries.

When the four Swedish estates met in 1809–10 to hold their 'revolution parliament', their composition was a very inadequate reflection of the country's socio-economic base. In the last resort, the unrepresentative nature of the four estates was, of course, the reason for the ensuing debate over more than fifty years about the continuing existence of the estates as political institutions. The nobility made up just under 0.5 per cent of the country's population, and its privileges, which had already been curtailed by Gustav III, were almost completely abolished at the 1809–10 parliament. The process had begun in 1789, when Gustav III had given the peasants the right to buy land which had previously been the exclusive preserve of the nobility in order to strengthen his own position by reinforcing the loyal patriotism of his subjects. The enlargement of the nobility through the ennoblement of commoners had also declined sharply after 1789. Within the noble estate, the division of its members into three groups (the titled nobility, members of the council of the realm and their descendants, and the remainder) for voting purposes – a practice established in the early seventeenth century – disappeared. The position of the freeholding peasants in relation to the towns was

strengthened through the abolition in 1810 of internal tolls levied on agricultural produce and by the lifting five years later of all restrictions on the internal trade in foodstuffs. The burgher estate was alone in opposing the abolition of the guild system in 1823. The gradual retreat of the nobility within economic life and as the leading group among servants of the state was matched by the diminishing role of the clergy as the 'learned estate'. One expanding group within all sectors of society were the *ofrälse ståndspersoner* ('non-noble persons of rank') – an affluent but politically unrepresented group of high social status created by the development of the economy and society in directions which the four estates failed to accommodate. Moreover, the decision-making process was not facilitated by the requirement that, in accordance with the practice of an age that had not accepted the principle of majority voting, all four estates had to be in agreement. The most vehement attacks on the existing parliamentary structure described the estates as both divisive and unrepresentative of the nation as a whole, and argued that these divisive national estates should therefore be replaced by a national association.

The incomplete revolution of 1809–10 had solved the questions of the succession to the throne and the constitutional separation of powers between the executive and the legislature, but it had left the question of parliamentary representation unresolved. Reform was inescapable and touched all the estates except the nobility over the following decades – a development which makes it appropriate to ask whether the four-estate parliament of the nineteenth century really was a four-estate parliament any more. As early as 1823, the estate of the clergy was thrown open to members of the non-theological faculties of the country's two universities and to members of the Royal Academy of Sciences, that is to say to that same professoriate which the grand duke consulted in a more private form in the case of Finland. Five years later, commoners who owned ironworks – who had become an increasingly important group within the economy – were admitted to the burgher estate. After all remaining manufacturers and also urban property owners who were not recognised as burghers were admitted to the burgher estate in 1858, the burghers had in reality ceased to exist as an exclusive corporation. As for the peasant estate, it was turned into a national body when the many commoners who owned noble land were allowed representation in 1834 and 1844. In other words, representation ceased to reflect the nature of the soil one owned, the factor that had previously been the governing principle to which the subject was subordinate, and came to be associated instead with the individual/citizen. The divisive effects of the existence of four estates were also alleviated from

1858 onwards by the fact that joint plenary sessions could now be held if at least two estates so requested.

The piecemeal reform of the four existing estates was accompanied from the very beginning by demands for an entirely new type of parliament based on individuals, not corporations. In 1810, the estates approved in principle a proposal for a bicameral legislature, but the matter was not pursued further and the proposal was ultimately abandoned. In 1830, before news of the July Revolution had reached Sweden, the union with Norway and a number of domestic questions of an economic, social and organisational nature prompted Baron Carl Henrik Anckarsvärd, who had long been in opposition to the government, and lawyer Johan Gabriel Richert, who was hostile to all corporations of any variety, to suggest a unicameral model. Their proposal was followed by a number of others for some kind of bicameral system and even, in 1850–1 during Oskar I's conservative phase, by a variant which would have involved retaining four chambers of parliament. This last proposal demonstrates above all the effects of the February Revolution and that the organised reform movement which had become active even before the March disturbances of 1848 both could and indeed had to continue its work – a point underlined ten years later by the presentation of a petition about parliamentary reform signed by 38,000 people. By that time, a new tone had been given to Swedish politics by the appointment of a liberal government in which the finance minister, Johan August Gripenstedt, was the driving force over all matters of economic policy. The bicameral solution produced by the de Geer government finally became law in 1866. The first (or upper) chamber of this new parliament consisted of 125 members elected by the county councils (*landstingen*) established in 1862. These regional parliaments were in their turn directly elected by the most affluent sections of the population, and the last meeting of the noble estate was consequently a considerably more popular body than the new first chamber. The new second (or lower) chamber had 190 members and was directly elected on a franchise which gave the vote to about 20 per cent of adult males. In practice, this conferred a much greater measure of influence on the freeholding farmers than they had ever enjoyed through the old peasant estate. As critical voices complained, 'the age of money' had arrived, and the old, static, corporative principles had indeed been obliged to give way to free, capitalist competition. The new parliament reflected the distribution of power in society better than the old had done. The state had to some extent become a mirror of society, a development which meant in Sweden, as elsewhere, that in the age of

repoliticisation a parallel process could also begin which would ultimately lead society to become a partial mirror of the state.

As we have seen, it was impossible in 1814 for a Norwegian parliament to be based on the principle of four estates, above all for the practical reason that there were virtually no noblemen in Norway. The principle of individual representation, which was already enshrined in the constitution of the United States, therefore had to be adopted in Norway as the basis for how power and influence within the state was to be distributed through parliament, the *storting*, among the groups which had for a long time dominated Norwegian society: the civil servants and burghers of the towns on the one side, and the tax-paying farmers on the other. This meant that less than 10 per cent of the population had a voice in electing the *storting*, whose membership was set at not less than seventy-five and not more than one hundred. The line which divided those who owned property from those who did not was just as distinct in relation to the Norwegian parliament as in the case of all other parliaments during this period. In reality, the civil servants dominated the machinery of the state until 1884, when the principle of parliamentary government triumphed and the *Venstre* (Liberal) party took power.

Before 1814, the civil servants ruled Norway in the name of the king: after 1814, the same men governed the realm in the name of the people. They had changed their nominal master, but the people were as powerless in the period after 1814 as the king had been before 1814. This meant that the terms of political debate were by and large different from those in Sweden. The demands of various social groups for a role in political life primarily concerned the best means of exploiting parliamentary representation, not the form it should assume.

One important change which rapidly made an impact on the nature of political debate in Norway was the emergence of a new, capitalist bourgeoisie which regarded free trade and the removal of all restrictions on economic activity as questions of central importance, above all because Norway acquired a large market at an early stage for her timber products and fish, and a little later also for her paper pulp, in Western Europe. These groups regarded a well-ordered, predictable state based on the rule of law as the best political guarantee of their economic position: practical utility, not natural law, became the guiding principle for pragmatists like lawyer Anton Martin Schweigaard and others. For a time, there was an alliance between the rising petty merchants and the declining artisans, but it broke down when many of the latter joined the Thrane movement. The freeholding farmers represented in the *storting* were not a homogeneous group, and they became even less so



as agriculture in some parts of the country, above all Østlandet, became ever larger in scale and ever more integrated into a money economy, while the farmers of Vestlandet continued to combine agriculture with fishing in the traditional way. These divisions became more apparent after the February Revolution and proposals were advanced, at Swedish prompting, for the separation of the *storting* into an upper chamber for the owners of capital and a lower, more popular chamber. Johan Sverdrup came to see it as his mission to unite the country's urban radicals and the 'friends of the farmers' against the institutions of the growing civil servants' state. He acted in an anti-centralist spirit, and his goal was to create a state in tune with the social outlook and aspirations of the farmers by securing annual meetings of the *storting*, parliamentary reform to give more seats to the countryside and increased powers for local government.

If the Swedish nation drew nourishment in the early stages of its development from the diachronic struggle against the traditional estates and other corporations, the Norwegian nation was moulded rather by synchronic, economic conditions. As Peter Andreas Munch, one of the fathers of Norwegian nationalist historiography, put it during the period which witnessed the breakthrough of cultural nationalism in Norway just before mid century, everyone spoke about 'Norwegian herring and Norwegian timber boards, not about Norwegian language or literature or nationality'. Another aspect of the development of Norwegian nationalism was the need to resist Swedish encroachment, above all the power of the Swedish crown, which was represented in Norway by a governor (*stattholder*) between 1815 and 1829 and again between 1836 and 1856, and attempts to achieve any form of amalgamation. Norwegian national consciousness was strengthened by the existence of a national flag modelled on the old Danish *Dannebrog*, even if it also carried – from 1844 onwards – the symbol of the union, nicknamed 'the herring salad'.

However, the dangers of an institutional amalgamation between the two countries must have seemed just as slight to people at the time as it does now to a historian who knows the final outcome given the differing natures of the two societies and of their constitutional traditions. One growing source of discontent was that the foreign policy of the union was formulated by the king and his Swedish advisors and that the union's official representatives abroad were responsible only to the Swedish foreign minister. This was an important matter for a country with such extensive contacts with the outside world as Norway, and there were indeed more Norwegian than Swedish consuls in the union's consular service. Attempts to let Norwegians become foreign ministers were stopped.

Denmark had been greatly reduced in territorial extent by the outcome of the Napoleonic Wars, but these setbacks did not prevent a general strengthening of the central administration in the years after 1814. The king was still absolute, but he now met regularly with his council of state (*geheimstatsråd*), among whose members Anders Sandøe Ørsted was particularly active in promoting liberal policies and in initiating the regional representative assemblies which started to meet in 1835–6. Their composition provides a good example of how an absolute monarchy could begin to draw closer to society as a whole. All four assemblies, to whose meetings the public was not admitted, contained some full members appointed by the king and a royal commissioner who had no voting rights. The Danish state undertook to submit all questions which directly touched the citizen to these assemblies, and the composition of the electoral colleges which chose their elected members reflected the forces in society whose support the Danish state was anxious to obtain: property owners in the market towns, large landowners and freeholding farmers. In the kingdom of Denmark, tenants with security of tenure were also allowed to participate, while in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, the estates were given a guaranteed say in relation to municipal questions and new taxation. These measures legitimated civic participation in political life – the spirit and tendency was often more important than the content of new departures. The manifestations in the public sphere had begun to chip away at the edifice of the old political structures: the absolutist system that many regarded as un-Danish was about to collapse and liberal circles expectantly awaited the coming of circumstances in which a free constitution could be introduced.

The July Revolution had given Denmark regional assemblies which in reality quickly made the whole state machinery bourgeois in character, and the February Revolution eighteen years later conferred on Denmark in 1849 the June constitution which for a time created the most broadly based parliamentary body in the Nordic region. The one hundred members of the lower house (the *folketing*) of the new Danish parliament were elected by all adult, economically self-supporting males, while the fifty-one members of the upper house (the *landsting*) were indirectly elected from among those with high income. Legislative power rested with this new parliament in association with the king and government. However, despite the radicalism of the June constitution, Denmark was soon on a road which led away from the principles of 1848. At the time when the constitution was adopted, the indivisible state (*helstat*) policy of the Danish crown, which aimed at maintaining the union between the kingdom of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein,

had already led Denmark into a three-year war with Prussia. This had fateful consequences for the new constitution, not least because Russia ensured after the conclusion of a peace treaty (which conferred decision-making rights on the regional assemblies of the two duchies) that a conservative government was appointed in København. The council of state, to whose meetings the king could be invited under the terms of the June constitution, was transformed into his personal privy council.

This was the first step towards the constitution by royal charter of 1854 (introduced at the prompting of the same Ørsted who had previously pushed for the establishment of regional assemblies) and the joint constitution for the Danish kingdom and the duchies adopted the following year. This joint constitution supplemented the new Danish parliament created in 1849 with a council of the realm. Of its eighty members, thirty were elected by the Danish parliament and the regional assemblies in the duchies, thirty were chosen by the 6,000 most wealthy citizens of the state and twenty were appointed by the king. The main effects of these constitutional changes were that a significant step had been taken back towards authoritarian rule at a time of growing cleavages between those who owned property and proletarians and that the Holsteiners had been antagonised. In this second respect, matters were not improved by the November constitution of 1863, which represented an attempt to impose a union between Denmark and Schleswig. This gave Bismarck the opportunity he had been waiting for and rendered the second Danish–German war over Schleswig-Holstein inevitable. After Denmark's defeat in this conflict, the constitutional amendments of 1866 produced a situation in which the *folketing* was unable to achieve anything against the combined opposition of the heavily oligarchical *landsting*, the king and the government. With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that the constitutional changes of 1866 opened the way for the protracted struggle which would ultimately lead to the triumph of the principle of parliamentary government in 1901.

At first sight, it may seem remarkable that the Icelanders rejected the June constitution when it was put before them. However, their attitude is less surprising if we bear in mind that during the two preceding decades the regional assemblies in the mainland territories of the Danish crown had made a contribution to the work of social reform, but that no public bodies had been established on Iceland and the Føroyar for the development of civic political activity. On the contrary, such representative institutions as existed on Iceland and the Føroyar had been abolished long before regional assemblies were set up in Denmark and the duchies. The Icelandic *allting* played a

legislative role for the last time in 1700 and ceased to function as a court exactly one hundred years later, while what was left of the Føroyar *lagting* was abolished in 1816, after the Føroyar Islands ceased to be a part of Norway. The *Alþingi* was re-established in 1845 as an advisory body, but its proceedings rapidly turned into a tug-of-war between it and the government in København. The nationalist element in this struggle quickly became apparent in the demands of the Icelanders for control over their own internal affairs. These demands were discussed in a rich flora of clubs and societies on Iceland, and in 1871 an avowedly patriotic political party which described independence as its goal, *Hið íslenska Þjóðvinafélag*, was set up under the leadership of Jón Sigurdsson. When the *Alþingi* was given legislative powers, in association with the government in København, in 1874 on the millennium of the settlement of Iceland, the first step had been taken on the road that was to lead to the establishment of an Icelandic government with responsibility for the island's internal affairs in 1903. The June constitution came into force on the Føroyar Islands in 1850, and the *lagting* was reconstituted with the powers of a county council (*amtsråd*) two years later. This created the embryo of the political debate that would some decades later be conducted in a nationalist spirit among social groups which had also been strengthened economically by the abolition of the royal trade monopoly in 1856.

In Finland, voices calling for a meeting of the four estates made themselves heard very soon after 1809 and such a meeting was close to taking place in 1819, but in fact the estates did not assemble until 1863. The Russian government was deterred from summoning the four estates in Finland, first by manifestations of national sentiment in Poland during the second decade of the nineteenth century and later by the events associated with the July and February Revolutions. However, the outcome of the Crimean War influenced the political climate, and the question became topical once again because of the ad hoc contacts between the liberal-minded Alexander II, who was personally well acquainted with the long-dominant Finnish loyalists, and a society that was experiencing both material and spiritual growth. The dialogue which the emperor/grand duke and the senate had maintained ever since the events of 1808–9 with various official or semi-official bodies in Finland was reinforced and deepened when the four estates met once again in 1863, that is to say two years after serfdom was abolished in Russia and at around the same time as a succession of restrictions were being placed on the influence of the electorate as a whole in Denmark. The decision to summon the estates had been preceded by many calls from Finnish opinion for such a meeting, and the question had been examined by a special

constitutional committee in response to demands from the Finnish Agricultural Society (*Finska Hushållningssällskapet*), which in some respects functioned as a kind of representative assembly in the years before 1863. The Swedish eighteenth-century constitutional laws in force when Finland was conquered by Russia were officially cited as the basis for the activities of the last parliament of estates left in Europe. When the estates assembled, the Finnish language was given the same status as Swedish and political parties with a more or less Finnish-nationalist tinge were immediately formed. At the same time, the division of the noble estate into four classes was abolished, and the right to vote in elections to the 'lower' estates was significantly extended. The old Gustavian prohibition on the presentation of motions by members of the estates remained in force, but Finland's public sphere had for all that been accommodated within a seemingly obsolete form of parliamentary representation, which was an important element in the constitutional legacy and constitutional position cherished by all shades of Finnish opinion as the Finns sought to maintain the balance between loyalty to the emperor and autonomy which was essential to their national existence.

The growing bourgeoisie had been obliged to fight everywhere in the Nordic region to achieve a civic form of parliamentary representation from which the lower classes in society were excluded to a greater or lesser extent. As the section on social relations demonstrated, there were significant differences between the Nordic countries in the period 1809–14 in relation to which groups in society exercised decisive influence over matters like poor relief and schooling in local communities. It may be that between 1809 and 1863 the freeholding Finnish farmer and the great aristocratic landowner regretted the failure of the estates to meet, but they were both far from powerless at the local level. Like their Swedish counterparts, they enjoyed the right to elect at parish meetings the leader of the local community, namely the state-church pastor. At such meetings, the economic standing of each individual weighed very heavily in those few cases when a vote was taken. The county governors sometimes complained that the decisions taken at parish meetings were often more zealous than legal. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the freeholding farmer and the nobleman had a direct say in local government. Matters were different in the towns, where the influence of the state as exercised through the town officials and magistrates had contended against that of the town meeting open to all burghers ever since the time of the absolutist regimes in power towards the end of Sweden's Age of Greatness. In the towns, the form of local government was mixed.

The system of local government was even more mixed in Denmark and Norway. In contrast to Sweden, the introduction of absolutism in the seventeenth century had brought with it state control of local government, but in the course of the eighteenth century 'elected men' began to be chosen again in the towns, while the members of the poor-relief and school commissions and other, more ad hoc bodies in the countryside were also elected. Reforms were consequently required for politico-ideological reasons after 1814 in the case of Denmark and Norway, but the system needed to be renewed throughout the whole Nordic region, not least in order to strengthen the financial resources of local government in an age of demographic expansion and increasingly individualised and therefore also anonymous pauperism.

In 1817, after the matter had been debated in parliament, a royal ordinance supplemented the existing organs of local government in Sweden with parish councils (*kyrkoråd*), which were given responsibility above all for questions of morality and health. An important innovation was that the old idea of reaching decisions by consensus was displaced by the principle of majority voting, which had been employed in relation to poor relief as early as 1811. In a sense, the most interesting effects of this reform can be observed in Finland, where the need for an administrative overhaul was just as great but where all the other estates had, in the name of constitutionalism, vehemently opposed a proposal put forward by some members of the peasant estate in 1809 to introduce a Russian style of local administration. After 1809, the question had to be discussed, as was normal between 1809 and 1863, in one of the extra-parliamentary bodies which existed in Finland. In this case, the forum was the chapter of Turku Cathedral, where the leading role was played by Archbishop Jacob Tengström, who had been well regarded in St Petersburg since 1808. In 1826, Tengström sent out a circular which virtually repeated the contents of the Swedish ordinance of 1817 stating that those without property were given a stronger position than in Sweden and parish meetings were called church meetings. The church was very definitely one of the state institutions whose continued and unhampered existence had been guaranteed by the emperor in 1809, and this measure significantly strengthened the agrarian sector of civic society.

In 1843, the social base for the Swedish parish meeting was extended in Sweden too, since it was not just farmers who contributed to the costs of poor relief and the like and, for the same reason, parish meetings were introduced in the towns as well. Moreover, for the first time, an executive body was now established for the organs of local government in the Swedish

countryside – the parish board with an elected chairman. It remained subordinate to the parish meeting, which made it a rather feeble institution – in those cases when a parish board was set up at all – and it only became a more lively body four years later when the constitution gave the parish board responsibility for the administration of poor relief. Similar reforms were introduced in Finland in 1852, though the Finns preferred to be more explicit and used the term ‘poor relief board’.

The process of secularising the parish meeting that had begun in 1843 was taken further in 1862, when the administration of ecclesiastical and temporal affairs was separated and the pastor lost his automatic position as chairman of meetings devoted to the discussion of general social questions. However, the parish meeting – now municipal meeting – survived, as did plural voting, which gave more votes to the wealthier citizens, in line with the same principle which favoured those with more shares in the case of a joint-stock company. On the other hand, all tenant farmers, not just freeholders, were now given a say, and so too were women who paid municipal tax in their own name. The changes of 1862 were much more radical in the case of the towns, where the agrarian model of local government was now applied. In towns with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants, a general town meeting of all eligible residents was set up, while a council of elected representatives was created in each of the larger towns. In both cases, the municipal board was subordinate to the representative assembly, and the town’s local government officers were merely responsible for ensuring that the letter of the law was followed. In contrast to the countryside, a ceiling was placed on the number of votes an individual could cast in order to prevent a tiny minority from becoming completely dominant.

At the same time, taking the old agricultural societies and other elected regional bodies as a model, elected county councils (*landsting*) which were not linked to a particular municipality, were created. The liberals had long demanded the establishment of such bodies to act as a counterweight to the county administrative institutions (*länsstyrelser*) controlled by the central government, which had been established during Sweden’s Age of Greatness – in contrast similar municipal reforms were introduced in Finland three years later (1872 in the case of the towns). County councils were perceived by the emperor as presenting a threat of democratisation through the back door, and this aspect of the reform was therefore abandoned. After 1812, when Old Finland, i.e. the territories ceded to Russia in the eighteenth century, were made a part of the grand duchy, it proved relatively difficult to reintroduce the old Swedish forms of local government in parishes where large estates had become

widespread at the expense of the freeholding farmers and where Russian administrative practices had become well established.

Municipal bodies quite clearly belonged to the state's sphere of competence. This was the very reason why the philosopher and statesman Johan Vilhelm Snellman wanted to arouse a civic spirit within them, since the Russian authorities and Finnish loyalists disapproved of voluntary associations; but in both Sweden and Finland municipal institutions occupied a curious grey area. This is demonstrated by the degree to which they are still supervised by the central authorities.

As a summary, it can be said that the conservative efforts of the propertied elements in the countryside to retain the essentials of a time-honoured system of local government had succeeded in both Sweden and Finland. Swedish politicians had found little to emulate in the arrangements in place in foreign countries, and their Finnish colleagues took the same view – wherever they looked, they saw only small, elected delegations, and no one wanted that in Finland. Nonetheless, the effects of the growing role of the state in society were still very noticeable after the reform of the Swedish parliament in 1866. When the central authorities, which were now more aware of their duties to society, began to demand statistical information from local government in order to acquire more knowledge about the society which they wished to improve, the farmers reacted vehemently. At the same time, the liberals had triumphed in relation to the restructuring of local government in the towns.

In the cases of Sweden and Finland, a system of representative local government was gradually introduced, almost by stealth, in the second half of the nineteenth century. In contrast, there was never really any alternative to this option in the debates which took place in Denmark and Norway. In these two countries, the basis for representative local government lay in the arrangements that had developed in the market towns during the period when local government had been controlled by the central authorities. When the question was discussed in the regional assemblies established in Denmark during the 1830s, Anders Sandøe Ørsted found it relatively easy to deal with the problem and the ordinance on the subject issued in 1837 was able to strike a balance between the powers of the 'state element' (i.e. local government officials) and the 'municipal element'. It was more difficult to find such a balance in the case of the countryside, even if – as we have seen – there was some embryonic popular participation in the form of 'best men' etc. The rural councils established in 1841 placed power over the 'parish directorship' in the hands of the great landowners and between four and nine farmers



while ensuring that the central government was represented through the presence of bailiffs, district court judges and local pastors. The pastor did not have an automatic claim on the chairmanship, but self-assured citizens would protest for a quarter of a century against the decision to use the term 'parish directorships' (*sogneforstanderskaber*) in order to avoid encouraging 'pretensions'. What the citizen wanted was a 'parish council' (*sogneråd*).

From 1855 onwards the pastor was only present in the discussion of questions relating to poor relief and schools, and the suffrage for elections to local representative bodies, which still had few members, was extended. At the same time as the farmers lost influence at the national level, their position was strengthened in local government – as is clearly demonstrated by the law of 1867, which finally accepted the use of the term 'parish councils'. It also put an end in the market towns to the old dualism between local government officials and representatives of the burghers by setting up elected town councils. The elected county councils (*amtsråd*) exercised supervisory functions over local government on behalf of the state. These developments clearly reflected the transition from a form of local government that was under the control of the state to a system of representative local government. This involved adding a popular element to the rule of a narrow circle of local government officials appointed by the state.

As for Denmark, it would only be a slight exaggeration to say that the power over municipal affairs conferred on the regional assemblies in the duchies, where the administrative structure was complex, was the ultimate reason why no comprehensive reforms were introduced in Schleswig and Holstein. The arrangements in place in the duchies ranged from the time-honoured peasant communalism of the marshland districts to the dominance by the great landowners in other areas. The debates about local government in the duchies were also coloured by the tensions between Danish support for a united state (*helstat*) and Schleswig-Holstein separatism.

In Iceland, the question of local government became an integral element in the growth of national consciousness from the very outset. The successive elimination of all popular participation by the absolutist regime provoked a civic reaction, and the Icelanders found it easy to draw inspiration from their own history. In 1835, the poet Jónas Hallgrímsson published his work about the social structure of the pre-Christian *hreppur*, a district larger than the parish, which was often very small. The inhabitants of Reykjavik obtained a representative body the following year, and when the *Alþingi* reopened a little later, there were efforts, as in the duchies, to acquire control over decision-making in relation to local government. It was virtually inevitable

that all Danish proposals would be rejected, and that the Icelanders would once again begin to elect representatives at the *hreppur* level. Finally, in 1872, the social homogeneity of the Icelanders in their relations with the Danes finally gained all enfranchised Icelandic men the right to vote in elections to the directorships of the *hreppur*, which were placed under the supervision of a number of regional boards, which in their turn were subordinate to the county councils. The Føroyar Islands resembled Iceland in socio-economic terms and developments there largely followed the same pattern as Iceland. In 1872, the Danish authorities paid great attention to the way in which the village communities already functioned as poor-relief districts. Even after the reforms of 1872, colonial government was in force on Greenland in that all forms of local administration continued to be dominated by colonial administrators. However, on Greenland too, some role was given to trusted representatives of the central economic activity on the island, namely the reliable and self-supporting hunter-fishermen, and this points towards the emergence of a civic society.

In 1814 the freeholding Norwegian farmer had become a central force in what was at that time the most broadly based parliament in the Nordic region, but he had no legal right to direct his own local affairs. The great variety of sometimes very different local bodies that had emerged over the course of time were in need of review, and – as in the case of Iceland – indigenous myths and realities of the pre-absolutist age played an important role in shaping ideas about the form local government should take. The farmers put forward proposals for peasant meetings or people's assemblies that were to be quite independent of the state, and some even floated the notion of a national federation of self-governing local units. Such ideas had a perfectly realistic objective, namely greater control by the prosperous farmers over the growing costs which the local communities faced. It was the social-liberal civil servants of the central administration, who were well aware of the risks for the more vulnerable members of society that such a solution might involve, who prevented its adoption. However, the farmers also had to struggle against the country's conservative government, which was unwilling to allow the property-owning population access to local government on the same conditions as to the *storting*. The government's attitude tells us a lot about where the truly important and expensive decisions were taken in Norway, as in other parts of the Nordic region.

Despite such resistance, the municipal laws finally accepted by Karl XIV Johan in 1837 rested on the same principles as those which governed the right to vote in parliamentary elections. In organisational terms, these laws

constituted an interesting compromise. They created a town or parish council of three to nine members alongside a representative body which was three times larger and which had to be consulted on matters of importance – both with the same chairman. This duo of local institutions was supervised and frequently approved by the county council, which was made up of the chairmen of all the local institutions and presided over by the county governor. In the 1860s Sverdrup struggled in the *storting* to achieve greater powers both for local government as such and for the local electorate. The first result of his efforts was the decision in 1879 that chairmen would in future be elected by the representative bodies. Essentially the same solution was adopted in the towns, where the old group of elected men gave way to town councils and the traditional, open, meetings of all burghers were replaced by elected representative institutions, whose membership was no longer restricted to those who were burghers of the town. Local town officials retained a role under the new dispensation. The solution adopted in Norway was similar to that chosen in Denmark in that a representative system was introduced, as rule by local government officials was abandoned, and resembled the Swedish and Finnish solution in that a role was also found for a larger body. However, it was only in 1896 that the smaller town and parish councils were officially subordinated to these larger bodies. One contrast with Sweden and Finland was that the arrangements in place in the countryside were not taken as a model.

The whole period between the Congress of Vienna and the Paris Commune is characterised in the Nordic region by the emergence of new political groups and their demands for reforms to the system of political representation. The growth of the bourgeois state was apparent everywhere in the way both the prosperous sector of the urban population and the agrarian petit bourgeoisie were found a place in the political machinery. Except for the Danish democratic experiment (for men) in 1849, the whole period is marked by determined efforts to lay down a strict boundary between men of property and the lower ranks in society. In the case of parliamentary assemblies, this was achieved by restricting the suffrage, while for municipal bodies either the same solution was adopted (as in Denmark and Norway) or the old system of plural voting was retained (as in Sweden and Finland). One difference in the relationship between the state and local communities lay in the differing role played by central government in different parts of the Nordic region. In Sweden and Finland, the right of appeal gave the state a supervisory function, while in Denmark and Norway the same was achieved by making the decisions of local bodies subject to approval at a higher level.

This constant supervision of municipal activity in Denmark and Norway reflected the norm in most Continental, post-authoritarian states and was made possible by the fact that there were far fewer units of local government in Denmark and Norway than in Sweden and Finland. In other words, the geographical point of departure was different. In Sweden and Finland, the parishes were by the strength of time-honoured custom the natural units of local government, whereas in the pre-1814 territories of the Danish crown, the considerably larger *pastorat* (benefice) had been coterminous with the poor-relief district, which later became the normal unit of local government. Moreover, regional institutions in Sweden could not have been constituted in the same way as in Norway, since this would have led in some parts of Sweden to assemblies with several hundred members. Just as Sweden and Norway functioned as two national states without any common union institutions, there was no uniformity in the parliamentary and municipal institutions which they evolved on the basis of very different constitutional legacies.

### General cultural and spiritual demands

The form and content of politics had been rationalised in accordance with the ideas of those social groups which regarded themselves as the foundation of society. The state based on the rule of law, which the bourgeoisie desired, along with the predictability it created, had been established. These endeavours to achieve liberation were connected with other emancipatory efforts that had their roots in the Enlightenment. The existence of an economy reformed in the light of liberal principles contributed to creating an infrastructure in which a general cultural discussion of secularisation was possible and in which the monopoly over opinion enjoyed by states which to a greater or lesser extent were still absolutist was questioned by the bourgeoisie and, at the time of the February Revolution, also by less prosperous sections of society. Evolutionary ideas, especially positivism, came to the fore in an increasing number of academic disciplines, and various contributors to public debate made ever greater use of statistics, which had been used in earlier periods, and reshaped this old discipline into something new.

These attempts at rationalisation also affected the human beings who had been brought closer together by the social, economic and political process of unification and homogenisation. In general terms, it can be said that this period was characterised everywhere by a search for national identity. In the 1870s, one Scandinavian observer argued that the time was not so remote

when 'the different popular groups felt no other sense of unity than that created by religion and perhaps war'. It was only around the turn of the century that national identity had become so strong that it was possible in some areas to begin to think in terms of regional identities as well. As in other parts of Europe, nation-building proceeded in stages.

Even before 1789 there were signs of Danish resistance to the strong German influence on state and society. The general struggle between old and new was ultimately reinforced by a more synchronic struggle through the growing national tensions between speakers of Danish and German in Schleswig and Holstein. In the long run, the only possible solution was a partition of the duchies along the linguistic/national frontier between Danish and German.

In addition to references in the political debate to a presumed golden age in the distant past, there was an increasing interest in the indigenous dialects of Norway. The struggle against Danish in church and school, and indeed in other contexts too, began the *Nynorsk* (New Norwegian) movement, and ultimately left Norway in 1878 with two officially recognised forms of Norwegian – and with a continuing dispute about the relationship between them. In parallel with this development, nationalist historical writing was born in Norway. Rudolf Keyser and Peter Andreas Munch were leading figures during the early phase of the emergence of nationalist historiography, which remains a bone of contention to this day. The cultural bonds with Denmark remained strong, literary unity continued for a long time and the Norwegian church was certainly not nationalised in the form and content of its services. As for the new link with Sweden, the rapid growth of associations proceeded quite separately in the two countries. It can be said that direct mutual cultural influences were weak, since there was so little of a shared legacy to build on. In so far as the Norwegians needed to resist Swedish encroachment, this occurred on the political level – though even in this case, Norway's *annus mirabilis*, 1814, was for many years a source of inspiration for radical liberals in Sweden.

According to the Peace of Hamina (Fredrikshamn), Sweden did not cede Finland to Russia in 1809. What she ceded was a number of her eastern provinces. In the new grand duchy, the events of 1809 were not exclusively perceived as a threat. There were certainly protests among the peasantry, though this was an expression less of national consciousness than of fear that the traditional freedoms of the peasant estate would be lost, but once constitutionalism was confirmed by the emperor at Porvoo (Borgå), there were also many Finns who were inclined to regard him as a liberator. Alexander I was

certainly liberal in comparison with Gustav IV Adolf. Economic, social and cultural contacts with St Petersburg and Finland's regained city of Viipuri were opened, and that difficult balancing act began with the words 'We are no longer Swedes, we do not wish to become Russians, so let us be Finns!' It soon became necessary to find a word in Finnish to describe the 'citizen'. Contacts with Sweden were never broken off. Many of the ideas entertained by Finnish liberals were derived from Sweden, and a number of Finnish intellectuals visited Sweden. However, the clash between Swedish and Finnish became the dividing line. The leaders of the Fennoman movement, Johan Vilhelm Snellman and the historian Yrjö Koskinen (Georg Forsman) pointed out that the basis of Finnish national consciousness is to be found among the common people, in their language and culture. Koskinen was the first to write Finnish history in Finnish. In his work the Swedish period was described as a foreign rule. The Fennomans were inspired by European National Romanticism in the spirit of the German philosophers Hegel and Herder and also from the collections of the Finnish national epic like *Kalevala*. The truly durable effects of this internal struggle were on the Swedish language in Finland, which began its long decline. Finland's relationship with Russia was uncertain, and this made it more important to guard the country's constitutional legacy and, therefore, also her social institutions.

The 'Little Sweden' of the Bernadottes created by the Peace of Hamina did not develop a national consciousness in the modern sense by 1809, any more than Finland had. The loss of Finland was naturally ignominious for the Swedish state, but it was hardly noticed among the broad mass of the people. The loyalism shading into patriotism fostered by Gustav III is not to be confused with nationalism. In the case of Sweden, too, the task of nation-building remained to be performed and would take place in a struggle directed against the country's past. While the Finns and the Balts fought a bitter battle to retain their ancient constitutional and cultural legacy from Sweden, the early Swedish liberals were assaulting that very same legacy within Sweden: the state church which represented a strong centralised state and an all-pervasive culture developed during the Age of Greatness. The loss of Finland was not perceptible in 1809, but it would soon make itself felt as a new Sweden, which had not previously existed, was created in men's minds. In the field of historical writing, the Swedes now donned a more modest, post-revolutionary garb. Erik Gustaf Geijer and other historians introduced the practice of describing the country's history as if it had always existed within the frontiers established in 1809. This was one of Sweden's

contributions to the invention of the nations which emerged in nineteenth-century Europe.

The values of the early nineteenth century were manifested, in the wake of Sir Walter Scott, in a flood of historical novels which in no way constitute a source of knowledge about how things really were in the past. The writers of the educated upper middle class made their contribution to the national liberal cause. There is some force in the argument that for a while Norway developed into a 'poetocracy', as the individuals represented on Norwegian bank notes still remind us today. In 1829, only fifteen years after the Peace of Kiel, it was possible for Esaias Tegnér to place a laurel crown on the head of the Danish poet Adam Oehlenschläger and to hail him as 'the king of poetry in the North' at a meeting of students and university teachers in Sweden, the country which had virtually been Denmark's arch-enemy for hundreds of years. New men belonging to new nations had throughout the Nordic region created new states, and they would soon find one another in the Scandinavianist movement. In cultural terms, too, the fall of absolutism and the growth of a society based on individualism had created a sense of national identity in the Nordic countries, but the struggle for the nation, and between the nations, would continue after 1870.

## The idea of Scandinavianism

HENRIK BECKER-CHRISTENSEN

In August 1828 the Danish steamer 'Caledonia' made its first sailing from København to the Swedish city of Malmö. The visit was a great success and contributed to the establishing of a regular steamer connection between the two cities. The following year, the Danish poet Adam Oehlenschläger was among the passengers. Regarding their reception in Malmö, one Danish newspaper wrote that it 'offered a new and powerful proof of the spiritual affinity which for far too long has evaded kindred hearts'.

One particular outcome of the rapprochement between the neighbouring peoples at the Øresund was the so-called 'poet's coronation' of 1829, when Oehlenschläger, during a visit to Sweden, was honoured with a laurel wreath at Lund University. It was in this connection that the rector of the university, Esaias Tegnér, pronounced the oft-quoted words about the relationship between Denmark and Sweden: 'the time of division is past'. Tegnér's words came to stand as the introduction to a new chapter in the history of Scandinavia which was characterised not only by reconciliation but also by the establishment of fraternal relations between the two peoples. It is this establishment of good relations which became known, in its first phase, as Scandinavianism. This took on a decisive significance for the internal relationship between Denmark and Sweden in the years up to 1864.

As early as the end of the eighteenth century, there are signs of vague Scandinavian sympathies within the literary world. These had manifested themselves in 1796 with the founding of the Scandinavian Literature Society, but from the beginning it had the character of a purely Danish enterprise and had no significance for the future relationship between Denmark and Sweden. The Napoleonic Wars and the Peace of Kiel in 1814, by which Denmark had to concede Norway to Sweden, cooled any interest in Scandinavia, but in the wake of the Romantic Movement spiritual Scandinavianism gained in strength again and flourished openly at the end of the 1820s and in the 1830s.



It was the recollection of northern antiquity and the glories of earlier times that found expression in poems, plays and historical novels, and which not only tugged on national heartstrings but also bore witness to a deeper interest in the neighbouring peoples. Recognition of their common linguistic heritage and similar mode of thought had a positive effect on this development. Examples of this are Bernhard Severin Ingemann's poem *Nordens Aand* ('Spirit of the North') from 1833 and Hans Christian Andersen's song *Vi er et folk, vi kaldes skandinaver* ('We are One People, We Are Called Scandinavians') from 1839, which the author himself described as a national song for Scandinavia.

At the same time, contacts were also made on the personal level. Steamship trips on the Øresund were a first indication of this. The same was true of the warm relations that developed between the Scandinavian students in Rome. As late as the 1820s they had maintained their distance from one another, but in 1833 Andersen was writing home enthusiastically that there were plans to hold a common Christmas party, 'where Swedes, Norwegians and Danes will become one nation. Rome is reuniting the Scandinavian kingdoms!'

The union came about – in the purely physical sense – in the winter of 1838, when the ice formed a bridge between Sjælland and Skåne. This provided an excuse for a lively traffic over the Øresund – with, among other things, a torchlight procession and a band. Among those visiting each other were many students from the universities of København and Lund. After the ice melted they maintained contact with each other. In April and May 1838 there were Swedish guests in København again, and in June seventy students from there went to Lund to attend the MA graduation ceremony. In May 1839 a new congress was held in København with 150 students from Lund taking part. This was the start of the Scandinavian student congresses. Two months later the more senior academic community followed suit by holding the first Scandinavian scientific congress in Göteborg.

In 1839 spiritual Scandinavianism also acquired a literary focus when the Danish student Frederik Barfod commenced publication of the journal *Brage og Idun*. In contrast to earlier ventures in this field, this was a consistently Scandinavian journal with contributions from all three Scandinavian countries. By the time the second issue was sent out in 1839, there were 404 Danish, 113 Swedish and 49 Norwegian subscribers. The geographical imbalance helped to demonstrate the different levels of interest in Scandinavianism in the three countries. Common to all of them, however, was an unconditional passion for Scandinavia, the feeling of a spiritual kinship and – as far as

the Danes and Swedes were concerned – a feeling of joy that they could once again be in the same room together.

In this way, the arrival of Scandinavianism was in line with the simultaneous awakening of the Slavs, Germans and Italians. But while pan-Slavism remained for most of the nineteenth century a philosophical-cum-literary phenomenon without major political significance, it was otherwise with the movements promoting German and Italian unity. Those belonging to German student circles in the 1830s, with their clear political overtones, were a step ahead of Scandinavian efforts along the same lines. Accordingly Germany, as Scandinavia's nearest neighbour, came to serve as a source of inspiration for several Scandinavianists – among others, Orla Lehmann. On the other hand, from the beginning of the 1840s it was growing Danish opposition to the German unity movement dressed up as Schleswig-Holsteinism that had a decisive influence on Scandinavianism, and which in the last resort was the cause of its demise.

Just as was the case with the other European unity movements, Scandinavianism was soon influenced by the political currents of the time. Thus, at the beginning of the 1840s it made the leap from a spiritual movement to a political one, intended to serve particular constitutional, national and dynastic purposes. It was this development which gave Scandinavianism its special stamp. But it should be added that spiritual Scandinavianism lived on, independent of political strivings. In practice, spiritual Scandinavianism also reached much broader circles in the following years – also in Finland among the Swedish-speaking Finns. From this point, accordingly, there is a straight line of descent to the Scandinavian fellow-feeling that we know today.

At the two Danish-Swedish student congresses of 1842 in København and Lund it became clear that Scandinavianism was about to take a political turn. It was evident from the speeches that the new relationship between the Scandinavian countries would now help to pave the way for the introduction of a free constitution in Denmark, on the Norwegian model, and secure Sweden and Denmark against external threats from east and south. The latter possibility was powerfully underlined in 1843 at the Danish-Swedish student congress in Uppsala. From then on, the national struggle in the duchy of Schleswig became the fixed pivot of political Scandinavianism, with a Danish demand that their Scandinavian brethren be 'ready' if Denmark's southern border was threatened.

The great Scandinavian student congress in 1845 in København became a new forward thrust for political Scandinavianism. Whereas hitherto it had in practice been a Danish-Swedish phenomenon, now Norway was also

represented among the 500 delegates from the universities of Lund, Uppsala and Kristiania. It was on this occasion that the prominent Danish National Liberal politician Orla Lehmann, in a major speech, incited the students to make a 'sacred promise' that they would remain true to the Scandinavian ideal, 'to the end – true in life and death'.

In 1848 this became a matter of urgency. With the outbreak of the First Schleswig-Holstein war (1848–50) the new Danish government – the so-called March ministry – asked Sweden-Norway for help. The dispatch of a Swedish-Norwegian detachment to Fyn (Funen) and the many Norwegian volunteers in the Danish army were expressions of the gains that Scandinavianism had made in the preceding years. From being a movement which was regarded with scepticism by the authorities in both Denmark and Sweden-Norway, Scandinavianism had become an ingredient in the policy of both states. Yet the practical significance of this was limited. After the armistice in Malmö in the summer of 1848 it became clear that the Swedish-Norwegian troops had no wish to be actively involved in the war. Renewed Danish appeals to Sweden-Norway in 1849 and 1850 remained fruitless.

The resulting disappointment meant that it was not until the second half of the 1850s that Scandinavianism once again got under way. External expressions of this were the student congresses of 1856 in Stockholm and Uppsala, and 1862 in København. Add to this several gatherings of other professional and population groups in the Scandinavian countries, numerous articles in the press and, not least, frequent meetings between the Scandinavian monarchs. The fundamental dilemma remained the national problems in the duchy of Schleswig, which increasingly fed the Danish desire for a Scandinavian defence league. What was new, however, was that this desire was echoed by the Swedish King Oskar I and his son Karl XV, who adopted a policy of clear-cut Scandinavianism. This would – with varying emphasis – strengthen Sweden-Norway in relation to Russia, distract attention from Swedish-Norwegian internal problems and prepare the way for the Bernadotte family's candidature for the Danish throne. It took place in the context of co-operation with leading Danish Scandinavianists and played a decisive role in the Danish-Swedish negotiations of 1863; but Karl XV's sanction for military support to Denmark was rejected that same autumn by the Swedish government. This destroyed an important precondition for the foolhardy policy which the Danish government had embarked upon in the Schleswig question, and which had outward expression in the adoption of the so-called November constitution. When the Second Schleswig-Holstein war broke out in 1864, Denmark had to fight alone against Prussia and Austria, and the

outcome was the loss of Schleswig and Holstein. These circumstances brought a halt to political Scandinavianism.

Scandinavianism did not develop into a fixed political programme. Perceptions of the form and purpose of Nordic unity varied from country to country and from circle to circle of activists. However, several common traits can be discerned – generally, and in individual countries. In 1842 the student Hans Frederik Poulsen aptly characterised Scandinavianism as the ideal of ‘internal freedom and external independence’. In the same way, it was the two emerging forces – liberalism and nationalism – which induced politically engaged circles to aspire to something more tangible than the spiritual and scientific union of Scandinavia. The desire for internal freedom was a burning issue in Danish liberal circles in the years before 1848. There was an expectation that a Scandinavian union could prepare the way for the introduction of a free constitution on the Norwegian model. Likewise, Swedish liberals believed that Scandinavian unity would promote a modernisation of the Swedish constitution.

In the 1830s and 1840s absolutist Russia was seen as a brake on aspirations towards a freer constitutional development and closer ties between the Scandinavian countries. Anti-Russian feelings were particularly strong in Sweden, where the loss of Finland in 1809, desire for revenge and fear of their neighbour in the east had a positive influence on Scandinavianism. The same held true of Denmark in relation to leading German states – but to a much greater degree.

While Scandinavianism in Denmark was linked to a securing of the border on the Eider, and in Sweden it could offer support against Russia as well as furthering dynastic aspirations, the Norwegians had no burning issue of their own. This, together with the fear that Norway would become the junior partner in a Scandinavian union, meant that Scandinavianism manifested itself more weakly here than in the other two countries. The fourth Scandinavian country, Finland, which was often mentioned on festive occasions, was prevented by the Russians from playing an active role, although in Finland there were idealists committed to Scandinavianism.

As regards the form of the Scandinavian union, pronouncements were often vague and contradictory. One basic tenet, however, was the desire to see the Scandinavian countries united under the Swedish royal house. Here, Scandinavianists were anticipating the dying-out of the male line of the Oldenburgs in Denmark. At the same time, they shut their eyes to the new arrangement made after 1852 for assuring the succession to the Danish throne (the Glücksburgs). On the other hand, it was constantly underlined –

among other things, out of consideration for the Norwegians – that each country should keep its own (free) constitution. However, the front presented to the outside world meant that from the mid 1850s people tended more and more to emphasise that entry into a defensive alliance would be the first step on the way to a Scandinavian union.

Political Scandinavianism in the period after 1864 has often been described as Student Scandinavianism – in order to distance it from the ensuing fiasco. The description is, however, misleading. Outwardly, the concept of Scandinavian unity was certainly characterised by the large student congresses, but it found support – and was employed – by leading circles in the three countries. In the 1840s it was, in particular, younger liberal opposition academics and the more substantial businessmen in Denmark and Sweden who supported the movement, but from 1848 Scandinavianism was raised to a higher sphere and came to form an important element in the political deliberations of the two governments and the two kings.

In this, and in other areas, there is a clear parallel with the German and Italian unity movements. Nor was Scandinavianism, by the standards of the time, any less deeply rooted than those two movements. In this respect it contrasts with pan-Slavism, which in the period examined here, managed only briefly to manifest itself as a political force in the revolutionary year of 1848. When Scandinavianism – like pan-Slavism – failed, this was due, among other things, to the fact that, in contrast to Italy and Germany, it lacked a single energetic power which, like the kingdoms of Sardinia and Prussia, could place itself in the vanguard of the movement and force through the business of union. Internal relations between the Scandinavian countries, and the limited room for manoeuvre which the Great Powers afforded them, made this impossible. In addition, there was an inbuilt contradiction in political Scandinavianism. From the beginning of the 1840s up to 1864, Scandinavianism was to a large extent nourished by opposition to the German unity movement, but in the last resort it was also crushed by it.

## Finland: the emergence of the nation state

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Of the five Nordic countries, Finland was the one to manifest a particularly pronounced national consciousness in the nineteenth century. This took place in the phase from 1809 onwards when, no longer a part of the kingdom of Sweden, it became an autonomous grand duchy within the Russian empire with the Russian emperor as the grand duke. Finland characteristically differed from Sweden and Denmark in its lack of continuous independence. Unlike Norway, which equally lacked independence in the union with Sweden, it could not even look back on an older tradition of rulers and its own empire during the Middle Ages. There was, however, one particular aspect of Finland that was definitely well known during the formation of the Scandinavian kingdoms: the inhabitants, who, apart from a narrow belt of Swedish-speaking people along the coastlines, spoke a non-Scandinavian language, namely Finno-Ugrian Finnish. Up until the age of nationalism, this phenomenon had been of very little significance. As an institution, only the Lutheran church used this commonly spoken language accompanied by the appropriate Bible translation. The New Testament and the most important liturgical books had been published in Finnish already in the 1540s, but soon the official policy in favour of Swedish had discontinued this. These publications, however, formed the basic corpus from which written Finnish continued to grow. The Finnish language was to become the most effective medium in the nation-building process as well as the most important criterion in creating an awareness of a collective identity. To the outside world it became a defining characteristic, and on the 'inside' it was a communicative driving force within the great diversity of local and regional cultures.<sup>1</sup>

In his comparative study, Miroslav Hroch has convincingly shown that, just as in several other countries, the process of a growing national

1 M. Pohls and P. Tommila (eds.), *Herää Suomi. Suomalaisuusliikkeen historia* (Kuopio, 1989), pp. 253–367.

consciousness in Finland went through several stages, starting with an elite movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century and developing into a Fennoman mass movement towards the end of that century. At the beginning, as in Bohemia and later Estonia, there was a scholarly interest in the people, their history and culture. Literary publications, the press, the activities of associations and the school system communicated the national message to broad circles.<sup>2</sup> We could say that for the process of nation-building in Finland during the nineteenth century two main deficits had to be overcome with the development of sovereign state structures and the formation of an individual Finnish national consciousness.

Finland was always a border country, not only as an object in the political-military strategies of the major powers and alliances but also as an area of influence in the cultural sense. The Swedish kings had managed to hold the areas inhabited by the Finns for six centuries to form the eastern flank of their empire, thus maintaining a predominantly Western European influence. The weakening of Sweden and a border change 'at the right time', that is at the beginning of the age of nationalism, meant that annexation by a foreign, and previously hostile, multinational empire did not lead to the superimposition of a new cultural layer. Instead it turned out to be an unforeseen chance to develop a national consciousness and build the administrative structures of a Finnish state. From the perspective of the new capital, St Petersburg, Finland now formed the western border country of the Russian empire. A good hundred years later the tsarist regime collapsed in the First World War creating another unique chance for Finland to gain complete independence. This declaration of independence in 1917 has been of key significance throughout the country's national history, not only in view of later developments but also for interpreting the foregoing centuries.<sup>3</sup>

2 M. Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 27–9, 178; cf. A. Kemiläinen, 'Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Finland', in A. Tammisto et al. (eds.), *Miscellanea* (Helsinki, 1989), pp. 93–127; M. Hroch, 'Programme und Forderungen nationaler Bewegungen. Ein europäischer Vergleich', in H. Timmermann (ed.), *Entwicklung der Nationalbewegungen in Europa 1850–1914* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 22–5; E. I. Kouri, 'Religiosität und nationaler Gedanke in Finland in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1918', in H. Timmermann (ed.), *Entwicklung der Nationalbewegungen in Europa 1850–1914* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 448–51. See also Ernest Gellner, *Nation and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983); E. Gellner, *Nationalism* (Oxford, 1997); and A. D. Smith, 'National Identity and Myths of Ethnic Descent', in A. D. Smith (ed.), *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 57–95.

3 A good example is two modern concise histories of the Finnish people: E. Jutikkala and K. Pirinen, *A History of Finland*, 6th rev. edn (Helsinki, 2003), and J. Vahtola, *Suomen historia. Jääkaudesta Euroopan unioniin* (Helsinki, 2003). See for the period of autonomy:

The period of autonomy also contains a key date, both for today and for the people of the time in question. It is March 1809 when, during the meeting of the estates in the small town of Porvoo (Borgå), the Finnish estates paid tribute to Emperor and Grand Duke Alexander I (1801–25) who then pledged that the constitution, Lutheran faith and the laws of the Swedish era would continue to be valid. As a result the constitutional statutes enacted by Gustav III in 1772 and 1789 remained valid until 1917, enabling the Russian emperors to hold a position in Finland almost equivalent to that of an absolute monarch. Whether or not Finland actually achieved the ‘rank of a nation’ in 1809 in Porvoo to become a more or less autonomous state with its own constitution has been a focus of concern for law experts and historians ever since. The retrospective views of the continuous expansion of autonomy over the decades soon enshrined this official act as a substitute for the lack of the kind of ancient state foundation myth so well known to other nations. One of the first people at the time to express the ‘national existence of the Finnish’ people was the bishop of Turku (Åbo), later first Finnish archbishop, Jakob Tengström.<sup>4</sup>

Being part of Sweden for such a long time, retaining the administrative and social structures, the whole legal system, the Lutheran faith and Swedish as the official language in the bureaucracy and education throughout the age of autonomy, formed the continuing common intellectual and social foundations of Finland’s sense of belonging to the Nordic complex. The Russian emperors and civil servants definitely had a vested interest in promoting a sense of alienation towards Sweden among Finland’s existing cultural elite of indigenous bureaucrats, scholars, writers and artists. To this end the growth of Finnish cultural nationalism proved extremely opportune. For this reason the new rulers permitted leading figures, all Swedish-speaking Finns such as the poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–77), the novelist and historian Zacharias Topelius (1818–98) and the philosopher and later statesman Johan Vilhelm Snellman (1806–81), to continue their activities, as long as they did not

O. Jussila, ‘From Grand Duchy to Modern State’, in O. Jussila *et al.* (eds.), *A Political History of Finland since 1809* (London, 1999). O. Jussila, *Suomen suurruttinaskunta 1809–1917* (Helsinki, 2004), is the best résumé of the period. M. Klinge has summarised his research on Finnish history in the nineteenth century in the volume *Finlands historia*, 3: *Kejsartiden* (Helsingfors, 1996).

- 4 J. Manninen, ‘... se voitti itselleen vain sivistyksen voitot: Suomen hegeliläisyyden perusteemoja’, in J. Manninen and I. Patoluoto (eds.), *Hyöty, sivistys, kansakunta* (Oulu, 1986), pp 114–17. Summarising the discussion between Finnish historians on this question: E. Hösch, ‘Die kleinen Völker und ihre Geschichte. Zur Diskussion über Nationswerdung und Staat in Finnland’, in M. Alexander *et al.* (eds.), *Kleine Völker in der Geschichte Europas* (Stuttgart, 1991), pp. 22–32.



become too political or liberal. Thus, this border country gradually found its identity in cultural patriotism. A popular saying of the day aptly illustrates the attitude of Finland's intelligentsia; 'We are not Swedes, we are not [later transformed to 'do not want to be'] Russians, and so let us be Finns.'

In the process of spreading a Finnish national consciousness – a development often associated with the term 'awakening' as in a religious experience – the main focus was directed towards the common people, their language and culture. This was completely in the tradition of Herder and the belief that the soul of the people resided here. Other intellectual models for the shaping of early Finnish nationalism can be found in German philosophy and literature of the Romantic period. To put it simply, both Runeberg and Topelius discovered the ethical qualities of men and women in the common people, against the romantic backdrop of the Finnish landscape. Runeberg's best-known work, *Fänrik Ståls sägner*, was a glorification of the battles and the Finnish defenders between 1808 and 1809. In the first part of the work it was made very clear, and the songs were duly interpreted in this way, that the fighters had a fatherland named Finland, not Sweden.<sup>5</sup> Included was Runeberg's patriotic poem *Vårt Land* ('Our Country'), which gained popularity after 1848, later becoming the national anthem, and which praises love of the country and its natural beauty from beginning to end. In his extremely popular book of the same title, Topelius wrote a history of the inhabitants of the country for young people. It narrated the story of the tribes of the 'proper' Finns in the west, the Tavastians in the centre and the Karelians in the east, not forgetting the Swedish-speaking peasantry around the coast, and described the various areas, with vivid characterisations of the indigenous peoples. He provided his readers with a specific local identity as well as a national identity. A poor but honest, industrious and God-fearing people: these were the people living in Finland.<sup>6</sup>

This type of patriotism can be described as apolitical. Runeberg's poem did not question the existing system, which is not surprising considering the level of censorship. There was no call for 'Justice and Freedom', unlike

5 The original work was published in two parts, 1848 and 1860. The latter part, however, contained allusions to the Swedish past and they could be interpreted as anti-Russian. M. Klinge, *The Finnish Tradition: Essays on Structures and Identities in the North of Europe* (Helsinki, 1993), pp. 132–7; M. Klinge, *Den politiske Runeberg* (Helsingfors, 2004).

6 Z. Topelius, *Boken om vårt land* (Helsingfors, 1875), translated into Finnish by J. Bäckvall, *Maamme-kirja* (Helsinki, 1876); see M. Klinge, *Idyll och hot. Zacharias Topelius, hans politik och idéer* (Helsingfors, 2000); in general about Finnish literature in the nineteenth century see P. Lassila, *Runoilija ja rumpali. Luonnon, ihmisen ja isänmaan suhteista suomalaisen kirjallisuuden romanttisessa perinteessä* (Helsinki, 2000).

Germany's *Deutschlandlied* which appeared at the same time and later became the national anthem. And, unlike the Poles within the Russian empire, the Finns had no cause to mourn their lost freedom. Consequently they had no urge to rebel – not even in 1848 – against this common ruler, and in the final analysis they actually gained far more liberties for their country from being the emperor's loyal subjects.<sup>7</sup>

Snellman, a philosopher schooled in Hegelian thought, became the real promoter of Finnish national consciousness, primarily through a national education process, and especially through his later practical activities as a senator. He identified the main problem as the divide between an educated, Swedish-speaking elite and the uneducated 'common folk', the majority of whom spoke Finnish. According to his programme the people had to be educated in their own language, Finnish, while the Swedish-speaking educated elite should be urged to learn the common language, Finnish. National education and upbringing thus became an emancipatory, enlightening credo. Snellman became the figurehead of the Fennomans,<sup>8</sup> militants who advocated a completely Finnish Finland, while liberal-minded Topelius was already propagating the idea of a nation with two languages.

The district medical officer and later professor of Finnish language and literature, Elias Lönnrot (1802–84), managed to compile the *Kalevala*, a national epic of traditional Finnish folk songs. Although present-day research indicates that this collection of poems is a modification of common myths and narrative patterns well known to many cultures, including classical antiquity, it nevertheless became the qualitative symbol of individual nation-building potential on its publication in 1835 and subsequently emerged as a highly versatile source of inspiration for the national genius.<sup>9</sup> The *Kalevala* gained international recognition. It was translated into numerous languages and allowed the Finns to be numbered among the existing ancient civilised peoples of Europe.<sup>10</sup>

7 See M. Branch et al. (eds.), *Finland and Poland in the Russian Empire: A Comparative Study* (London, 1995); E. I. Kouri, 'Auswirkungen der Revolution an der Peripherie Europas. Das Jahr 1848 in Finnland', in H. Timmermann (ed.), *1848 Revolution in Europa. Verlauf, politische Programme, Folgen und Wirkungen* (Berlin, 1999), pp. 511–13.

8 I. Liikanen, *Fennomania ja kansa. Joukkojärjestäytymisen läpimurto ja Suomalaisen puolueen synty* (Helsinki, 1995), with English summary; E. I. Kouri, 'Zum Verhältnis von Nationswerdung und Sprache im Großfürstentum Finnland', in A. V. Doronin (ed.), *Centres and Peripheries of the European World Order* (Moscow, 2014), pp. 288–303.

9 P. Karkama, *Kansakunnan asialla. Elias Lönnrot ja ajan aatteet* (Helsinki, 2001), pp. 240–323.

10 The first translation, into Swedish, *Kalevala. Öfversatt af M. A. Castrén*, 1–2, was published in 1841 in Helsingfors; into German: *Kalewala, das National-Epos der Finnen, nach der zweiten Ausgabe ins Deutsche übertragen von Anton Schiefner* (Helsingfors, 1852); into English: *The Kalevala: The Epic Poem of Finland. Into English*

Like their contemporaries elsewhere in Europe, Finnish philologists and ethnologists began earnestly researching the origins of the Finnish tribes and their cultures.<sup>11</sup> The image emerged of an original Finno-Ugrian people that later developed into a larger family. Scientific data was collected mainly by Matthias Alexander Castrén (1813–53) on his research expeditions which he pursued to the furthest reaches of eastern Siberia. But this turning towards language-related peoples in Siberia also created a basic conflict. The more scholars drew on atavistic extra-European origins in order to authenticate the true Finnish character, the greater the temptation became to distance themselves from Western achievements of civilisation and the modern European age. However, this backward-looking search for identity remained on the periphery of mainstream thought. A further aspect of the discussion was the racial categorisation of the Finns as a non-Indo-European-speaking people, often together with the Mongols. This position, propagated by many European anthropologists in the nineteenth century, went too far for the Finns who strictly rejected it.<sup>12</sup>

It became far more important at the time to prove that, within Finland's modest cultural life, Finnish gained the status of a modern cultural and scientific language.<sup>13</sup> The first results came with the founding of a society for the cultivation of Finnish literature in 1831,<sup>14</sup> followed by other organisations, Finnish newspapers and later Finnish primary and grammar schools. The elite, the civil servants, scholars and many artists continued to use Swedish as their language of communication and publication. But Finnish steadily gained ground. Many of the elite were already, or became, bilingual. The accusation that Finnish was 'too primitive' was defeated by the generation of new terms, which proved that the language was innovative and possessed the potential for development. Many individuals and families demonstrated their acknowledgement of being Finnish by their choice of names. This applied especially to Swedish given and family names which were now replaced by purely Finnish names or transcribed into Finnish.

But the real monument to a new Finnish literature came in the shape of the first Finnish-language novel *Seitsemän veljestä* ('Seven Brothers') by

by John Martin Crawford, 1–2 (New York, 1888). Selections of Finnish folk songs had already been translated, even before 1835, into German and English.

11 P. Tommila, 'Mitä oli olla suomalainen 1800-luvun alkupuolella', in P. Tommila and M. Pohls (eds.), *Herää Suomi. Suomalaisuusliikkeen historia* (Kuopio, 1989), p. 55.

12 A. Kemiläinen, *Finns in the Shadow of the 'Aryans': Race Theories and Racism* (Helsinki, 1998), pp. 63–95.

13 Katja Huumo et al. (eds.), *Yhteistä kieltä tekemässä* (Helsinki, 2004).

14 I. Sulkinen, *Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura 1831–1892* (Helsinki, 2004).

Aleksis Kivi (1834–72). It is no coincidence that this novel deals with character development. The theme is the raising and development of seven wild children of nature into civilised human beings. After publication in 1870 it soon became a national classic containing all the elements ascribed to the ‘Finnish national character’: a love of nature, but also the struggle with the forces of nature, earthiness and humour, toughness and tenacious perseverance, a characteristic conveyed by the Finnish word ‘sisu’ (guts). It also deals with the question of a modern, though still agrarian, society combining heathen elements and a form of Christian belief that adheres strictly to the Old Testament. As Snellman expressed it, Kivi’s novel was the story of the developing nation.<sup>15</sup>

It has often been said that with the conclusion of the war of 1808–9, Finland entered history for the first time as a subject-nation.<sup>16</sup> This was formally signed and sealed in the peace treaty between Sweden and Russia in Hamina (Fredrikshamn) on 17 September 1809. For the first time Finland was defined as a complete entity with its own borders to the east as well as the west. This created the framework for a territorially defined concept of the grand duchy and allowed the growth of a state consciousness. In addition, although subjects of the Russian emperor, the Finns possessed their own citizenship, a right to which other inhabitants of the Russian empire were not necessarily entitled. Not long after 1850 the Hegelian Snellman claimed that Finland had in fact achieved the status of a state. It was not just another province of the Russian empire.<sup>17</sup>

The demand for natural borders in theories about the modern territorial state is of particular relevance in the case of Finland and Sweden. In the far north the border is marked by the river Tornio (Torneå) while the remainder is defined by the Gulf of Bothnia. Although there are Swedish-speaking populations on both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia who keep in touch with each other, they do not share a common Swedish national consciousness. Local identity proved itself stronger. Another reason for this status quo is that Sweden was satiated, so to speak, and apart from a

15 A. Viikari, ‘Kansakunnan kirjoittaminen’, in *Kirjallisuuden tutkijain Seuran vuosikirja*, 49 (Helsinki, 1996); A. Kivi, *Seven Brothers*, trans. Alex Matson (rev. edn, I. Rantavaara) (Helsinki, 1973).

16 M. Klinge, *Let Us Be Finns: Essays on History* (Keuruu, 1990), p. 68; F. Neseman, *Ein Staat, kein Gouvernement. Entstehung und Entwicklung der Autonomie Finnlands im Russischen Zarenreich, 1808–1826* (Frankfurt, 2003).

17 O. Jussila, *Maakunnasta valtioksi. Suomen valtion synty* (Porvoo, 1987), pp. 90–102. The Finnish word for ‘state’ (*valtio*) did not exist before 1840.

few exceptions never expressed any prolonged intention of regaining Finland or even the narrow belts with a Swedish-speaking population. Even the emergence of Scandinavianism and Axel Olof Freudenthal's agitation in Helsinki for Swedish nationalism presented no real threat to the structure of the grand duchy or the Russian empire. The only notable exception in this context is Ahvenanmaa (the Åland Islands). In 1809 their purely Swedish-speaking population tended to favour staying with Sweden. But their opinions were irrelevant because Russia wanted the islands for strategic purposes. In contrast to the sea in the direction of Sweden, Finland possessed no common natural border with Russia and eastern Karelia. In the north the border ran through mostly uninhabited wilderness.

As was the case virtually everywhere in Europe, the state border of the grand duchy did not generally coincide with the language borders considered so important for national agitation purposes. The nature of these borders was highly debatable depending on what was defined as Finnish, a dialect, or simply language-related. The river border between Finland and Sweden in the north left a small Finnish-speaking population on the Swedish side. Apart from this the river also ran through the lands of the nomadic Sami, an independent ethnic group who however at that time had no voice within the national Finnish context. The Karelians in the east and south-east represented another 'borderline case'. They had been separated in two different power zones with different religious confessions since the Middle Ages. The Eastern Orthodox east Karelians, who had traditionally lived under Russian rule, did not directly participate in Finland's nation-building process, but were certainly monopolised in the cultural and phylogenetic sense by the later Karelianism movement within Finland. In 1812 Alexander I officially enacted the reintegration of so-called 'Old Finland' into the grand duchy, i.e. the part of western Karelia which had been removed from Sweden in 1721 and other areas which had passed to Russia in 1743.

Another significant factor in Finland's relatively peaceful national transition is the absence of any social differences between the Swedish-speaking and the Finnish-speaking rural population which could have become a source of separatist developments. In addition to this, the populations of most rural parishes were either Swedish-speaking or Finnish-speaking. In the larger coastal towns, including the capital, the populations were more or less mixed, though Swedish still tended to dominate. But in the second half of the nineteenth century the balance began to change in favour of

Finnish-speakers, particularly as people migrated from the countryside to the growing towns.<sup>18</sup>

While the national poems written in Swedish by Topelius and Runeberg were highly popularised through the Finnish translation, the original versions served to help the much smaller Swedish-speaking section of the population to identify with the 'land of their fathers', whether it was called Finland (Swedish) or Suomi (Finnish). Finally, the Lutheran faith, which embraced Swedish- and Finnish-speaking people alike irrespective of social standing, also acted as an integrating factor within the country.

The communication factor was of decisive importance in the development of a collective national consciousness in Finland. This applied not only to the spheres of culture, language and education but also in very concrete terms to the technological process of connecting the very different western and eastern regions, as well as central Finland, with the coast. In this respect the construction of new railway links in Finland during the second half of the nineteenth century contributed more to the unification of the nation than any sea links between Sweden and the Swedish-speaking people on the coasts of Finland could ever do. At the same time the development of trade within Finland also played a major unifying role.<sup>19</sup>

As we mentioned earlier, Finland's special status within the Russian empire provided the initial impetus to, and promoted, the development of a nation-building process within Finland. At the same time, growing national consciousness contributed to the continuous expansion of autonomy, as well as the development of social, political and economic openings within the country's special status. The fact that Finland possessed a clearly defined territory, its own bureaucracy and its own senate (government) – albeit headed by a governor-general dispatched from St Petersburg – strengthened the Finns' sense of belonging to and living in their own state, even though it was not officially independent. Emperor Alexander I also made a further major fundamental decision in 1812, when he decreed that the grand duchy was to have a new capital, Helsinki. The city was designed by the German architect Carl Ludwig Engel (1775–1840)

18 M. Engman, 'Finns and Swedes in Finland', in S. Tägil (ed.), *Ethnicity and Nation Building in the Nordic World* (London, 1995), pp. 179–216; E. I. Kouri, 'Die Stellung des Finnischen als Verwaltungssprache bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts', in T. Niclas and M. Schnettger (eds.), *Politik und Sprache im frühneuzeitlichen Europa* (Mainz, 2007), pp. 137–52.

19 M. Klinge, *Finlands historia*, 3: *Kejsartiden* (Helsingfors, 1996), pp. 186–288.

with a number of monumental classicist designs which included the Senate House, the Great Church dedicated to Emperor Nicholas I (1825–55) and several barracks. However, Turku remained the see of the bishop and was elevated to the see of the archbishop in 1817. After the country's only university moved from Turku to Helsinki in 1828, the latter gradually developed into the intellectual hub of the nation. The three key buildings representing religion, scholarship and government grouped around Helsinki's central Senate Square became the symbolic focal points of national cultural remembrance.

Loyalty towards the ruler and monarch and trust in his willingness to promote the welfare of the Finnish people was especially noticeable during the reign of Alexander II (1855–81). Alexander was praised for having reconvened the legislative parliament of the estates at defined periods, giving the Finnish language official status alongside Swedish and, no less important, agreeing to the introduction of the Finns' own currency, the Finnish *markka*.

To a large extent national cohesion is generated from a combination of traditional heritage and, invariably, numerous newly created and consciously revived elements of collective memory. In this respect Finland was no exception. 'Places of remembrance' emerged, both in the metaphorical sense as already mentioned as well as in the shape of architecture. Admittedly, the repertoire of the Grand Duchy of Finland was far more modest than that of an old nation such as France with its profusion of war memorials, rulers' tombs and memorials to great men, as described by Pierre Nora. One of the first memorials of national significance was dedicated in 1864 to Henrik Gabriel Porthan (1739–1804) and created by the first 'Finnish' sculptor Carl Eneas Sjöstrand. As a historian and scholar Porthan was considered to be a pioneer in the rediscovery of Finnish folk verse. The monument is located near Turku Cathedral, the medieval bishops' cathedral of the country. This historical monument had been turned into a Protestant 'national shrine' from the early nineteenth century onwards with decorations including the frescoes by Robert Wilhelm Ekman dedicated to the history of Christianity in Finland.

A love of the homeland was expressed in painting and prints depicting the natural environment as early as the first half of the nineteenth century. At first, Finnish artists who had studied in Düsseldorf, such as Werner Holmberg (1830–80), chose the wildness of nature as a favourite motif for representing a romantic, ideal landscape. To name just three examples, there was Koli Mountain overlooking the islands of Lake Pielinen, a motif that attracted many artists; the Imatra waterfall; and the Kyrökoski waterfall, made famous

by Holmberg's painting.<sup>20</sup> But it was a collection of lithographs, *Finland framställt i teckningar* ('Pictures of Finland') with text by Topelius and other writers, that became the standard work conveying an understanding of the Finnish landscape.<sup>21</sup>

If language, culture and a defined territory are the foundations of nation-building then the development of its history also plays a significant role. This is particularly true in the case of Finland where the national past had to be reconstructed. Despite the lack of an independent state, in Hegel's opinion the precondition for the formation of history, there was no difficulty in proving the existence of a Finnish, or Finnish-speaking, people deep into the Middle Ages. With the aid of philology and the new discipline of archaeology it was also possible to construct a theory of migration by the Finns from a distant original homeland. In this way historians were able to provide their readers with a continuous story of progressive development, fraught with many privations, but with the final successful outcome culminating in the development of the Finnish nation. The Fennoman leader Yrjö Sakari Koskinen (original name Forsman, 1830–1903) was the first to write the history of the Finns in Finnish, in which the time 'of Swedish rule' was explicitly described as 'foreign rule'.<sup>22</sup>

The basic pattern in depicting the period of autonomy since it became the focus of historians after 1918 has more or less remained the same: 'national awakening', the preliminary stage of independence during the 'time of Russian rule', though admittedly the role of Russia, for instance, has since been depicted less negatively and other aspects have been subjected to controversial discussion. Whereas previously the causes of the developing nation were sought in ideological and intellectual components, recent research has focused more on the social and economic aspects.<sup>23</sup> The first approach viewed the development of the national concept in Finland in

20 M. Valkonen, *Finnish Art over the Centuries*, 2nd rev. edn (Helsinki, 1999), pp. 29, 36–8; A. Reitala, 'Romantiikasta modernismiin', in A. Reitala and O. Apunen (eds.), *Suomen historia*, 6 (Helsinki, 1987), p. 30.

21 *Finland framställt i teckningar* (Helsingfors, 1845–52). Also published as *Das malerische Finnland: 118 Ansichten der merkwürdigsten Örter in Finnland, nach der Natur = La Finlande pittoresque: 118 vues des places les plus remarquables en Finlande, dessinées d'après nature* (Helsingfors, 1853).

22 Y. S. Koskinen, *Oppikirja Suomen kansan historiassa* (Helsingfors, 1869–73); see also Y. S. Koskinen, *Finlands historia. För folkskolornas behof* (Helsingfors, 1873); E. I. Kouri, 'Das Nationale und die Stellung der Sprache im Großfürstentum Finnland', in K. Maier (ed.), *Nation und Sprache in Nordosteuropa im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 2012), pp. 275–93.

23 R. Alapuro, *Suomen älymystö Venäjän varjossa* (Helsinki, 1997); H. Ylikangas, *Käännekohdat Suomen historiassa. Pohdiskeluja kehityslinjoista ja niiden muutoksista uudella ajalla*, 4th edn (Porvoo, 1993), pp. 105–12, sees the national concept as a tool of the bureaucracy to gain and remain in power.



connection with stimuli from German philosophy, Herder and Hegel. This placed Finland in a mutual context of analogous developments in Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. The other 'more realistic' viewpoint, which sees the nation as a predominantly theoretical construct anyway, has focused more on the hard facts of the development of state and societal structures. Both tendencies can refer back to Snellman who defined the nation ideologically as a cultural, and especially a language, community. However, with reference to Hegel, he also discussed in detail the role of the state. Consequently, in the case of Finland, it is difficult to distinguish clearly what emerged first, the nation or the state. Both have developed, as indicated at the outset, in a dialectical relationship and at the same time in a favourable space of power-political constellations.

## Denmark: the emergence of the nation state

VAGN SKOVGAARD-PETERSEN

## Denmark, 1801–71

*Events – concepts*

Events can be noted, perhaps also explained; their effects are harder to evaluate. But for the sake of order as much as for explanation and evaluation, there is a need for categories and concepts – particularly, in this context, the concepts of nationality and nationalism, with the corresponding adjectives. The Danish National Dictionary (*Ordbog over det danske Sprog*) defines nationality as a relationship of belonging which builds on a common language, culture and history. Nationalism is defined as exaggerated, extreme national feeling. Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, Miroslav Hroch, Anthony G. Smith and Bjarne Stoklund, for example, have published studies of the origins and development of nationalism. The Danish history professor Lorenz Rerup (1928–96), a native of Flensburg, mentions that research on nationality since the end of the Second World War has primarily focused on the world beyond Europe – especially the countries of the Third World, which are attempting to modernise by the process of ‘nation-building’. In the national ideal it is the people who occupy centre stage – not the state.<sup>1</sup>

In Danish historical tradition there has probably never been any doubt that the two most significant events for Denmark in the nineteenth century were the separation from Norway in 1814 and – half a century later – the loss of the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg in 1864. With the dissolution of the dual monarchy Norway, with a million Norwegians, was separated from Denmark, which had a similar population. In terms of area, calculated in square kilometres, Norway measured about 320,000 and Denmark roughly

1 The international debate about nationalism has many contributors, among others, Ernest Gellner, Anthony D. Smith of the London School of Economics, the English historian Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson (USA). As regards Denmark, see the ethnologist Bjarne Stoklund.

58,000. Furthermore, almost a million people were excluded from the monarchy in 1864, including 400,000 in the duchy of Schleswig. In territorial terms, the loss of the duchies meant a decrease in area of 18,600 square kilometres. After the defeat in 1864 Denmark consisted of 1.8 million people on 43,000 square kilometres. But it was a nation state.

The effects could be felt for decades at the national level and in society generally. But there were differences. 1814 was a shock. Denmark became a little state of the second rank, where even those in positions of authority doubted whether it would continue to exist. In 1801 the British had forced Denmark out of the league of armed neutrality with Russia and Sweden, and in 1807 they had bombarded København and forced Denmark to hand over its fleet. The reason for this was Britain's wish to defend herself against potential Danish co-operation with Napoleon in setting up a mainland blockade (the Continental System) directed against Britain. The British attack had almost forced Denmark into Napoleon's camp, and not until the Peace of Kiel in 1814 was the matter settled, when Frederik VI of Denmark was forced to cede Norway to Sweden. This was irreversible – and it was perceived as such by all the parties involved.

It was otherwise in 1864. This time, the pain of defeat was lessened by the expectation of reuniting with pro-Danish elements in the northern part of Schleswig. After all, they also belonged to the Danish nation. In the years after 1864 there was a feeling of satisfaction that Denmark was at least Danish now from border to border. Dialects could be heard throughout the kingdom, but they were all part of the Danish language. Both 'fatherland' and 'nation' were meaningful concepts. Not only territorially but also materially and mentally, Denmark at the beginning and end of this period was two different worlds. The state had become less static. In 1813 it was in a financial crisis, a state of bankruptcy, which had a lasting effect on the relationship between proprietors and their estates and farms. Not until about 1830 was the crisis in corn sales and credit to a large extent overcome.

In 1814, despite the political and financial confusion, Frederik VI put his signature to the all-important laws decreeing compulsory education for all children, whether in towns or in the countryside, from the age of 6 or 7 until confirmation – to be financed by a local tax assessment. This necessitated the establishment of both rural and urban schools and the division of each individual parish into school districts under the local leadership of a school commission chaired by the parish clergyman. The clear intention was that Danish children should learn to read, write and count and know the part of the catechism concerned with the Christian education of children. Illiteracy was

defeated in the years that followed. This led to greater enlightenment generally in Denmark and opened up the possibility of government by the people.

After 1830 events almost tumbled over each other. The economic crisis eased off and turned into success. Fields were fertilised, grain improved. On the political front, the nature of the autocracy changed with the introduction of four advisory assemblies of the estates: announced in 1831 and put into effect in 1834–6. With the change of monarch in 1848, a constitutional monarchy was declared. Frederik VII signed the constitution of the Danish Kingdom on 5 June 1849. This introduced a government that was representative of the people by means of elections to the parliament's two chambers, the lower and upper house (*folketinget* and *landstinget*), and it ensured freedom of association, of speech and of belief.

A law passed in 1857 forced the guilds to give way to freedom of trade. At the same time, the monopoly of trading enjoyed by the market towns was cut back. Transport between different parts of the country benefited from the increased number of ships, some of them even steam-powered. Child mortality fell. The major factor here was smallpox vaccination, which had been obligatory since 1811. Hygiene and the rebuilding of towns were to be a long-drawn-out process, but mention should be made of the building of hospitals after the cholera epidemic in København in 1853. The *Kommunehospital* was opened in 1863. In short, Denmark was more efficiently knit together by practical reforms.

The changes were brought about by an interaction between nature, human beings and the economy. The driving forces mostly came from outside, mainly from Europe. But as time went on, it became clearer that there were also people living in Denmark who felt the need for an overview, who had the will to implement change, the wish for contact between one district and another and the desire to express themselves politically in speech and writing. Change became a desideratum in politics, economic life and self-knowledge. Nationality called for energy, engagement and political results. In some circles, however, love of king and fatherland culminated in a carefree belief in the nation's invulnerability.

At the same time, ideas of a common history, solidarity and national consciousness took on an element of self-assertive ideology, frequently described as nationalism. Why was this? For the historian, this question revolves around the following: self-knowledge had to do with events, but in particular with the use to which they were put – with concepts which were closely tied to experiences, and with movements which translated ideas into actions.

## People and romanticism

From ancient times, patriotism has included ideas about the age of one's country, the shrewdness of its princes and the courage of its people. Love of the fatherland was a respectable virtue. It gathered new strength in time of war and in the demonisation of enemies. From Saxo's time to the present day, historians kept their distance from the less comfortable manifestations of real life. Patriots worshipped heroes like Absalon, Peder Tordenskjold and Christian N. David. The heroes were Danish, the villains the foreigners, the foe.

Historiography had an educational significance, the earliest example being Ove Malling's *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske og Holstenere* ('Great and Good Deeds of the Danes, the Norwegians and the Holsteiners'), which was published in 1777. Its eighteen chapters used history to exemplify recognised virtues such as religion, love of fatherland, loyalty to the king, steadfastness, thrift, etc. One exemplary act was the way in which the people of København showed solidarity with Frederik III by rallying round him when he declared he would rather 'die in his nest' than flee his city when the Swedish king Karl X Gustav stormed København on the night of 10/11 February 1659. 'It would be impossible to say which rank of society on that notable night, as well as throughout the siege, most excelled itself in its dedicated zeal for the commoners. For all men were united as one for the city and against the foe.' The memorial park at Jægerspris with statues to Danish heroes was founded in 1777 – the same year in which Malling's book was published – by Crown Prince Frederik and Johannes Wiedewelt, inspired by a comparable joy at Denmark and the people's 'zeal for the commoners', i.e. efforts on behalf of the common good.

In 1808, the year after the British bombardment of København, the historian Laurits Engelstoft published a work *Tanker om Nationalopdragelsen, betragtet som det virksomste Middel til at fremme Almeenaand og Fædrelandskjærlighed* ('Thoughts on National Education, Seen as the Most Efficient Means of Promoting Public Spirit and Love of Fatherland'), which can be seen as a culmination of the eighteenth century's confidence in the relevance of past times and the importance of history for the next generation. In principle it was a modest attempt to employ historical personages and events without high-flown illusions. Heroes and villains were in there, also the ordinary people, although they were mostly portrayed as passive commoners without any mystique or latent possibilities. The French Revolution was, despite everything, a distant memory.

Romanticism made its exotic inroads into København in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The impulse came from Germany, brought to Denmark first by the scientist Henrich Steffens and then taken up by the poet Adam Oehlenschläger. It proclaimed the working of the spirit and the connectedness of nature and history – an organic development which was mysterious, but not haphazard. It lent itself most readily to being sensed and interpreted by children, poets and geniuses.

According to romanticism, events and historical developments were determined in one way or another by rhythms in organic growth, and were therefore in principle predictable – not for the individual human being, but when it was a question of the totality of individuals comprising the ‘folk’, the nation or history. Every single nation has its defining characteristic; so said the cultural philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder in the 1770s. National Romanticism contained both mysticism and political opportunities. The latter had become topical when, in 1806 and the years following, Napoleon’s army overran the German states. Germany discovered a need for a belief in a common past and future, and the philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte met this need with his famous *Reden an die deutsche Nation* in Berlin in 1808. Romanticism had popular consequences – partly because of its historical perspective, which tended to idealise the freedom of the ordinary people in past times as interpreted in sagas, myths and historical narratives; and partly through the prioritisation of language as a criterion of nationhood.

Romanticism consisted of ideas, which were often rather diffuse, but perhaps for that very reason they streamed unhindered throughout Europe where they were seized on, in particular, by the educated young. This applied to Denmark too, but here, in the first instance, only to trends in poetry, fine art and science in København’s intellectual circles – excluding opposition to Frederik VI’s unitary state. In Denmark the authorities were on the lookout for tendencies which could be interpreted as being inspired by the French Revolution. Censorship of news had been tightened up in 1799 and 1810. After the loss of Norway and the king’s participation in the Congress of Vienna in 1815, it was the economic crisis in particular which occupied the attention of the public. Europe had returned to dynastic stability secured by constitutions and inter-state agreements. But romanticism was not forgotten. It soon also found political expression, among other aspects in Scandinavian brotherhood to the north of the Danevirke and the Eider, and in national self-defence against the foe to the south.

Denmark had an Achilles heel. Frederik VI was sovereign ruler of his kingdom, but he was also duke of the Danish duchy of Schleswig and duke of

Holstein, which was a duchy of the Holy Roman Empire. This created problems and new national enemies in the 1830s.

### Language, Schleswig and a liberal constitution

National Romanticism had popular appeal and helped to create popular movements in Europe. These movements also encouraged the adoption of other innovations, e.g. better roads and a postal services, that could spread both liberal ideas and rumours of revolutions and social tensions. In Denmark constitutional law also played a part, e.g. the hereditary relationship of the duchies as important parts of the Danish-Norwegian conglomerate state. The popular movements impacted on history. The decisive event occurred in 1840, six months after King Frederik VI's death on 3 December 1839. The new king Christian VIII (1839–48) was met with great expectations – it was he, after all, who as a young man had earned the gratitude of the Norwegians for helping to bring about Norway's free constitution, the Eidsvoll constitution of 1814. But as the new king of Denmark, Christian VIII wished first and foremost to safeguard the unitary state and to smooth over differences which might damage the monarchy. In this he failed.

The occasion was Christian VIII's issuing of a linguistic edict on the 14 May 1840. This laid down that in those areas of the duchy of Schleswig where Danish was the language of church and school, it should also be the language of the law and the local administration. To the extent that parents wished it, their children were to have three hours' instruction per week in German – free of charge. New teachers would have to prove on their appointment that they were capable of giving such instruction. The edict gave expression to the politics of the unitary state, with concerns of a social nature, among other things, with regard to the Danish-speaking peasants in Schleswig. But it was too late. Language had become a sensitive issue and a political sore point. Any concern for ease of communication between the people and the authorities was lost in emotional protests which took both the king and the government by surprise.

National interests came into play, and there were several reasons for this. In the first place, Holstein was, as mentioned, a German duchy and as such – after the conclusion of the Congress of Vienna – a member of the German Confederation. The final act of the Congress was to decree that a constitution be drawn up for each individual member of the Confederation. In Holstein's case this commitment was not carried out until 28 May 1831, when Frederik VI issued his plans for the estates, in which he ordained that

four advisory councils of leading citizens (*stænderforsamlinger*) be set up – not only in Holstein, but also in Schleswig, in North Jylland and in the islands.

In the second place, economic links between the duchies and København had been weakened after the state went bankrupt in 1813. To an increasing degree, the two duchies were drawn into international trade by the merchant houses of Lübeck and Hamburg. Exports of farm animals played an important role for the duchies in the 1820s and 1830s. Trade and industry, especially shipbuilding, played a similar role in the towns. The self-confidence of the middle classes found expression in a liberal movement which – despite long-standing allegiance to the monarchy and loyalty towards the unitary state – now demanded reforms to the constitution, limits to the autocracy and the securing of an economic tie between the two duchies. For a long time there was a good understanding between liberals in the duchies and in the kingdom. Both parties looked forward to a sensible settlement after the change of monarch in Denmark.

Two other considerations merged with those mentioned:

1. Legal discussions took place about Schleswig's constitutional position, including the Schleswig-Holstein nobility's claims to represent the two duchies, together with the hereditary claim of the House of Augustenburg, who felt entitled to inherit both duchies if the Oldenburg royal family died out in the male line. All the indications were that this would happen in the foreseeable future.
2. A customs union under Prussian leadership had been working since 1834 to create a north German economic unit effective both internally and externally, with the help of, among other things, the railways and shipping. At the beginning of the 1840s plans were circulating to co-opt Denmark as a member of the German Federation to be the ruling state of the duchies.

From the Danish side came a rejection of all plans to limit Danish integrity, in terms of both a ruling position in the German Federation and the right of inheritance. But this only made the language question more political. The Augustenburgs warned against the 'Danicisation' of Schleswig; nationality became a pawn in family politics. The idea of nationality gave rise to feelings, songs, processions, banners and enmity. The competition for supporters was a distinguishing feature of the duchies in the 1840s, between the Schleswig-Holsteiners and the Danes: the former in a coalition of middle-class liberals and aristocrats. From mid-century, constitutional and inheritance questions represented a threat to the unity of the state.



Even the liberals in Denmark took on the national concept and became 'National Liberals'. They did not want Denmark to enter into a German federation: they would have been far keener to give up any claim to German Holstein, so that Danish Schleswig could be firmly attached to the kingdom. But despite their sympathy for popular Danish feeling in Schleswig, the main interest of the National Liberals was not democratic self-determination. Their thinking was historical-constitutional: the border on the Eider. Their point of view was rooted in the historical state, their thinking was national.

In 1849 Denmark acquired a constitution largely drawn up by the National Liberals headed by two prominent politicians, the theologian Ditlev Gothard Monrad and the jurist Orla Lehmann. It was intended to be valid throughout the Danish realm – not only in the kingdom proper, but also in Schleswig. Accordingly, the name given to it was the constitution of the Danish Realm. But the Schleswig part of the plan was never realised.

Christian VIII died on 20 January 1848. In his will he had advised his son and heir Frederik VII (1848–63) to promulgate a free constitution which would protect the unitary state. On 22 March Frederik VII announced that he was willing to consider himself a constitutional monarch and to make the council of state responsible for the business of government. Denmark thereby became a constitutional monarchy – even if the constitution had not yet been fully worked out. The background was not only that the liberals' demand for the abolition of the autocracy had also won support among the Danish peasantry in the course of the 1840s; in addition, underlying the king's declaration in March was the fear that the February Revolution in Paris could spread and hasten a national uprising in the duchies.

This fear was not groundless. A deputation from Schleswig-Holstein made demands on the king which included among other things the preparation of a constitution for Schleswig-Holstein, and the inclusion of Schleswig in the German Confederation. The Danish government turned down the demands and announced that Holstein wished to have its own constitution, while Schleswig would enter into a constitutional union with Denmark and not seek to join the German Confederation. This was followed by a general mobilisation in Schleswig-Holstein. In København, this was interpreted as an uprising.

The three-year war of 1848 to 1850 brought disasters, but no solutions. The Schleswig-Holsteiners received help from Prussia and the army of the German Confederation, and the fortunes of war shifted several times. The Great Powers attempted to mediate, but the Danish king turned down all proposals for a division of Schleswig. In this respect, the king presumably had

the support of large sections of the Danish population. The national mood favoured sending 'the plucky Danish soldier' (Peter Faber) into the field to defend old Denmark. In 1848 general conscription was introduced in Denmark. Military service would no longer be only for the peasantry. Hardly ever before had so many Danes been inspired by a popular national consciousness. Moreover, they received military and moral support from volunteers from the rest of Scandinavia.

In 1848 the poet-clergyman Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872) wrote the poem *Folkeligheden* ('Popular Feeling'), in which he attempted several interpretations, partly democratic ('To a people who all can hear, who count themselves a part (of Denmark), who have an ear for their mother tongue, and are afire for their fatherland'), partly historical, where the criterion was a fellowship of 'birth and blood, mother tongue and lion's heart'. Whatever was Danish was somehow special: 'What is Danish is always to be loved!' National Romanticism can turn into mysticism when it is transformed into poetry – or, as history shows, when it is exploited in ideological propaganda.

Once the war actually ended in 1850, the Danish king took back his duchy of Schleswig – as an autocratic domain. The mood in Denmark was 'Eider Danish' and nationalistic; language, songs and symbols were national. But the history of the state was dynastic. This was backed up by demands from the reactionary Great Powers, not least from the Russian tsar, who had little time for popular movements, whether national or liberal – and no time at all for democratic ones.

### A European necessity – and a Danish one

Danish cultural policies in post-war Schleswig were language-based – in view of the border on the Eider. New language regulations were issued in 1851. They were open to criticism and became dangerous when German states made use of them in anti-Danish agitation. North Schleswig was not the problem. Here the language of the people was Danish, and from 1840 Danish was also the language of the authorities. Nor was South Schleswig a problem in any way; here the language was German. But in about fifty parishes of central Schleswig the Danish language had been losing ground for decades as the language of the people, and German was the language of administration. Danish was now to be introduced into schools here as the first language, though with a little instruction in German. The language of religious services was to alternate between Danish and German. The ordinance, which was

clumsily administered, created conflicts in some parishes. Only in Flensburg was it carried out voluntarily – with favourable results.

From 1851 onwards it was the matter of the constitution more than the national question that occupied people's minds. Denmark was dependent on the European Great Powers in crucial areas, and at the beginning of the 1850s the tendency in the capitals of Europe was reactionary. As far as possible the dynasties wished to keep their liberty of action as it had been before 1848, when revolutions rolled over Europe. The June constitution was seen as an experiment in democracy: a risk.

Denmark was obliged to give up its Eider policy and accept a unitary state ordinance. This was the essence of the so-called '1851–2 agreements'. In return Denmark would continue to exist as a monarchy – in the form of a unitary state consisting of the kingdom itself, Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg. Schleswig was not to be integrated any more closely into the kingdom than Holstein. The duchies were not to have any closer relations to each other than to the kingdom, which was allowed to retain its constitution with reference to internal matters. Meetings of the estates with powers of decision were to be introduced in Schleswig and Holstein. The ordinance was to be enforced by a common constitution.

In the Treaty of London of May 1852 the Great Powers, Sweden-Norway and the Danish government agreed that the House of Glücksburg should inherit the lands and territories of the Danish king in the event of the House of Oldenburg dying out. This actually occurred when Frederik VII died in November 1863. His successor was Christian IX (1863–1906). The Treaty of London guaranteed that the royal houses – first and foremost that of Russia – would renounce any potential hereditary claims to the territories of the Danish king. Despite difficulties, the Danish government also succeeded in 1853 in persuading the *rigsdag* to accept the law of succession. For a hundred years, until 1953, the Danish crown was hereditary only in the male line.

The incorporation of Schleswig had therefore to be abandoned, and this was a hard blow for a National Liberal consciousness. Only two arguments weighed heavily in the subsequent discussion in Denmark: partly, the desire to retain the comparatively democratic constitution of 1849 for internal matters, and partly the feeling of the people of the unitary state that Denmark ought to bow to European necessity (C. A. Bluhme). They thought that, in the existing situation, the survival of the monarchy was at stake, and therefore agreements and treaties were the best results achievable.

During the Crimean War between the Western powers and Russia (1854–6), Denmark wisely operated a quiet, neutral foreign policy. But

attempts by successive governments to introduce workable common constitutions for the unitary state failed. National Liberal politicians in the kingdom and aristocratic politicians in Holstein had too divergent perceptions of what a constitution was for. The advisory councils in the duchies now had the power to make decisions, as we have seen, and they had the right of veto.

National Liberal governments finished up by working out a constitution in 1863 which only applied to the Danish kingdom and Schleswig – confident of support in Scandinavia and in hopes of a lack of interest from the German states. Denmark was wrong. The proposed constitution was a breach of the agreements of 1851–2, and the Prussians (i.e. Bismarck) would make good use of a cause that would unite the German nation. The Denmark-Holstein conflict became such a cause. For the government in København the constitutional cause had become a Gordian knot. This does not legitimise the ‘November constitution’ of 1863, but it may explain the desperate conclusion: to break the agreements of 1851–2.

Denmark lost the war of 1864 against the army of the German Confederation and the armies of Prussia and Austria. Despite attempts at mediation, from the British side among others, Denmark was forced to hand over the duchies at the Peace of Vienna in October 1864. Prussia occupied Schleswig, Austria was granted Holstein, which nevertheless was transferred to Prussia at the Peace of Prague after the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1 was the next move on the dynastic chessboard of Europe. Denmark resisted the temptation to support France in order to win back the lost land. The goal became to achieve tolerable conditions for the pro-Danish population south of the border.

‘Denmark’s Necessity’ was the name that Grundtvig gave to a poem he published in June 1853, one month before the *rigsdag*’s final acceptance of the law governing succession to the throne. ‘Love of the Fatherland’ was the first line and the general theme. ‘Fear not what the world calls the needfulness of steel! / In the tongue of heaven above / What we need on earth is love!’ Freedom and national solidarity became important concepts. Love of the fatherland was the answer to Europe’s demands. A national answer, but also an obscure answer – offering no political solutions.

An unstable monarch (Frederik VII), waves of nationalistic sentiment with little grounding in reality, ducal succession demands and a new popular government with a tendency to the doctrinaire were, in sum, a most unfortunate combination in Danish history around 1850. Denmark turned down offers of mediation over the partition of Schleswig, and refused to allow a free vote between Danish and German in the cultural-cum-political struggle

over Schleswig's mixed areas. To combine the theory of a dynastic state (the *helstat* or unitary state) with experiments in democracy was hopeless. One suspects that an autocracy guided by public opinion and with advisory assemblies of the estates would have had far less warlike consequences. From a historical perspective, the June constitution came decades too soon.

### Estates, classes, economic conditions

Danish society was held together by the monarch, the military, the church and the civil service – but also by economic conditions and social customs, rituals, language, faith and perceptions. Martin Luther wrote his *Kleiner Katechismus* (1529) as guidance for teaching in the Protestant kingdoms. The world hung together in this way: at the top sat God, then came the king and the clergy, and at the bottom, the husbandman, father and moral guardian of the family. There were regional and local variations, but they were subordinate to the static hierarchical system of the autocracy. In the course of the period under discussion this society became less static and a little less authoritarian. The common people became rather less anonymous, commercial enterprise more differentiated and the social model likewise. The differences increased in number and became greater, but still the country did not fragment.

The population of the kingdom almost doubled – from 929,000 in 1801 to 1.8 million in 1870. In 1801 79 per cent lived on the land; in 1870 the number had fallen to 75 per cent. Countryside reforms, potatoes and vaccination were important factors in this development. In 1788 the king had taken the decision to remove the ascription law (*stavnsbåndet*), but in reality the peasants were bound to their native soil. An unmarried peasant was obliged to enter into fixed employment, but from 1840 onwards, only up to the age of 28. Until 1848 military service was a burden borne solely by the peasant estate. The son of a peasant could only avoid becoming a soldier by enrolling at a teacher-training college or higher-education institution.

In the mid-nineteenth century the privileges of rank disappeared as an acceptable concept. One example is the June constitution: 'Every privilege in the legislation which is connected to nobility, title and rank is abolished.' The corollary was that economic and social class differences emerged all the more sharply: differences between farmers and smallholders, rich and poor. The pattern of society in rural communities was characterised not only by agricultural reforms and the catastrophic lack of credit during the crisis years which affected the new proprietors most

of all; it was also formed by the growth in population. A proletariat emerged, and the problem of homelessness.

When the prices of European farm products began to rise in the 1830s, the situation eased for the farmers. They became the middle class of the countryside – with political influence both nationally and locally – for instance, in the new parish directorates from 1841. It was otherwise with the smallholders. They eked out an existence, either without adjoining land or on a small farm with a piece of land which could not sustain a family. The smallholders became a cheap workforce on the farms. In 1835 some 87,000 smallholders' houses were registered. In 1872 the number had almost doubled to 162,000. In the nineteenth century, neither the autocracy nor the elected government was able to solve the problems caused by a large rural proletariat. Municipal poorhouses appeared in the 1840s, but especially after 1860 – monuments to local stinginess and pseudo-liberal prejudices.

Once the commercial law of 1857 came into force, most of the privileges of the boroughs with regard to trade and crafts disappeared. Hitherto the guilds had been a power to be reckoned with, especially in the capital. They had controlled the examination of journeymen and master craftsmen, they had regulated the numbers of apprentices, journeymen and masters and they had also taken care of welfare provision. But opposition to their power had grown. From about 1840, especially in the capital, there was an aristocracy of successful master craftsmen and prosperous wholesalers. Many travelling craftsmen gave up trying to reach master's level and took jobs in workshops and small factories where their wages and status were not much higher than those of untrained workers. Retailers moved from market booths to permanent shops.

Socio-economic differences grew, but the political and administrative barriers lessened. The autocracy had, in principle, striven for equality in the eyes of the law. The first political forums were advisory councils and the parliament (*rigsdag*). The newspapers too became mouthpieces for a larger public. The position of landed estates as a link in the system of public administration had already been greatly reduced at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The difference in taxation between privileged land and peasant land disappeared in the middle of the century. Parochial boards for poor relief and schools turned little by little into municipal governing bodies with their own powers of legislation (1837–41). It was less a rank-based state, more a class-based society.

External economic forces may explain some of the changes in the business life and welfare of society. Scarcely anyone doubted this during the

long-drawn-out economic crisis of the two decades up to around 1830. Fear of 'pauperisation' and revolution left its mark on both the upper and lower classes. Many people ran the risk of ending in poverty. The safety net was weak, not least for those who had fled the rural villages and bought their own land, so that they no longer belonged among the peasants tied to an estate. Both 'poverty' and 'proletariat' had become very real concepts across large swathes of society. These factors could encourage a form of solidarity, but not necessarily on a national level. Economic uncertainty is an insufficient explanation of the strengthening of Danish identity that took place at that time. Other considerations weighed more heavily.

### They became movements

Nationality confers a sense of belonging to a nation. National feeling expresses a consciousness that one is part of a people, a larger community. We have learned from the nineteenth century that this type of feeling evokes the will to sacrifice and the expectation of major changes. Experience also shows that such feelings can spill over into nationalism, into a self-assertive ideology which is typified by hatred of 'the others', those outside, the enemy. If both parties are zealous in their self-realisation, then mediation becomes a difficult matter. Danish nationality and national feeling have had a historic context. Improvements in communications (roads, bridges, railways, postage stamps, newspapers etc.) together with local schools obliged to offer education to all created common perceptions about Denmark and the outside world. They opened up the possibility of movements which extended beyond the purely local, appealing to more distant regions of the country. The weakening of the old familiar safety net – the rural village, the estate, the craft guild – revealed a social vacuum and highlighted the need for communal endeavour on a larger scale: the Christian fellowship in revivalist circles, the political fellowship of parish councils and parliament. The last phase of this period teemed with trade unions and workers' organisations, co-operative movements of various kinds, high schools, free schools and village institutes. People could meet together, and to a large extent they spoke the same language. Improved communications were a basic precondition. The language of the common man, the mother tongue became the bearer of national feeling.

What was new was that this engagement was not only academic; it was broader than that – some would say, popular. Events plus concepts became movements. Religious awakenings around the country had mobilised the

common people to charitable acts, to Christian mission work, both in writing and in speech. They were the vanguard of movements which turned into meetings, societies, memberships and political messages. The four representative councils of the 1830s were purely advisory, but they became epoch-making. This is where political life in Denmark began. The will to change the reality of life in Denmark could be of practical utility. Concern for the next generation was translated into a political mission. Faith in good deeds and in providing for the future was a left-over from pietism and the Enlightenment. But the perception of the people's common history, about the special historical role of Danishness, of the culture of the common people as genuine poetry – these were the traces left by romanticism in Danish people's understanding of themselves, a contribution to both Danish and Norwegian consciousness.

But how did this sense of community come to express itself in a nationalistic display of force in Schleswig? Two factors at least are part of the answer. First, territorial demands – in the style of the times – were couched dynastically in terms of 'historic right' and hereditary claims. Considerations of local people's wishes, attitudes and languages did not have high priority. The idea of dividing Schleswig was scarcely considered as a realistic possibility.

The second factor, which precipitated a surge of national feeling, was an emotional engagement, a feeling of intoxication at being part of a movement. Common enemies provide a strong motivation to band together, overcome one's own inadequacy, narrow one's perspective and rehearse songs of battle. Symbols made their entry into Danish-German politics in the 1840s. It is on the national level in particular that such simple, self-assertive images are most obviously tempting: friends and enemies, Danes and Germans, native-born and foreign, known and anonymous. The emotional attachment was a romantic inheritance with religious overtones – one was prepared to die for the fatherland. On occasions this sentiment also helped to conceal the hopeless conditions of everyday life – the poverty, isolation and feelings of inferiority in a time when the birth rate, unemployment and housing shortages were all on the increase. So one could dream about the nation's past and future greatness without competition from foreigners. It was the reverse side of romanticism, that dreams, including political ones, concealed realities which were far from heroic. This is why Denmark was so unprepared for the catastrophe of 1864.

The country survived, bound better together – linguistically, mentally, physically and politically. National feeling was also a catalyst for new energy, with belief in the nation's future built into the constitution. Denmark became



a nation state. External pressure eased. After 1864 there was room for disunity, and internal tensions became clearer. In 1866 the country was given a revised constitution, far more conservative than the June constitution. From around 1870 the Right (*Højre*), with their elitist viewpoints, dominated the political arena, while the Left (*Venstre*), the peasants' party, demanded a popular government reflecting the majority in the lower house of parliament (*folketinget*). The 1870s also saw the emergence of a socialist party, the future Social Democrats. For a long period nationalistic feelings were closely linked to military questions, including the fortress of København, as well as to the dynastic prestige of the royal family. Christian IX operated skillfully as the central figure of the princely houses of Europe – in his role as 'Europe's father-in-law'.

As we have already mentioned, Danish national feeling after 1864 was intimately bound up with the pro-Danish Schleswigers and their desire to vote themselves back into Denmark. They were given the chance after the First World War, when – for a time – dynastic demands were toned down; north Schleswig became Danish after a referendum in 1920. This represented a power-shift from state and dynasty to people and community. Nation and nationality continued to be positive terms, but more democratic – they also took account of national minorities.

## Norway: the emergence of the nation state

SIVERT LANGHOLM

### Background

The Norway that was re-established as an independent state in 1814 was a country characterised by great distances, a scattered population and natural barriers causing difficulties of communication, and it had no real natural centre. Even if there was some exchange of goods between different parts of the country, about 90 per cent of the population made their living as part of the workforce in primary occupations, to a great extent quite isolated from each other in their rural communities and districts. Nor was that sector of the economy that was outward-looking of such a nature as to bind the country together as a unit – rather the opposite.

Socially, Norwegian society – like both its neighbours and other European countries – was relatively egalitarian with its major grouping composed of the many small independent farmers. Nevertheless there were important regional differences here, with more distance between independent and dependent members of the rural population in some areas. Most of all, however, there was a deep social and cultural difference between ‘the peasantry’ or ‘common people’ – the great majority – on the one side, and a relatively narrow stratum consisting largely of civil servants and the upper middle classes on the other. The civil servants occupied something of a special position in Norwegian society by virtue of the fact that they formed a network which embraced the whole country. But their numbers were few, and until 1814 they had their centre and their base, both culturally and in terms of the chain of command, in København. The upper middle classes were more fragmented in their interests and outlooks, and they were also greatly weakened as a result of the Napoleonic Wars and their aftermath. This contributed to the unique role that the civil service came to play in the following decades.

Society as a whole was characterised by traditional social structures, with the emphasis on ‘vertical’ lines of authority, ties of dependency and lines of

division within and between households, neighbourhood associations, industrial concerns, guilds and local communities. This could contribute towards solidarity and concord on the local level, but it did not promote 'horizontal' integration across social and local boundaries. Also a key factor in the background was that for several centuries the country had been governed and administered from Denmark, until 1814 it had no capital, and its central administrative institutions were few and weak.

On the other hand, there existed a consciousness of Norway as a 'historic state' that had enjoyed several centuries of independence during the Middle Ages. There was a concept of the Norwegians as a 'people' and of Norway as an independent 'kingdom'; for some, also, as an independent 'fatherland' within the joint monarchy of Denmark-Norway. Since 1536 Norway was governed as an independent province, and this was strengthened during the Napoleonic Wars by individual independent central institutions. During the last decades of the eighteenth century, and especially during wartime, a Norwegian national feeling – a national patriotism – was clearly expressed by representatives of the Norwegian elite, first and foremost in the civil service. After the Peace of Kiel in 1814 and during the subsequent conflicts with Sweden over the union issue it grew in intensity and became more widespread, and at this time it would also have embraced people from the middle and lower classes in the towns, while the farmers were probably still more lukewarm. There were also differences between different parts of the country.

### Starting point in 1814 and framework for building a Norwegian nation

The obvious and most fundamental starting point for the building of Norway as a nation state in the nineteenth century is the 17 May constitution of 1814, as modified on 4 November after the *storting* had been forced to accept the union with Sweden. Aside from the constitution itself, Norway at the beginning had few central state institutions, a poorly developed economic and communications infrastructure, little of the common cultural institutions and, all in all, little of the simultaneously distinctive and inclusive culture which, according to contemporary thinking, distinguished a nation state.

As for the constitution, in 1814 it was, in formal terms, one of the most democratic in Europe. But the steps from this towards the incorporation of every group in society into a national co-operative community were in practice to be both many and long. Developments in those areas referred

to here comprise the main strands in the building up of Norway as a nation state in the period 1814–70. Simultaneously with this process, new societal conditions were constantly being created and recreated, often in interaction with each other, as a consequence of the economic, demographic and social development which the country was experiencing in parallel. Further important considerations were, on the one hand, the union with Sweden, where Norway was the weaker part, and on the other hand the legacy of the long-standing union with Denmark, especially in terms of cultural dependency.

Another basic premise is the country's lack of elites, and generally speaking the peculiar political power relations which resulted from the country's social and economic structure. Norway had practically no aristocracy in the real sense of the word, and its commercial middle class was greatly weakened after the Napoleonic Wars. As a result of this the Norwegian civil service acquired a quite unique position in the decades after 1814 in terms of political dominance, social prestige and cultural hegemony. Politically, the civil service filled almost every position in the government for a number of years, while at the same time they were both over-represented in the *storting* in terms of numbers, and through their expertise and authority they exerted an influence out of all proportion to their numbers alone. In the period after 1814 representatives of this elite took the lead role in working to build up and defend the new Norwegian state and its independence.

### Defence of independence in the union

A main strand in the consolidation of the Norwegian nation state throughout the nineteenth century was the protection and defence – and if possible, the extension – of Norway's independence and parity in the union with Sweden. This was of course a struggle which had commenced as early as 1814. As the union comprised a joint monarchy, the circumstances of the union became a question of the power of the king. A major thread in Norwegian politics became the retention of the 17 May constitution's restrictions on the power of the king, and in every major respect this was a success. In the revised constitution of 4 November the only concession to the king was a continuing veto over legislative measures. The king was granted power over the army, but needed the agreement of the *storting* in order to employ it in an aggressive war. The *storting* retained the sole right to grant naturalisation to foreigners. Moreover, Norway was to have the right to its own merchant flag and its own bank and currency, and it was to be answerable only for its own national debt. On the other hand, foreign policy and the foreign and

consular services were to be common to both countries, and here Sweden was dominant, even if this was not formalised.

Unrest and conflict over the conditions of the union persisted after 1814, although with varying intensity over time. The background to this was fundamentally different perceptions in the two countries of both the union's legal basis and its desirability. For Sweden, the basis was the Peace of Kiel. The revised constitution was to be regarded as a treaty of union; the union would extend Sweden's power as a compensation for Finland and provide military security. The establishment of a closer union was seen as a major objective. From the Norwegian point of view the constitution and any potential amendments thereto were a unilateral Norwegian affair, and the union was forced on them, the weaker part, from outside. There was a fear, especially at the beginning, of a merger or 'amalgamation', and the main thread of policy throughout the century was to reject all amendments that could make the union closer, strengthen royal and/or Swedish influence, or formalise actual inferiority. Only a minority, especially after about 1850, saw advantages in closer ties even if it meant equal rights.

Apart from the fundamental question of the relationship between the organs of state and control of the constitution, there were disputes over, for instance, national symbols such as the flag, the national coat of arms etc., the post of governor, foreign policy, the running of the army and trade between the two kingdoms. In an initial phase up until the end of the 1820s the Swedes were on the offensive to win back for the royal family some of the rights they had lost in 1814. From 1821 onwards the temperamental King Karl XIV Johan presented a series of suggestions on this topic to a number of sittings of the *storting*, the most important of which was concerned with the royal power of absolute veto on legislative proposals. These suggestions were regularly turned down by a packed *storting*, whose line of defence was that the constitution should remain undisturbed. It is interesting that the struggle for national defence contributed in this way to a principle of the inviolability of the constitution – a principled 'constitutional conservatism' – in Norwegian politics more generally.

The next phase, from about 1827–30 to 1844, was characterised rather more by a Norwegian offensive, which led to certain gains as regards national symbols, such as the flag and influence over foreign policy. The 1850s and 1860s were again characterised by Swedish advances. Some among the Norwegian political elite could now imagine a greater degree of co-operation between the two countries in the union, on condition of equal status for Norway. Both Scandinavianism and fear of the Great Powers – first of all

Russia, then Bismarck's Germany – help to explain this. However, the *storting* voted down a suggestion about greater co-ordination of their legal systems in the 1850s, and in 1857 they threw out a proposal for an extended 'inter-state law' which was aimed at promoting free trade between Norway and Sweden. Moreover, in the 1860s a royal plan to reform the army was rejected with reference to, among other things, arguments about the politics of the union.

Meanwhile, in 1859, the *storting*, after secretly obtaining the assent of the king, had decided to repeal the paragraph in the constitution relating to the governor. The post of governor had been vacant since 1856, and now had at best only symbolic meaning. However, the resolution came up against a wave of nationalistic feeling in the Swedish *riksdag*. The Swedish government demanded the right to refuse to sanction the resolution, and the king sanctioned its refusal. This episode created new bitterness in Norway and in the long run it was a turning point in Norwegian attitudes to the union.

As a repercussion of the conflict, the Norwegian and Swedish governments combined to set up a union committee which submitted its recommendations in 1867. It proposed a more broadly based partnership between the two countries and greater equality of status, but it also sought to give formal recognition to the inequality between them, which previously had existed in fact but not in statute. The Norwegian government gave its official backing to the proposal. But in the public arena, massive opposition based on arguments of nationality gradually found expression, and the proposal was rejected by a large majority in the *storting* in 1871. This was the last attempt to bring about more binding ties between the partners in the union.

All in all, Norway's independence within the union was strengthened in the course of time. A major reason for this was that the personal power of the king was weakened. Other partial explanations may be that the issue was seen as more existentially important in Norway, and that internal political conflicts in Sweden played a part too. Another part of the explanation is the fact, remarkable in itself, that these conflicts were pursued by peaceful political means without resort to physical force. Certainly Karl XIV Johan threatened a coup d'état on several occasions and used military manoeuvres as a form of pressure, but without ever carrying out his threats. The attitude of the Great Powers may also be part of the explanation.

The Norwegian policy of national self-assertion at this point in time was, in regard to all major issues, a phenomenon of the elite. Up until about 1860, and especially in the first two difficult decades after 1814, the civil service played the leading role. From about 1860 they had to share this with a rival,

an oppositional elite who to some extent relied upon other elements in society. But throughout this period the farmers' representatives in the *storting* were for the most part more tepid and sometimes wavering in regard to these national questions concerning the politics of the union. And out in the countryside it is pretty certain that people mostly took up no particular stance towards these questions in the period before 1870.

### The building of a national culture

The events of 1814 and the establishment of Norway as an independent state strengthened the preoccupation with a Norwegian national individuality and identity and acted as a motivating force to seek out manifestations and proofs of a unique Norwegian national culture. This was, of course, in keeping with the general current of ideas in Europe at this time. The first years after 1814 were characterised by the poverty of the new state and the need to carry out the most pressing tasks. But the translation and publication of Old Norse texts and the collection of Norse cultural heritage goes back to this time, and even further. From the 1830s onwards the work took off in several directions. In the field of historical research a 'Norwegian historical school' made themselves spokesmen, partly for a theory of immigration intended to give Norwegians purer Nordic origins than Danes and Swedes, and partly for the view that the Old Norse Edda and saga literature was not a common Nordic inheritance, but the exclusive property of the Norwegians (and Icelanders).

In the field of folklore, the first anthology of Norwegian legends appeared in 1833, and ballads, folk tales and folk music were collected and published from the 1840s. The most problematic cultural question in Norway concerned language. The relationship between language and nationality, and the question of how far and to what degree one should build a Norwegian language on the basis of the educated Danish then in use, on the contemporary Norwegian spoken language (dialectal) of the people and/or on the Old Norse written language, was discussed from the 1830s onwards. Between 1848 and 1850 the self-taught country boy Ivar Aasen published his grammar and his dictionary of the rural Norwegian language, and 1853 saw the publication of his *Prøver af Landsmaalet i Norge*. This laid the foundation for a new Norwegian written language, *Landsmål*, later officially called *Nynorsk*, which individual pioneers began to use from the end of the 1850s. But others wished to create a Norwegian language with a more gradual Norwegianisation of the traditional Danish, and the *Nynorsk* language movement never became a national rallying point.

From one point of view the language question was only one of several expressions of a more general conflict within the elite about how best to promote national cultural development: by building more directly on popular culture in the 'raw' form in which it actually existed, or by seeking to cultivate or 'refine' it. A cultural debate of the 1830s which has become famous in Norwegian history, between the two poets Henrik Wergeland and Johan Sebastian Welhaven as the main protagonists, essentially revolved around this issue. In the visual arts too, Norwegian nature and folk life became central motifs, and Norwegian composers strove to achieve a national strain in their music. Historical studies of Norwegian literature and art talk of a 'national breakthrough' in the 1840s, and a conventional label for the period is 'National Romanticism'.

This preoccupation with Norwegian history, language and folk culture was essentially, as far as one can judge, limited to an academic and urban elite in the period up to about 1870. For instance, it was not an issue on which peasant politicians took the lead. In the rural areas these matters were for the time being beyond the ken of ordinary people. Individual poets like Wergeland made attempts to spread these ideas but they cannot have met with much success. In the rural schools the language the pupils learned – to the extent that they did actually learn it – was still Danish. History did not become a compulsory subject in these schools until 1860. Folk high schools in time became a source for the inculcation of interest in national culture in rural areas, but the first ones were not established until the 1860s. Country school teachers have also played an important role in Norwegian cultural history as champions of national ideas, including the language issue. But this too only began to happen from around 1870.

### The development of institutions and infrastructure – economic and social integration

Fundamental to the development of a Norwegian nation state was the growth of central public institutions and of a societal infrastructure in the broader sense. This was decisive, partly for the viability of the state, and partly because it promoted the spread of a feeling of national belonging and identity among the citizens. The efforts invested and their development in these broad areas are of interest in the present context from two main viewpoints: partly as (potential) expressions of more or less clearly patriotic or national motives on the part of those who stood behind them, and partly because of their more long-term effects on national integration.



As regards central institutions of state, the impoverished new Norwegian state in 1814 had to begin from a position of near destitution. The country had a well-established system of local administration, but only a few weak and to some extent fairly new or provisional central institutions. During the Napoleonic Wars when it was physically severed from Denmark, a series of temporary central organs of administration for Norway were set up from 1807 onwards. Even the central administration which took over after the union with Sweden had its origins in the period 1813–14, when Christian Frederik was governor, regent and king of Norway. The decisive new institutions were of course the constitutional organs of state: the parliament or *storting*, the supreme court and an independent Norwegian government, which was established by the constitution of 17 May and 4 November 1814. 'The Bank of Norway' was set up by the *storting* in 1816 and its initial funds were gathered by means of compulsory deposits in silver, the so-called 'silver tax' which in itself was an expression of the patriotism of the leading members of the country's elite. A Norwegian university was formally established as early as 1811 and it came into being in 1813.

The king of the united countries normally resided in Sweden's capital, Stockholm, where a department of the Norwegian council of state along with the prime minister also had to base themselves. However, all the central institutions with the exception of the main office of the Bank of Norway (in Trondheim) were set up in the little town of Kristiania, which from now on became Norway's capital.

In the decades after 1814, work continued to establish and strengthen the newly formed state in practice. The old state institutions, services and administrative networks from the time of the union with Denmark were re-organised, and a series of new ones were gradually set up to answer new needs. Examples include services such as fire insurance, a pensions body, a property register, geographical mapping and a regulatory body for weights and measures. The building up of these sorts of institutions and the manning of the numerous commissions and management bodies required was a demanding task for the country's elites, who were few in number, at a time when both finances and expertise were scarce resources. Many of them made a contribution which was clearly an expression of deep-seated loyalty towards the new state, whether or not they identified themselves as 'patriots'. These institutions made inroads into people's lives in different ways. They acted within the parameters of the Norwegian state, and they were orientated out from and in towards the new centre of the state: the capital city. And so they became part of that set of factors which in the long term

would integrate the country and the people in a community of co-operative action and experiences.

In a special position among the institutions of state stood the armed forces and the school system. From a national point of view too, the armed forces were stamped with a certain ambiguity, as they came under the king of Sweden-Norway as commander-in-chief, even if his authority to employ the Norwegian forces was subject to strict conditions. Nor was military service initially socially cohesive. The constitution laid down the principle of general military service, but a law based on this principle was only passed in 1854 and the principle of the same duty for all without exemption on grounds of status was only implemented in 1876. In the argumentation about general military service the key issue was the aim of getting the 'kernel of the nation' into the army, but the counter-rhetoric warned against armed services based on 'poor people who cannot be said to have any fatherland'.

Compulsory school attendance for all in the countryside was introduced as early as 1739. A new law of 1827 concerning rural schools suggested compulsory attendance again. But the 'school' was still in the main a peripatetic affair (the teaching took place at one farm after another), and the teachers were usually the sons of husbandmen or farmers from the local community, who had been taught by the vicar. In the nineteenth century all children were taught to read, but literacy was often not particularly well developed or maintained, and only a small minority learned to write at the beginning of the century. However, the level of teaching and instruction was improving all the time. More teachers gradually received a better education as *seminarer* (teacher-training colleges) were expanded. One very important reform was the law of 1860 concerning elementary schools in the countryside, which required permanent schools (schools based in their own permanent school building) in all school districts, made stricter demands regarding the training of the teachers and made a certain amount of teaching in subjects like geography and history compulsory. Also important is the fact that the law had a standardising and levelling-out effect by introducing the principle of state subsidies on condition that there were grants at the local level, with the regional councils as middle-men. The law of 1860 thus contributed not only to the improvement of the level of education, but also to the breaking-down of local autonomy, self-reliance and individuality – something which did not always happen without local resistance. A new law governing the elementary schools in the towns came into force in 1848. The level of education was higher here, but social differences were greater, in that the middle classes continued to send their children to private schools until into the 1880s.

Other reforms with long-term consequences were the expansion of the country's infrastructure and the goal-orientated modernisation policies in the area of economic life which picked up speed from the 1840s onwards. Representatives of the civil servant elite were in the vanguard, supported by sections of the urban middle classes. Two significant names are Anton Martin Schweigaard, professor of law and member of the *storting* from 1842 to 1869, and Frederik Stang, barrister in the supreme court and cabinet minister 1845 to 1856 and 1861 to 1873, as well as prime minister in Kristiania from 1873 to 1880.

One main aim was the improvement of the country's communications. In the sparsely populated mountainous and sea-girt country that was Norway, the pre-industrial transport routes were lakes, rivers, inland seas and sled-tracks. In comparison to the size of the country, the total extent of passable routes was small. In 1814 it was estimated at around 11,000 kilometres. Road-building gathered momentum in the 1840s, but before 1870 the results were still comparatively modest. In 1850 the total extent of passable roads was around 16,000 kilometres and in 1870 it was 20,000 kilometres. Around 1850 a continuous network of roadways linked the capital to foreign parts (Sweden) and to the provinces of Vestlandet and Trøndelag, but not to northern Norway, and the network was most highly developed in Østlandet. The roads were mainly important for the conveyance of people and mail and, generally speaking, were of little significance for the transport of goods. They were more useful for public administration and for the economic life of the towns than they were for the country people, and in any case, up to the middle of the century road-building was liable to meet with resistance in the rural areas, and it was not unknown for them to be sabotaged.

Steamship services took on great significance for the transporting of passengers and the delivery of mail, both of which demanded speed and regularity. The state was a pioneer here, buying steamships and operating the routes itself in the period 1827–70. Private steamship routes were introduced from the 1840s, and from the 1850s the state-run concern was partly wound up – partly supplemented by local, municipal or county council coastal-steamer companies, generally subsidised by the state. In 1853 the steamship routes were joined up to reach from the capital to the coast of Finnmark. From the 1840s, steamships also operated on the largest inland lakes and on navigable stretches of rivers.

Yet the modern form of transportation which was most revolutionary in the eyes of contemporaries was the railway. The so-called 'main line' from Kristiania to Eidsvoll, opened in 1854, was the first railway on the

Scandinavian peninsula. It was not approved without resistance, and it is interesting that the protestors were able to make effective use of the national argument which pointed out that the track was to be built and operated with the help of British capital. Once it had become a reality it became for many a source of national pride. But railway construction before 1870 was on a modest scale. In 1855 the total length of track was 68 kilometres and the number of passengers carried was 128,000. In 1870 the corresponding numbers were 359 and 551,000. The lines were mainly concentrated in the Østland region. In several places here, the railway was linked to steamship routes on the inland lakes, so that the effect was to some extent noticeably greater than the length of the track alone would indicate. In a new wave of construction in the 1870s the length of track was tripled in comparison with the level in 1870.

An obvious expression of an increase in both the need for and the possibilities of communication over longer distances was the development of the postal service. The number of established post-towns was 261 in 1848 and 660 in 1872. Until the 1840s postage was calculated according to distance. A reform of 1848 introduced a simplified postage system with only two rates, and 1854 saw the introduction of a postage stamp valid for the whole country. The number of letters posted increased from 1 million in 1848 to 7.5 million in 1870. Yet this was only the beginning: the increase in the following period was much greater.

In the period from 1855 to 1870 the country was also knit together by an admittedly extremely complicated telegraph network which reached right up to the most northerly extremity of Norway. Like the roads, the steamship services and eventually the railway, the telegraph lines also linked Norway better in terms of communications with foreign countries, with for example better news dissemination as a result. The development of communications may be seen in the context of the other policies of liberalisation and modernisation in the economic sphere, and the economic and social processes of change due to the nascent industrialisation of the country, the increasing contribution of market orientation and a money economy in agriculture, the development of a credit system, the growth of towns and cultural urbanisation and mounting geographical and social mobility.

We have mentioned elsewhere the marked growth of voluntary associations or societies and the new 'association spirit' which was noted by contemporaries, especially from the 1840s. The associations were in themselves both the result of and contributory factors in increased societal integration. In national assemblies, central congresses, periodical journals

and travelling delegates there was also a centralising tendency, with the capital city as the centre. But it must be said that national assemblies were still rare around 1870. Many associations had only a local sphere of operation. Up to 1870, however, one can find a contrary decentralising tendency, in that many associations, especially in the west and north of the country, set their face against the larger society.

The voluntary organisations had an unacknowledged role in training their active membership. Here, their function was similar to that which local self-government had after 1837 for those who took part in it. But again it must be stressed that only a minority participated in local government, and these were first and foremost local elites. Moreover, it is also conceivable that local self-government in the first instance actually helped to strengthen and fortify identification with the local community itself rather than with the larger community outside – especially as the distance from the latter's centre was so great, culturally and in other ways.

Yet another side to the processes of modernisation and integration, and on a higher level of enlightenment, was the increase in the availability of journals and newspapers. There was a growth in both publications and print-runs. In the 1860s several weekly papers had editions of 10,000 or more. The largest, a religious newspaper, had almost 30,000. But papers with more general contents also achieved bigger circulations, even in the country areas. Daily papers, to be sure, had much smaller editions. In a class of its own for size was the hallowed, and by now conservative and government-supporting, Kristiania paper *Morgenbladet*, which had 2,500 postal subscribers throughout the country according to a report of 1863. But it is a sign of the times that a series of new papers were launched at the end of the 1860s, both in the capital and in other towns, many of them opposed to the government.

All of these processes of change up to 1870 are expressions of a gradual disintegration of such 'vertical' ties of dependency and dividing lines as characterised the traditional, locally divided and class-based society, and of a greater openness, ease of communication and mobility with increased opportunities for 'horizontal' integration across old divisions, both geographical and social. Yet this integration, such as it was by 1870, still fell far short of including 'the whole people', in any meaningful sense of that phrase, within the parameters of the nation state, whether we think of integration as communal action or as perceived partnership. All aspects of the process of communication and integration demonstrate its limitations.

Another eloquent indicator is the actual degree of political participation in national politics. The constitution of 1814 was in its time one of the most

democratic in Europe. Originally, it would have given in the order of 40 per cent of all adult males over the age of 25 the right to vote if they (once and for all) swore an oath to observe the constitution. Nevertheless, the right to vote was a relatively exclusive privilege. Later, the proportion of males eligible to vote would sink a little because of changes in the social structure, but of those who were eligible, in all elections from 1859 (the first election for which we have complete information) up to 1879, only a minority of about 30 per cent or less bothered to vote. Among potential voters in the lower social strata there were many who never took the oath to the constitution, and who thereby, despite their voting entitlements, remained completely outside the political process.

In other ways too we can see the distance from the modern state. It has been said that, up until the 1870s, there was a natural opposition between the farmers and the modern state. In the 1870s many representatives of the farmers took part in an opposition movement targeted at removing the sitting civil service regime. But the interpretation that they were aiming to take over the running of the government in order to manipulate it for their own ends is off the mark. The farmers' aim was rather to reduce the state's power as such: to bring more power back to the local organs of farming society.

In addition to the reaction against the power of the state, we also find a reaction of a more regional or geographically determined kind. National integration necessitated growing centralisation around the centre of the state, the rapidly growing capital city and the growing dominance and influence for those social classes who governed there, as well as their culture and interests. A reaction against the civil service and the power of the state could thus run in parallel with a reaction against the dominance of the east of the country and the cities, and against the urban and – for many – alien culture which the capital represented. Similar contradictions lie behind the strength of the 'counterculture' in Norwegian politics and social life up to the present day.

These limitations to national integration do not contradict the fact that, in order to bring down the civil service regime, the more self-assured opposition took for granted from around 1870 that the old 'vertical' authority structures and ties of dependency were in the process of decaying, and that a new process of integration was under way. At a deeper level, the rebellion against the civil service regime and the realisation of the nation state in terms of mutual action and experience (shared identity), were two expressions of the same sociological process. But in 1870 this was still a long way from being fulfilled.

## Sweden: the emergence of the nation state

LARS PETTERSON

### Background and a glance at what was to come

The national idea never exercised as broad and deep an influence in Sweden as it did in many other European states, but it goes without saying that this great current in nineteenth-century European thought did not leave Sweden entirely unaffected. Swedish intellectuals were swept along by the idea just as much as their counterparts in other countries. The beginnings of nation-building in Sweden should be dated to the state-inspired attempts to mobilise the Swedish people which accompanied the war efforts during the Finnish War of 1808–9. Esaias Tegnér, the poet and professor in Lund, lent his pen to this agitation and his poem *Svea*, whose original theme was the reconquest of Finland, received a prize from the Swedish Academy in 1811. Political efforts to create a more integrated people began after Finland, the eastern part of the kingdom, was amputated. The former Gustavian ‘Greater Sweden’ gave way to the new ‘Little Sweden’ of the Bernadottes, and this new, territorially truncated state contained the germ of a proto-nation. To adopt d’Azeglio’s well-known remark after the unification of Italy, once Alexander I’s troops had ‘created Sweden’, it only remained ‘to create Swedes’. The homogeneity and geographical immobility of the population of the new ‘Little Sweden’ became the most important criteria in the nation-building process. The new Sweden ran from north to south and was, of course, much more culturally and linguistically homogeneous than the Baltic empire, with its east–west axis, which had just been destroyed. However, even this new, territorially limited state was still relatively heterogeneous, since it stretched from Skåne (Scania), which was half Danish-speaking, in the south to the Torneå valley, which was entirely Finnish or Sami in linguistic

terms, in the north. The great question was how the human beings within this state were to be integrated into a homogeneous entity.<sup>1</sup>

It was the attack which the principle of civicism mounted against the organisation of the state according to social estate and against corporate jurisdiction which gave force to the national idea in Sweden. It was argued – in line with the thinking inspired by the French Revolution – that the hierarchical and particularist collective relationships which had previously prevailed should now give way to a universally identical form of relationship between (male) individuals, citizens. However, civicism – that is to say, the sort of civic patriotism inspired by the French Revolution – was a movement which was not congruent with the nationalistic, sabre-rattling project, which had its basis in the existing state, or with romanticism with its passion for the ‘genuine and authentic people’, which emerged at around the same time, or with that form of nationalism which was expressed a little later through a virtually boundless admiration for the new royal family.

Many of the radical supporters of the principles of civicism who welcomed the coup of 1809 with enthusiasm were disappointed by the new constitution, but great hopes were placed in the French Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, who was elected crown prince in the expectation that he would impose a revolutionary stamp on the future development of the country. When the Crown Prince Karl Johan, to use the name Bernadotte adopted on his arrival in Sweden, declared after his meeting with Alexander in Turku (Åbo) in 1812 that he ruled out any hazardous undertakings aimed at the reconquest of Finland (‘the policy of 1812’), the hopes that had been placed in him were crushed, at least in the field of foreign policy. The national liberal programme had to be restricted to the arena of domestic policy. As Tegnér put it in the final version of *Svea*, the task was now to reconquer Finland within Sweden’s post-1809 frontiers.

After Karl Johan adopted Metternich’s policy of stabilisation, revanchist and anti-Russian rhetoric became the natural idiom of opposition. Such rhetoric resembled the attitudes that flourished in aristocratic officer circles, but it also appealed to the middle class. The patriotic outlook of the Enlightenment had

1 For a recent and comprehensive treatment of nationalism in Swedish historiography, see P. Hall, *The Social Construction of Nationalism: Sweden as an Example* (Lund, 1998), and S. Edquist, *Nyktra svenskar. Godtemplarrörelsen och den svenska identiteten* (Uppsala, 2001). For a comprehensive treatment of the Swedish nation-building project in the early nineteenth century, see T. Jansson, ‘En historisk uppgörelse. När 1800-talsnationen avlöste 1600-talsstaten’, *Historisk Tidskrift* (1990). Recent literature on the Swedish nation-building project in this period includes H. Höjer, *Svenska siffror: Nationell integration och identifikation genom statistik 1800–1870* (Hedemora, 2001).



slowly established a hold in middle-class and academic circles during the last decades of the eighteenth century, at the same time as the authority of the state and religion had gradually weakened. Certain groups within the civil service and among the burghers of the capital and the country's larger towns were no longer content to live as their fathers had done in the past – as loyal subjects, as respected members of the burgher estate and as sinners before God. The national-liberal programme sustained by these groups served as the dominant form of nationalism in Sweden during the first seven decades of the nineteenth century. It was usually revanchist and anti-Russian, and became in the 1840s and 1850s Scandinavianist and anti-German, but its most important feature was an overriding concern that the old Swedish parliament of four estates should be reformed in compliance with liberal ideas. The higher level of material welfare which the middle class had gained made it feel entitled to demand not only the emancipation of the economy from the trammels of the guild system, but also a share of the responsibility for the affairs of the realm. It was believed that the nation would come into existence once the country had a constitution which gave the middle class such a share in shaping national policy. In this respect the Norwegian constitution of 1814 was a source of inspiration for Swedish national liberals.

The apocalyptic apprehensions created by the outcome of the Finnish War and the kingdom's new, more confined boundaries undoubtedly contributed to the nationalistic mania of the age. So, too, did the erosion of regionalism as the economy assumed national proportions. However, the decisive factor was probably the breakdown of the bonds of community which had long been in progress, and the relationships of dependency characteristic of a corporative society. This disintegration of the context of the individual's existence created a vacuum which could only be filled by a new form of community.

The common people generally kept what they thought and believed to themselves. It was not something to be shared with the powers-that-be. Nowadays it is hard to tell how far, if at all, a farmer from Dalarna or Småland considered himself a Swede. We can certainly take it for granted that the peasants did not regard the loss of Finland as a 'national disgrace'. However, there can be no doubt that the loss of Finland had an effect on what was left of the old Swedish kingdom. Stockholm, in particular, suffered as a result. The capital was so dependent on food supplies and timber from Finland that the tsar instructed his peace negotiators to be accommodating over these questions. Nonetheless, from the little we know about the thoughts and feelings of the rural population, as reported by those who met them in everyday life and

from the handful of peasant diaries which have survived, it seems unlikely that the common people in what remained of the old Swedish realm took much notice of the loss of Finland or even identified themselves with the nation at all.

The peasant's world consisted of the farm, the village, the parish, the district and the town he occasionally visited in order to trade. In 1810, a peasant would hardly have known the word 'nation' – at all events, not in any favourable sense. He might perhaps have heard it sometimes from the pulpit when the pastor read out the details of some new ordinance or tax. Newfangled ideas that he was a citizen of the state would have conflicted with his image of himself as a member of the peasant estate, and that was the self-image he lived by.

Just over a half century later, activist national liberal circles were still able to complain that as a rule 'their fatherland was no more than a word' to the sons of the peasantry. At that time, of course, education was seen as the most effective means of awakening 'slumbering Svea'; the idea of arming the people through a voluntary rifle club movement also found favour in this connection. However, the goal of healing and strengthening 'Svea's arm', which had been carried in a sling ever since the wounds received at Poltava in 1709, as the more high-flown of the propaganda tracts put it,<sup>2</sup> soon gave way to the pursuit of other political tasks that were of more immediate interest to the liberals.

The political achievements of the national liberal movement in no way matched its high expectations, but – despite all the overstatement and the disappointed hopes – the movement did lay the foundation for the introduction of bicameral parliament in 1866 and for wider civic participation in social debate. However, a Swedish nation in the twentieth-century sense of the term failed to emerge. In truth, it was only after the complete failure of Scandinavianism and the rifle-club movement that the nation-building project started to succeed in Sweden. That is why it is necessary to look ahead from the perspective of the 1870s towards the turn of the century and the dissolution of the union with Norway in 1905. As in most other parts of Europe, nation-building was not completed until around the turn of the century. In Sweden too, the last decades of the nineteenth century were the epoch of state-nationalism, the period when membership of the nation came

2 Quotations from a letter to the editor of the daily paper *Nerikes Allehanda*, 14 February 1868.

to shape the individuals' collective identity in place of family ties, the village community or membership in a corporative estate or guild.

It was only at the turn of the century that nationalism, which had originally emerged as an emancipatory element in the ideology of the rising bourgeoisie, began to play a truly significant role in all areas of Swedish life. It was now used as perhaps the most important ideological weapon by those who sought to resist the efforts of the growing working-class masses to liberate themselves, and it was primarily directed against the ideological manifestation of those efforts, namely socialism. The energies of the patriotic activists were now focused on producing the ritual props and symbols of the nation – the national anthem and the national flag. They also breathed new life into the Swedish variant of Germania and Marianne, *Moder Svea* ('Mother Sweden'), as both the bodily and spiritual personification of the realm. In due course, they created a whole liturgy of phenomena that could all be honoured by the preceding adjective 'national' – ranging from costumes to dances, songs, parks, museums, and even character. The Swedish flag achieved intense symbolic value only after the union crisis of 1905.

It goes without saying that there are several reasons why the nation building process in Sweden was delayed and relatively weak in comparison with many other European countries. It would be possible, for example, to point to the long period of peace which began in 1814, or perhaps even more, to the importance of the military defeats and capitulations of the century between 1709 and 1808. In the century or so between Poltava and Sveaborg the territories which became the post-1809 Sweden were relatively sheltered in geopolitical terms from the rivalries of the Great Powers and ethnic and religious conflicts. The history of Sweden in the nineteenth century would have been very different if Finland had remained a part of the Swedish kingdom after 1809. The final loss of Swedish Pomerania in 1815 put a definitive end to all aspirations that Sweden might once again become a Continental Great Power. The union with Norway was a 'compensation' for the loss of Finland only in the sense that it conferred a needed legitimacy on the newly created Bernadotte dynasty. The term 'Sweden proper' only began to emerge in the 1860s to describe post-1809 Sweden. At that stage, it was no more than a pragmatic adjustment to the country's territorial losses and the foreign policy Karl Johan had adopted as crown prince in 1812.

However, despite the slowness and weakness of the nation-building process in Sweden, something had begun to happen in this respect by 1870. To judge from surviving peasant diaries – even if God and the king still occupied the highest place in their mental world – many peasants now regarded the

word ‘nation’ as meaning something. In 1870, the publication *Läsning för folket* (‘Readings for the People’), which had studiously avoided all political questions since its first appearance thirty-five years earlier and which was otherwise soberly utilitarian in its approach, carried an article with the headline ‘What good can we learn from the war?’ The conflict in question was the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1, and the article sought to show that its readers (the ‘we’ of the headline) could acquire heartening and inspirational knowledge from the war, despite all the death and destruction: ‘Something grows and blossoms above the grave where so many thousands lie in peace and happiness, and that is love of the fatherland.’<sup>3</sup> This was to adopt a tone that was both ancient and entirely new in Swedish public debate. It was ancient in that it was related to the classical idea ‘Sweet and honourable it is to die for one’s country’ (*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*). It was new because the unconditional spirit of sacrifice which the nation was naturally regarded as entitled to demand of its members incorporated each citizen into an exceptional historico-cultural community, possessed of legitimacy even in peacetime and excluding every other nation or nationality. From the 1870s onwards, nationalism meant something more than just patriotic loyalty to one’s fatherland. It involved a whole programme of political action which was quite different from that of the national liberals. The concept of nationhood acquired from the 1870s a connotation not only of shared origins but also of shared goals – it represented an exclusive community of shared values.

The period between the Finnish War of 1808–9 and 1870 is therefore important in the history of Swedish nation-building. It was during these years that an embryonic sense of national identity began to acquire a foothold in rural society. It is not possible given the current state of research to trace this process in all its variety. For example, we do not know whether it was a question – entirely or in part – of influence from without or above. Was it the national identity of civic patriotism that was transmitted to the common people during these years, or was it rather a matter of thoughts and feelings that emerged from within a peasant society undergoing rapid change?

What is certain is that the identification of the rural population in general, and the freeholding peasant in particular, as the primary manifestation of national identity and national tradition through the ages, was an invention

3 ‘Hwad godt lära wi af kriget?’, *Läsning för folket*, 4 (1870), pp. 375–84.

of the middle-class urban elite, above all of the so-called non-noble persons of rank (*ofrälse ståndspersoner*), who were not represented in the Swedish parliament before 1866 despite their considerable wealth and the resources at their disposal for influencing opinion. It was this social group which turned the soil into a national fetish, even though it had no direct relationship with agriculture itself. Sweden's 'native soil' was regarded as the inviolable and inalienable shared property of the nation. For Sweden's conservative establishment 'the farmers' march' (*bondetåget*) of February 1914 represented a hysterical culmination of this nationalistic cult of the Swedish peasant.

### Two Swedish nation-building projects

The new kingdom – to employ August Strindberg's phrase to describe Sweden which emerged with the introduction of a bicameral parliament in 1866 – did not turn into the kind of society that was the goal that inspired those supporters of civicism who had witnessed the demise of the old Swedish kingdom in 1809. They had dubbed that society 'the young nation', but its realisation was not achieved until the following century. However, the national euphoria which accompanied the dissolution of the union with Norway in 1905 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 would not have been possible without the ideological offensive launched during the decades that followed the loss of Finland, even if the vertical and state-regulated dissemination of ideas to create a nation state had not begun until after the period covered. It is difficult to prove any direct link between these two nation-building projects, because the first of them, the ideological offensive initiated in 1809, soon lost its momentum. The following decades were hardly a promising time for new projects in a civicist or national liberal spirit. The Holy Alliance in Europe, and Karl XIV Johan's ambitions at home to dominate Swedish politics by exploiting the divisions of the four estates, left little scope for political reform. The wave of revolutions in 1830 and the breakthrough of constitutional liberalism in Europe reopened the question of parliamentary reform in Swedish public debate, but with certain striking exceptions nationalistic themes played a subordinate role to purely liberal ideas. The culmination of the rifle-club movement during the 1860s represented the last attempt of national liberalism to contest with conservative and royalist nationalism. The 1870s witnessed a triumphant advance of conservative-royalist nationalism, as well as the beginnings of a slow reconciliation between the liberal and conservative strands of nationalism.

That reconciliation of these two versions of nationalism occurred later, but even before 1870 there were certain links between the two, because national consciousness never emerges spontaneously. It always rests on the foundations of a certain level of cultural homogeneity on the one hand and an intellectual construction, namely nationalism, on the other. In the case of Sweden, the process was assisted by the new administrative and fiscal arrangements introduced during the decades around the middle of the century, which produced more uniformity throughout the kingdom. The abolition of the demarcation line separating town and country in the 1840s, the simplification of the land tax in 1855 and the local government laws of 1862 all made a significant contribution to creating a more uniform administrative structure. However, a more important factor was the massive ideological campaign which continued throughout this period and which wove together the disparate ideological elements of royalism, rationalism, enlightened radicalism and romanticism. This combination later came to provide the foundation for nationalism as an overriding ideology, of a widespread sense of a collective Swedish identity and for the development of the nation as a concept.

It is reasonable to correlate the emergence of the national ideal to the collapse of traditional corporations and households. The nation became an expression of a new kind of relationship between human beings in which the family, both as a biological and a social category, was always cited as a model. All the organic theories of history produced by nationalism rested on equating the nation and civic relationships between its members with the family and the links that bind the members of a family together. As the household diminished in importance as a unit of production and as fewer and fewer families could be identified with a distinct piece of landed private property, a new notion emerged, namely that the nation was a collective unit of production with a shared economy and with its own collective property, i.e. the territory of the nation state. Even landless agricultural labourers were attributed their share when the nation was used to provide a broad definition of what constituted property. As the proletarianisation of rural society progressed and the subdivision of farmsteads reached its culmen, nationalism made it possible to present everyone as part-owner of their native soil. Indeed, the concept of the nation can perhaps be explained as an attempt to compensate for the property that was denied to the ever-growing group of those without property. The nation provided an answer to pauperism and proletarianisation and – as we have seen – the nation also provided answers to a number of other questions as well.

## Cultural nationalism

In addition to civic patriotism, with its roots in the French Revolution, another notion exercised a decisive influence on nation-building in Sweden. This was the notion that there existed an ethno-linguistic cultural community, an idea whose intellectual origins were to be found in the German-speaking parts of Europe. The earliest and most striking expression of what can best be called cultural nationalism was the nationalist literary association of *Götiska förbundet* (the Gothic Society). Its two most prominent figures were Erik Gustaf Geijer and Esaias Tegnér. The Society was established in 1810 at the initiative of a small group of civil servants and intellectuals who were influenced by romanticism. Its aim, according to its statutes, was to create a renewed awareness of the achievements of the ancient Goths. It was hoped that the study of Old Norse literature and history would help to recreate 'the spirit of freedom, manly courage and upright disposition' which it was presumed had characterised the ancestors of the modern Swede, and in this way to bring about a national revival in Sweden.

The supporters of Gothicism sought to produce a selective national cultural heritage, that is to say a set of traditions which would both make Swedes feel at one with their past and satisfy the new need for identity that had emerged. If these traditions were to rest on firm foundations, their antiquity needed to be demonstrated, and that in its turn required a manageable body of ancient monuments and historical artefacts around which the all-embracing threads of national myth could be spun. The members of *Götiska förbundet* collected folk ballads and legends and displayed a lively, though amateurish, interest in the publication of old documents. One of the more spectacular manifestations of these efforts to create a shared national tradition was *Samfundet för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens Historia* (the Society for the Publication of Manuscripts Relating to the History of Scandinavia). It was established in 1815 by a royal chamberlain, Adolf Ludvig Stjerneld, and received royal patronage for its work of publishing original archival material. One of the 'documents' Stjerneld published in 1816 contained the uplifting, patriotic words of the sixteenth-century Swedish King Gustav Vasa, supposedly uttered to his sons: 'Varen Svenske' ('Be Swedish').<sup>4</sup> The passage came to be well known to generations of Swedes,

4 'Konung Gustaf Erikssons märkvärdiga yttrande om Sveriges Konung och Svenska Folket, m.m.', in *Handlingar rörande Skandinaviens Historia, Första delen* (Stockholm, 1816), p. 38.

but later historians have always ascribed it, not to Gustav Vasa but to Stjerneld himself. Indeed, it seems that Stjerneld probably was the author of quite a few forgeries.

The foundation on which Gothicism erected a romantic regeneration of historical writings in Sweden was the idea of the nation as an organism. It was believed that the nation best displayed its peculiar nature through its language and literature, and that by writing the history of its language and literature it was possible to demonstrate essential elements of the nation's character. Historical writing would make the nation aware of its identity and its historical destiny, proud of that destiny and more inclined to pursue it. However, Swedish romanticism adopted not only an organic but also a corporatist view of society. It regarded the crown and the four estates of the realm as the cornerstone of the nation. The nation was merely the outer layer of a national body whose smallest unit was the household. In the mental world of the romantic patriots, the nation served as a new 'body' to which those limbs that did not belong to one of the corporations could attach themselves. This view had a lot of validity as a description of the political situation in Sweden: as late as the autumn of 1865, the four estates of parliament were discussing their future without regard to the demands for national representation which had been made for half a century, especially since 1830 when two prominent liberals – the leader of the opposition in the noble estate, Carl Henrik Anckarsvärd, and a lawyer, Johan Gabriel Richert – published a pamphlet on this question. Romantic corporatism was essentially conservative in character and the national liberals naturally found it repellent, but even Tegnér rejected the excesses of neo-romantic enthusiasm. Like Richert, he hailed the idea of equality as a legacy of the Old Norse world, and his popular piece of epic verse, *Frithiofs saga*, which appeared in the 1820s, contained the injunction: 'Do not pride yourself on the honour won by your fathers.'

The efforts of *Götiska förbundet* between 1811 and 1824 to provide the Swedes with a collective memory led in fact to little more than a rather anonymous and cosmopolitan cultural heritage lacking identifiably Swedish characteristics. Nor did it succeed in reaching out much beyond the ranks of the civil service and the free-professions Gothicism. It was not until the 1890s that Swedish schoolchildren would be able to recite Tegnér's spirited *Svea* or Geijer's declamatory *Vikingen*. The most turgid of the Gothicism writers, the fencing master and poet Pehr Henrik Ling, who dreamed patriotically of verse that presented purely Old Norse themes, never succeeded in reaching a broad public. His most durable contribution was not



his poetry but 'Swedish gymnastics', a system of physical training for the nation based on German and Danish models.

Patriotic enthusiasm slackened considerably throughout Europe after the Congress of Vienna, and the efforts of the civicists to create a more civic and culturally homogeneous Sweden assumed new forms. It was also necessary to take into account Karl Johan's cautious policy towards Russia, which hardly encouraged the revanchist ardour expressed in some Gothicism verse. Moreover, many politically aware Swedes regarded Denmark, not Russia, as the country's hereditary enemy. In 1813, the historian of literature Lorenzo Hammarsköld declared that it was an 'objective historical fact' that Denmark had at all times played the role of an unreliable and envious disturber of the peace, while Sweden had in her magnanimity seldom chosen to derive advantage from the valour and military prowess of her people.<sup>5</sup> It is in this perspective that the pan-Scandinavian cultural nationalism of the Gothicismists, which foreshadowed the Scandinavianist movement of the mid century, should be seen.

Historical writing was, of course, a central factor in the attempts to replace particularist and provincial traditions with universal and national ones, but from the 1830s the works of history produced in Sweden dealt with Old Norse themes to a decreasing extent. Instead, controversy came more and more to focus on the subject of the organisation of medieval society. Nor were the martial feats of earlier generations of Swedes always at the centre of works dealing with Sweden's Age of Greatness. The emphasis was placed rather on what was claimed to have been their pious disposition and noble ambitions. A historian who attracted a wide circle of readers during this period was the clergyman and poet Anders Fryxell, and he had only a moderate interest in Sweden's past military glories. The same could be said of Geijer's successor, Fredrik Ferdinand Carlson, but the historical writings of this academic and politician never gained a broad readership. It was perhaps Fryxell's austere moralism and his sober anti-heroic outlook which stopped him from fostering any sort of nationalist spirit. At all events, he certainly represented quite different and more pacific ideals than those embraced by the most popular historian in Sweden during the following decades, Clas Theodor Odhner. The publication of his three history textbooks for primary and secondary schools in 1868, 1870 and 1872 marked the transition to a new epoch. The idealised, boys'

5 L. Hammarsköld, *Sammandragen berättelse om Dannemarks krigsförhållanden till Sverige från äldre till nuvarande tider* (Stockholm, 1813).

adventure-book description of Karl XII concocted by Tegnér ('King Charles, the young hero') re-emerged in the pages of Odhner's textbook, this time in prose, but possessed of similar valour and Nordic martial qualities. Odhner produced the same nationalistic hero-worship and bellicose revanchism as filled the work of, for example, Pehr Henrik Ling, when he sought to prepare the Swedes for renewed war with his blood-curdling bardic efforts during the second decade of the nineteenth century.

### Communications

A decisive element in the unrelenting progress of the nation-building project was the gradual replacement of old social differences by new, horizontal class divisions. Traditional principles of law, norms of obedience and lines of social demarcation based on the conditions that prevailed in a bygone age had to be adjusted to new circumstances. Village councils, guild membership and the precedence and privileges conferred by birth all played a decreasing role as wealth and qualification came to the fore as the primary factors determining social standing and prestige. These developments represented a slow shift of emphasis whose meaning only became clear long afterwards, and specific developments are parts of a very gradual process which cannot be precisely dated. Most legal changes and administrative adjustments merely confirmed formally practices that were already in force. This was particularly true in the field of economic policy. Nonetheless, proposals for certain practical legislative changes pushed themselves onto the agenda side by side with the question of parliamentary reform, and these outwardly inglorious and unheroic years witnessed a number of reforms which paved the way for new initiatives and provided a basis for the country's continued development.

Until 1870 the primary significance of the expansion of communications, which would later be essential to the country's unification, lay in its implications for the future. It was the central state that took the initiative in this field: funding was legislated for the building of telegraph lines in 1852, uniform postal charges for the whole country were introduced in 1855, guidelines for the expansion and financing of the state railway network were established in 1857. The old regulations that travellers needed a passport, issued by the town council in urban areas or by the royal sheriff (*kronofogde*) in the countryside, were abolished in 1860. When Stockholm was linked by rail to Göteborg in 1862 and to Malmö in 1864, these developments represented the first cautious steps towards the destruction of provincial isolation.

The expansion of intellectual communication played an even more significant role in creating a homogeneous way of life throughout the country. Lars Johan Hierta established the beginning of a nationwide press readership as early as the 1830s with his liberal newspaper *Aftonbladet*, despite its limited distribution outside the capital. However, it was the growth of local newspapers in the 1850s that turned the press into a major instrument of national unification. Figuratively, with the help of scissors and paste, local editors tried to link their readers to the debates which were being conducted in the Stockholm press, and to play a part in the formation of a nationwide body of public opinion. It should, however, be emphasised that their attempts to transmit the ideals of urban elites to a provincial audience were not in the first instance motivated by a national ideal.

The press functioned as an increasingly important instrument in the nation-building process, but an even more significant role was probably played by the voluntary associations which embodied the country's bourgeois public sphere. One of the earliest manifestations of the associative idea was the reading society, which made it possible to incorporate the provincial elite into a national community as a reading public through the reading of the daily Stockholm newspapers. The task of 'uniting the disparate, divided forces of the nation by stronger bonds into a harmonious whole' – as the newspaper *Nationalföreningen* ('The National Association') put it when its first issue appeared in 1834 – now passed to both the press and the voluntary associations. Both nationwide and local associations engaged in a horizontal dissemination of ideas, welding geographically scattered groups which were relatively heterogeneous in social and educational terms into a uniform body, which might be described as members of a national community.

One of the associations that was active on a normal basis was *Sällskapet för Växelundervisningens befrämjande* (the Society for the Promotion of Monitorial Education), which was founded in 1822 and which came to function as an unofficial managing body for popular education throughout the kingdom for three decades. In its early years, the society emphasised that the purpose of schooling was to make the underclass, no less than more affluent groups, regard itself as a part of a society which 'is made up of one people, *one* family, all of whose members understand one another'.<sup>6</sup> However, this theme played a subordinate role in the education of the masses during the following

<sup>6</sup> J. P. Lefrén, *Tal, hållet i Sällskapet för Växelundervisningens befrämjande inom Fäderslandet; år 1825 d. 25 Maj* (Stockholm, 1825), p. 10.

decades. In practice, the dissemination of civic and national ideals was restricted to those social circles which could perceive some material confirmation of them in their daily lives. They still had no place in the schools attended by the masses. When schoolchildren participated in the celebration of national commemoration days for the first time in the 1860s, only pupils of the secondary grammar schools were involved. It was only in the 1890s that this practice trickled down to the common schools.

The importance of common school as an instrument in the process of developing a national identity should not, of course, be underestimated, but the education of the masses was only gradually and partially drawn into the activities associated with this process. The different stages by which the inculcation of national values became part of popular education can clearly be seen from the changing content of the pedagogical manuals used at training colleges for teachers at parochial schools. The benefit of historical studies was stressed each time in similar terms which reflected the existence of a definite programme. In 1842, it was stated that history taught 'how God guided the destiny of people and kings no less than that of private individuals'. In 1846, another author wrote that the purpose of teaching history was to demonstrate to children 'how divine providence regulates the destinies of countries, nations and individuals'. The manual for 1868 struck a somewhat different tone: children were now to be taught 'how our people, under God's governance of the world, gradually developed with regard to their internal conditions and external relationships'. It was only now, as Sweden stood on the threshold of a new age, that the teaching of history at parochial schools was regarded as an instrument for 'awakening a love of the fatherland'.<sup>7</sup>

The same year, 1868, saw the publication of the first edition of *Läsebok för folkskolan* ('A Reader for Common Schools'). In time, it provided norms for a uniform national language and served as the original source of a national literary canon for the children of the masses. At the time, this book did not succeed in rousing the slumbering national sentiment of the masses but, in the longer term, teaching in a common national language, combined with the expansion of the bourgeois public sphere and the press, contributed to creating a unified national culture. It would have been difficult to establish and weld together a Swedish nation in the absence of the cultural and linguistic homogeneity created by a nationwide system of

7 A. Oldberg, *Hemskolan*, 2 (Stockholm, 1842), p. 70; O. E. L. Dahm, *Skolmästarkonst. Antydningar för Lärare och Skolinspektörer* (Kalmar, 1846), p. 73; C. Anjou et al., *Bidrag till Pedagogik och Metodik för folkskolelärare*, 1 (Linköping and Karlstad, 1868), p. 10.

universal schooling. However, it should be emphasised that such a system was only built up during the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

### Scandinavianism and the rifle-club movement

The pan-Scandinavian aspiration of mid century were easier to express in high-flown rhetoric than in practical political co-operation, as both Oskar I and Karl XV learned to their cost. One manifestation of this Scandinavianist rhetoric was the song Richard Dybeck composed in 1844 which began 'You ancient, fresh and mountainous north'. During the heyday of conservative Swedish nationalism around the turn of the century, this song became Sweden's national anthem with only a few insignificant changes. When the Norwegian parliament decided to abolish the post of governor (*ståthållare*) in 1859, the Swedish press whipped up a wave of Swedish nationalism, which was a manifestation not only of conservative state-nationalism but also of a 'Greater Sweden' Scandinavianism whose primary objective was the maintenance of Swedish supremacy in Norway.<sup>8</sup> This crisis of Scandinavianism coincided with the beginnings of the last great effort made by the national liberal movement.

Garibaldi's irregular forces were an important source of inspiration for the Swedish rifle-club movement in the 1860s.<sup>9</sup> Even if British and Swiss models were imitated, it was the Polish, and above all the Italian national liberation movements that fired the imagination. Garibaldi and the brave volunteers who followed him were hailed in parliament, at banquets held in favour of reform and in the liberal press as the obvious example for the Swedish rifle clubs to follow. There was a wave of enthusiasm for the national cause, which was now linked to the demand for parliamentary reform more explicitly than ever before, and the rifle club was presented as the force that would save Sweden from 'foreign oppression – and from domestic

8 The best account on the Scandinavianist movement in Sweden is by Å. Holmberg, *Skandinavismen i Sverige vid 1800-tallets mitt (1843–1863)* (Göteborg, 1946).

9 On the subject of rifle clubs, see A. Björnsson, 'Ett folk i vapen. Bidrag till en svensk folkrörelses historia', *Meddelanden från Arkivet för folkets historia* (1979); N. F. Holm, 'Den svenska skarpskytterörelsens uppkomst', *Historisk Tidskrift*, 75 (1954); E. Johannesson, 'Geväret och pennan. Om skarpskytterörelsen och litteraturen', in B. Bennich-Björkman *et al.* (eds.), *Litteraturens vägar. Litteratursociologiska studier tillägnade Lars Furuland* (Hedemora, 1988); A. Karlsson, *Det frivilliga skyttets spridning i Sverige 1820–1965. Studier av tillväxt- och regressionsförlopp i en folkrörelse* (Stockholm, 1972). For a recent account, see L. Petterson, 'Skarpskyttet i Örebro län under 1860-talet', in L. O. Berg *et al.* (eds.), *Krigsmakt och bygd. Soldater, ryttare och befäl i Örebro län under indelningsverkets tid* (Örebro, 1997).

oppression too' – to quote the somewhat threatening words of August Blanche, the author and politician who was the central figure in the rifle-club movement.

The rifle-club movement initiated that mass production of public monuments which would characterise the following decades. Donations were collected all over the country in order to raise statues of Karl XII and Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, a fifteenth-century rebel against the Union king, who were both regarded as great heroes of Sweden's past. History and the contemporary world blended together, in a way that was quite typical of the 1860s, and the profoundly anachronistic image of Engelbrekt borrowed some of its characteristics from the highly idealised Garibaldi myth. Engelbrekt became a sort of Swedish Garibaldi, a national freedom fighter, who had armed and united the people. Blanche was particularly assiduous in shaping the link between Engelbrekt and Garibaldi. At the Garibaldi banquet in Stockholm in 1862, he emphasised that 'We too have had our Garibaldi, who was just as noble, just as great.'<sup>10</sup> And when the monument to Engelbrekt was unveiled at Örebro in 1865, Blanche declared:

This representation of Engelbrekt could not and should not have been raised until the presence of a people armed on a voluntary basis had created a situation in which Sweden stood ready to receive him. And now it has happened: the people have welcomed their hero and have greeted him in the most becoming way – with weapons in their hands.<sup>11</sup>

The rifle-club movement was led by journalists like Blanche at *Illustrerad Tidning*, August Sohlman at *Aftonbladet* and Sven Adolf Hedlund at *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*. It can be regarded as the first autonomous mass organisation in Sweden.

Its members not only wanted a reorganisation of the country's armed forces on a new basis, they also saw the arming of the people as an important element in efforts to promote reconciliation between the classes and greater social harmony. The broad masses were to be incorporated into civic society instead of confronting it. Despite its support in the press the movement, which reached its peak in 1865 with 40,000 members, proved short-lived. Most of the rifle clubs had disbanded ten years later. Despite all the passion expended in its support, the cause of the rifle clubs was lost. All that was left was the movement's instrumental attitude towards national consciousness.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in *Aftonbladet*, 24 October 1862.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in *Nerikes nya Allehanda*, 16 October 1865.

When nationalism once again became a force to be reckoned with around the turn of the century in connection with the defence question, it was with conservative, not liberal, overtones.

Many reasons can be cited for the rapid decline of the rifle-club movement. Although no member of a rifle-club was ever drawn into battle, except as a volunteer during the Schleswig-Holstein war of 1864, it can still be said that the movement died because of its victories. It is true that in the field of domestic politics it never proved possible to fulfil the high hopes concerning the introduction of universal conscription which had been entertained: these hopes were crushed in 1865 when parliament turned down the report of the army commission. However, the parliament of 1865–6 represented a decisive victory for the rifle-club movement in another respect. The leading figures of the movement were all strong supporters of parliamentary reform, and when that was achieved, some of the movement's more fiery agitation suddenly became hopelessly out of date. The possibility of speaking of the clubs as a weapon against both external dangers and domestic oppression was undermined, when the latter – that is to say, reactionary attempts to preserve the old chamber of four estates – was finally defeated in parliament in December 1865. In many cases the leading figures in the rifle-club movement had also used the clubs as a basis for, and a means of, applying pressure in their agitation in favour of a united Scandinavia, but the events surrounding the war of 1864 destroyed this argument as well. Few liberal Scandinavianists chose to speak up after that. However, the decisive reason for the rapid decline of the clubs in the 1870s lay in a completely different factor: the history of the Paris Commune in 1871 made the dominant elites in Swedish society less inclined to place weapons in the hands of the workers and to train them in their use.

Nonetheless, the importance of the rifle clubs in shaping future attitudes towards the country's defence should not be underestimated. A movement was created on the basis of voluntary principle which sought to inculcate the idea that each citizen had an obligation to bear arms in order to defend the nation. In so doing, it helped to turn the armed forces from an instrument used in the pursuit of dynastic interests into a matter of broader national concern. The inflated nationalistic tone adopted by the leaders of the rifle-club movement was directly related to the growing fissure emerging in Swedish society and to the crumbling of traditional bonds that had linked individuals to one another. The bonds of loyalty, which the liberals of the 1860s wished to create on the basis of an armed nation, served as an important precondition for the militaristic nationalism which emerged, this time in a purely conservative guise, in the 1890s.

## Iceland: the emergence of the nation state

ANNA AGNARSDÓTTIR

In the nineteenth century, Iceland's relationship with Denmark changed dramatically. During the first two decades the impact of the Napoleonic Wars severed the close ties between the two countries. Iceland left the Danish realm *de facto* and came within the British sphere of influence during the war years, 1807–14. In the early 1830s Icelanders began to demand more autonomy in their domestic affairs and recognition of their status as a separate nation. The first stage in this campaign ended in 1874, when Christian IX of Denmark granted the Icelanders their first constitution, thereby ending absolute rule in Iceland and ushering in a period of constitutional monarchy.

### The impact of the Napoleonic Wars in Iceland

After the British bombardment of København in 1807 Denmark joined forces with France. The Royal Navy roamed the North Atlantic cutting all links between the three Danish North Atlantic dependencies – Iceland, Greenland and the Føroyar (the Faroes) – and their mother country. The Danish possessions in the West Indies and India were again seized as they had been during the Anglo-Danish hostilities of 1801, and the British also captured Helgoland, a Danish possession since 1714. This island, situated near the mouth of the Elbe, was obviously of strategic importance. Furthermore, the British ministers certainly discussed in 1807 whether 'Iceland could be secured to His Majesty, at least during the continuance of the present war'.<sup>1</sup> Lord Hawkesbury, at the time Secretary for Home Affairs (later Lord Liverpool the prime minister), asked Sir Joseph Banks to advise the government on this matter.

<sup>1</sup> Hawkesbury to Banks, 29 November 1807, Natural History Museum (NHM), London, Dawson Turner Collection (DTC), 17.



Banks was the president of the Royal Society, and as a young man he had led the first British scientific expedition to Iceland in 1772. Thus he was the acknowledged authority on Iceland and this was not the first occasion when he had been asked to advise on the feasibility of a British annexation of Iceland. In the late eighteenth century there had been proposals for a British takeover of Iceland, the Danes acquiring in exchange either Crab Island (now Vieques) in the West Indies or the duchy of Lauenburg, bordering on Schleswig-Holstein. In 1801 the British government was contemplating using the hostile situation to send a force to occupy Iceland and Sir Joseph had been consulted.<sup>2</sup>

Banks now advised the government that a British annexation of Iceland was the obvious solution to the wartime plight of the Icelanders. The Royal Navy and British privateers had captured a significant number of Icelandic merchant ships sailing from Iceland to Denmark in that fateful autumn of 1807. The situation in Iceland was desperate. Without supplies from Denmark the Icelanders would face certain starvation, the island becoming nothing less, in the words of the Chief Justice of Iceland Magnús Stephensen, than 'an uninhabited desert'.<sup>3</sup>

Banks was convinced of the appropriateness of Iceland's conquest. He wrote: 'No one who looks upon the map of Europe can doubt that Iceland is by nature a part of the group of islands called by the ancients Britannia and consequently that it ought to be part of the British Empire.' Banks's plans for the annexation exist in minute detail. In a lengthy memorandum written in December 1807 he proposed that a warship should be sent to Iceland with a negotiator offering the inhabitants the splendid option of voluntarily becoming British subjects. Banks pointed out that once the Icelandic sailors had been 'active and adventurous' to the point of discovering America before Columbus though under the Danes they had degenerated to 'their present torpid character'. British rule, however, would ensure they would become 'animated, active and zealous', eventually providing plenty of hardy sailors for the Royal Navy.<sup>4</sup>

Denmark, without her fleet, had great difficulty in ensuring the survival of her dependencies, thus opening the way for British control of the North Atlantic trade. Though the British government ultimately decided against

2 A. Agnarsdóttir, 'Scottish Plans for the Annexation of Iceland 1785–1813', *Northern Studies*, 29 (1992), pp. 83–91.

3 Stephensen to Banks, 17 October 1807, NHM, DTC 17.

4 Banks to Hawkesbury, 30 December 1807, Library of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, London, Banks's Correspondence, 2.

annexing Iceland, Banks managed to persuade the government to release the Icelandic merchant ships, which were of course technically enemy vessels. Napoleon's blockade had attempted to close the Continent, one of Britain's major markets, to British trade. Britain found it most useful to issue British licences to neutral ships – the newly acknowledged status of the Iceland ships – to evade the Continental System.

Throughout the war the traditional Danish–Icelandic trade was almost completely controlled by the British Board of Trade. British merchants in search of new markets traded with Iceland during the years 1809–17. They received government backing and were issued with licences by the privy council and provided with naval protection.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Icelandic Revolution of 1809*

In 1809 the first British trading expedition, led by a London soap merchant named Samuel Phelps, seeking 'mountains of tallow in Iceland', seized political power in the island.<sup>6</sup> The Danish governor, Count Frederik Christopher Trampe, was taken prisoner and Iceland was proclaimed an independent country under the protection of Great Britain. This usurpation of power can be wholly explained as a spontaneous reaction by the British merchant against the governor's attempts to uphold the prohibition against foreigners trading in Iceland, even going to such lengths as to forbid the Icelanders to trade with the British on pain of death.

Subsequently, Phelps's interpreter, a Danish adventurer named Jørgen Jørgensen, took up the reins of government as self-styled 'protector' of Iceland. He issued radical proclamations in the French revolutionary spirit, stating that the 'poor and common' had the same rights as 'the rich and powerful'. An Icelandic flag was designed – three white codfish on a blue background – and elected representatives were to meet the following year to draw up a constitution. At the time it was the general belief in Iceland that Phelps had the backing of the British government. There is no documentary evidence linking the British government to this so-called 'Icelandic Revolution'. Phelps later declared that he had acted from commercial necessity and at his own risk and responsibility. Indeed it was ended two months later

5 See A. Agnarsdóttir, 'The Challenge of War on Maritime Trade in the North Atlantic: The Case of the British Trade to Iceland during the Napoleonic Wars', in O. U. Janzen (ed.), *Merchant Organization and Maritime Trade in the North Atlantic, 1660–1815* (St John's, 1998).

6 For a detailed account and analysis of the revolution see A. Agnarsdóttir, 'Great Britain and Iceland 1800–1820', unpubl. PhD thesis (London, 1989), chs. 5 and 6.

through the intervention of the Royal Navy. Jörgensen's radical ideas had little if any impact on the Icelandic people. In fact the Chief Justice of Iceland wrote bluntly to the British captain who ended the revolution: 'Independ-ency [*sic*] can never be the wish of any good Icelander.'<sup>7</sup>

Banks was deeply shocked. The Icelandic Revolution was a far cry from the sort of proper peaceful annexation, desired and supported by the natives, that he had had in mind. Instead the revolutionaries had actually dared to inflict a republican regime on the innocent Icelanders. Banks was of the opinion that a repetition of these 'atrocities', as he called them, must be avoided at all costs and Anglo-Icelandic relations placed on a firm footing. On 7 February 1810 the privy council issued an Order in Council stating the British government's official policy towards Iceland, Greenland and the Føroyar. George III, 'being moved by compassion for the sufferings of these defenceless people', placed them in a state of neutrality and amity with Britain. Free trade was established between the Atlantic islands and Britain. Icelanders, when resident in His Majesty's dominions, were to be considered as 'stranger friends' and not as alien enemies.<sup>8</sup> The Order acknowledged that the sovereignty of Iceland was still vested in the crown of Denmark, but that Iceland was under the protection of Britain.<sup>9</sup>

To safeguard British trading interests a British consulship was created in the island, unusual in a dependency. At the approach of peace in 1813 the British merchants, who had traded lucratively with Iceland during the war, urged that a clause be inserted in the prospective Anglo-Danish peace treaty permitting the continuation of British trade with Iceland. Failing that, Britain should take possession of Iceland. But, as before, the British government showed no interest in annexing Iceland. At the peace negotiations in Kiel in January 1814 Britain kept Helgoland, but made no demand for Iceland. The British negotiators at Kiel ensured, however, that the three Danish North Atlantic dependencies remained in Denmark's hands, which the British crown preferred to a Swedish takeover of these islands.

Thus, during the Napoleonic Wars, Iceland came within the British sphere of influence, not for the first time in her history (the fifteenth century in Icelandic history is known as the 'English century') nor for the last (British

7 Stephensen to Jones, 21 August 1809, The National Archives (TNA), London, ADM, 1/1995.

8 *London Gazette*, 10 February 1810.

9 A. Agnarsdóttir, 'Sir Joseph Banks and the Exploration of Iceland', in R. E. R. Banks *et al.* (eds.), *Sir Joseph Banks: A Global Perspective* (London, 1994), pp. 42–5.

forces occupied Iceland in 1940). Britain's protective role towards Iceland was crucial to the survival of the Icelanders. After the Napoleonic Wars, Denmark and Britain were again at peace and Iceland reverted to its former situation almost as if the wars had never taken place.

After the loss of Norway to Sweden in 1814, Denmark was relegated to the status of a minor power in Europe. Another threat to the Danish kingdom was looming on the horizon – nationalism.

## The political scene

### *1830: ideology and politics*

The 1830s are traditionally accepted as the beginning of Iceland's nationalist movement, when for the first time demands for political autonomy were made. The Icelanders had, however, always believed they formed a society apart, as was demonstrated quite clearly, when they insisted on living under Icelandic law when they accepted the rule of the Norwegian king in 1262–4.<sup>10</sup> In the nationalistic ideology that guided the Icelanders through their struggle for independence, the importance of the Icelandic language in the political discourse has been emphasised by historians.<sup>11</sup> The roots have been traced back to the humanist scholar Arngrímur Jónsson (1568–1648) who devoted a chapter of his historical work *Crymogæa*, published in Latin in 1609,<sup>12</sup> to a discussion on the nation's language. He asserted that only the Icelanders among the Nordic peoples still spoke the language of medieval times, pure and uncorrupted. In other Nordic countries the ancient common language, which he called Norwegian (*Norvegica*), had been contaminated by the languages of their neighbours. He urged his contemporaries to preserve Icelandic in its pure form, free from foreign influence. The publication of *Crymogæa* was extremely important as it opened the eyes of its readers to the fact that the Icelanders had an ancient literature and a special culture.

10 The Old Covenant. See K. Helle, 'The Norwegian Kingdom: Succession Disputes and Consolidation', in K. Helle (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*, 1 (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 386f.

11 Gunnar Karlsson and Guðmundur Hálfðanarson have written extensively on nationalism in Iceland. See e.g. G. Hálfðanarson, 'Language, Ethnicity and Nationalism: The Case of Iceland', in G. Hálfðanarson (ed.), *Racial Discrimination and Ethnicity in European History* (Pisa, 2003), and G. Karlsson, 'The Emergence of Nationalism in Iceland', in S. Tägil (ed.), *Ethnicity and Nation Building in the Nordic World* (London, 1995).

12 *Crymogæa* is the Greek word for Iceland. *Crymogæa sive rerum Islandicarum* was translated into Icelandic by Jakob Benediktsson in 1985. See Book 1, ch. 3.

Traditionally Eggert Ólafsson (1726–68), a naturalist and poet, has been regarded as the pioneer of the nationalist struggle against Danish rule in Iceland. He was first and foremost an ardent patriot who wanted to preserve the Icelandic language and the ‘glorious’ Icelandic cultural heritage and history that bound the Icelanders together. But Ólafsson was no political revolutionary. He, like most Icelanders, had great faith in the Danish monarchy.

*The July Revolution of 1830*

Though the French Revolution had little direct impact in Iceland, the same was certainly not true of the July Revolution of 1830. Johann Gottfried Herder’s ideas about language and cultural identity spread from Germany to the intellectuals in Denmark and subsequently to the Icelandic students at the University of København. According to the philosopher each nation, the *Volk*, had its own language and culture. Thus it was most natural that each nation should govern itself. Johann Gottlieb Fichte carried the idea further by writing that only nations speaking an original language were real nations, and thus Icelandic became the Nordic *Ursprache*. In 1813–15 the Danish linguist Rasmus Christian Rask visited Iceland and declared that contemporary Icelandic as spoken by the peasants – the majority of the Icelanders – was in fact the common language of medieval Scandinavia, echoing the humanist Arngrímur Jónsson from the early seventeenth century. At the time the Romantic Movement with its emphasis on nationalism and admiration for the medieval past reigned supreme with Denmark’s major poet Adam Oehlenschläger finding his inspiration in the old Nordic literature and Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, the architect of the Danish national identity, translating the sagas into Danish in search of ‘the original Nordic or Danish mind’.<sup>13</sup> The countries shared a common cultural heritage. In fact the Danes rarely doubted the value of the Icelandic language or that the Icelanders formed a nation apart. It is noteworthy that there was never any question of forcing the Icelanders to learn Danish, as was the case in Schleswig. Indeed, a professorship in the Nordic language was founded in 1844 at the University of København with another lecturer appointed soon after. However, Rask had also noticed that Icelandic was in danger of being contaminated by Danish – especially in the burgeoning capital, Reykjavík. In 1816 it was at his initiative that *Hið íslenska bókmenntafélag* (the Icelandic Literary Society) was founded. Its aim was to maintain the purity of the Icelandic language. The society’s

13 Hálfðanarson, ‘Language, Ethnicity and Nationalism’, p. 197.

journal, *Skirnir*, was first published in 1827. Now published biannually, it is the oldest journal in the Nordic countries that is still flourishing.

The Icelandic students in København, many spurred on by romantic nationalism, proved very receptive to the political implications of the July Revolution. Baldvin Einarsson (1801–33), a law student, is acknowledged to be the first Icelandic political writer of the nineteenth century. Wishing to preserve the Icelandic language and culture, he felt deeply the necessity of awakening the national consciousness of his compatriots. To this effect he published the journal *Árman á Alþingi* (1829–33) aimed at the common Icelander.<sup>14</sup> The problem for multi-ethnic Denmark was that the nationalist movement threatened the *helstat*. One-third of the inhabitants of the Danish realm were German, Icelanders, Føroyar Islanders and Inuits who all had their own languages (not to mention the languages of the Danish colonies in the Caribbean, Africa and India). But at this point in history it was first and foremost the political status of the duchies – Schleswig and Holstein – that occupied the Danish government.

At the Congress of Vienna in 1815 the German Confederation had decided that all member states should establish diets. King Frederik VI of Denmark, as duke of Holstein and Lauenburg, was thus bound to this promise. He was in no hurry. Denmark was an absolute state *par excellence* with no representative institutions whatsoever. Not until 1831 did the king bow to pressure and announce the creation of four separate diets (*stænderforsamlinger*) for the Danish realm – in fact, consultative assemblies. Only men of means would be eligible to vote. In Denmark this meant about 3 per cent of the population.

The Icelanders had two representatives in the Island Diet at Roskilde, both appointed by the king. Surprisingly, it was a Dane, Count Frederik Adolph Holstein of Ledreborg, who in 1831 first suggested that the Icelanders should have a diet of their own.<sup>15</sup> The following year Baldvin Einarsson proposed that the ancient Icelandic assembly *Alþingi*<sup>16</sup> should be re-established at the original site, *Bingvellir*.<sup>17</sup> After Einarsson's premature death in a fire in 1833, a new group of Icelandic intellectuals entered the political stage with an influential journal *Fjölnir* (published 1835–47), written in the spirit of romantic

14 Nanna Ólafsdóttir wrote a detailed biography of Einarsson, *Baldvin Einarsson og Þjóðmálastarf hans* (Reykjavík, 1961).

15 In a pamphlet *Om de danske raadgivende Provindsialstænders Væsen og Værd* (København, 1831).

16 Founded in c. 930 and abolished in 1800, having lost all legislative power and functioning mainly as a high court of justice.

17 In a pamphlet *Om de danske Provindsialstænder med specielt Hensyn paa Island* (København, 1832).

nationalism as one would expect. Their aims were in many ways the same as Einarsson's, to awaken pride in the Icelanders as a special nation by emphasising the importance of Icelandic, 'this invaluable treasure, the common property of all those who can be called Icelanders'.<sup>18</sup>

*Jón Sigurðsson*

It was around 1840 that Jón Sigurðsson (1811–79) first emerged as the leader of the nationalist movement. He was Iceland's first real politician and would eventually become the country's national hero. He had arrived in København in 1833 to study philology and history. Sigurðsson, as has often been pointed out, was an unlikely revolutionary leader. He was never arrested or imprisoned and made København, the capital city of his 'enemy', his permanent home, though he crossed the Atlantic to Iceland countless times. As an intellectual as he was, he was actively engaged, like fellow scholars in Norway, Finland and Sweden, in publishing historical documents such as the series *Lovsamling for Island* and *Diplomatarium Islandicum*, and was more or less funded by the Danish treasury throughout his life. In 1841 he began publishing his own political journal *Ný félagsrit* (published until 1873). He was a prolific writer and thus his method of fighting the Danish government was not by the sword but with words, using in particular historical arguments, the logic of which was simple for his readers to follow. In a nutshell he was, as Guðmundur Hálfðanarson has described him, 'a spokesman for a liberal nationalist theory, striving for autonomy from Denmark as well as for the development of individual liberty in Iceland'.<sup>19</sup>

In his first political article in *Ný félagsrit* (1841) Sigurðsson called for the resurrection of *Alþingi*, but this ancient assembly should now be guided by the principles of modern democracy. He was a national liberal, believing that 'world history has clearly proved that every nation has prospered most when it has taken care of its own government'. The government of the Danes was therefore 'unnatural'. Sigurðsson placed the blame for Iceland's economic decline squarely on the shoulders of the Danish government. Moreover, Denmark had failed to defend Iceland during the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>20</sup> During

18 These are the words of Tómas Sæmundsson, one of the editors of *Fjölhvir*, quoted by G. Hálfðanarson in 'From Enlightened Patriotism to Romantic Nationalism: The Political Thought of Eggert Ólafsson and Tómas Sæmundsson', in S. Sigmundsson (ed.), *Norden och Europa 1700–1830. Synsvinklar på ömsidigt kulturellt inflytande* (Reykjavík, 2003), p. 68.

19 G. Hálfðanarson, *Historical Dictionary of Iceland*, 2nd edn Lanham, Md., 2008), p. 195.

20 J. Sigurðsson, 'Um alþing á Íslandi', *Ný félagsrit*, 1 (1841), pp. 59–134.

the 1840s there were three issues that Sigurðsson considered fundamental for Iceland's incipient struggle in the direction of an autonomous nation state. First, it was necessary to politicise the Icelanders by resurrecting the *Alþingi*, where the Icelanders could practise their political skills. Secondly, the liberalisation of Iceland trade was crucial in order to bring prosperity to the country. Thirdly, reforms in education were necessary and he expected the all-important middle class to develop in due time in Iceland. Good education and free trade would form the basis for future progress in the country.

### *The Resurrection of Alþingi*

Frederik VI died in 1839 and his cousin Christian VIII succeeded to the throne. He was well educated and a devotee of science, art and literature, and not least an admirer of the Icelandic sagas. Shortly after his accession he granted an audience to a group of Icelanders. The king replied that he had Iceland's wellbeing and interests at heart and he would gladly do something to improve conditions in the country.

In Iceland there were definitely signs that the peasants or tenant farmers were experiencing a political awakening. In October 1841, sixty-three tenants in eastern Iceland sent an address to the most radical of the Danish liberal politicians, Balthazar Christensen, asking him to support their wish for the right to vote. This is apparently the first political document from 'the grass roots'. In October 1844, 160 people sent 76 rigsdaler as a gift to Jón Sigurðsson as thanks for his efforts to regenerate the country. What is surprising is that among the donors were thirty male servants and six women.<sup>21</sup>

There was really only one bone of contention among the Icelandic intellectuals, namely the site of the *Alþingi*. Should the assembly convene in tents at *Bingvellir*, the site of the ancient assembly, as advocated by the *Fjölnir* group or in Reykjavík, as advocated by Jón Sigurðsson, the champion of modernisation? In Reykjavík the population had been 307 in 1801, mid century the population was 1,149 and by 1870 it had almost doubled to 2,024. Reykjavík was both the main commercial and administrative centre of the country, where the residences of the bishop and governor were to be found and the High Court of Justice (*landsyfírréttur*) convened. An added advantage was that a handsome new building for the only Latin School was under construction (still in use), as it had been decided to move that school from

21 G. Friðriksson, *Jón Sigurðsson Ævisaga*, 1 (Reykjavík, 2002), pp. 266f., 315f.



Bessastaðir to Reykjavík. This was an ideal location for meetings of the *Alþingi* during the summer and would not incur any extra cost.

True to his promise Christian VIII did improve conditions in Iceland and in a decree of 8 March 1843 declared the re-establishment of the *Alþingi*. This would be a consultative assembly for Icelandic affairs only (i.e. the *fifth* diet) with twenty-six members, six being royal appointees but the rest elected in twenty electoral districts. The language of the assembly would be Icelandic. The crown official (the governor) would be permitted to speak Danish but would be assisted by an interpreter. The *Alþingi* would meet every other year in Reykjavík for a month or so.<sup>22</sup> The property stipulations in the electoral law led to only 3–5 per cent of the population being eligible to vote (roughly the same as in Denmark). Jón Sigurðsson was personally lucky. He had inherited enough land from his grandfather to meet the property requirements and was indeed elected to the *Alþingi*. This was an important political step forward in the minds of the Icelanders, signifying to them that they were a separate nation, though it is clear from the preamble that the Danish administration regarded it more as a practical measure.

On 1 July 1845 the first meeting of the resurrected *Alþingi* took place. The majority of the representatives had received a university education. The major issue was freedom of trade, but the most tangible result was the first sign of an embryonic university. In 1847 a school of theology was founded (now the faculty of theology of the University of Iceland) which also taught philosophy.<sup>23</sup> Norway had established a university in 1811 but the University of Iceland had to wait exactly a century longer for its foundation in 1911.

### *The February Revolution, 1848*

In 1848 the February Revolution had a greater impact in Denmark than the July Revolution of 1830. Christian VIII died in January 1848 and was succeeded by Frederik VII, the king who finally renounced absolutism. A constituent assembly, the *rigsforsamling*, would be convened and a constitution drawn up for the whole kingdom. The duchies rebelled, setting off a three-year civil war.

The Icelanders were faced with a difficult question. While the king was absolute both Danes and Icelanders were equally subjects of the king. Now

22 8 March 1843, 'Kongelig Resolution ang. Anordning om Althingets Oprettelse paa Island', in J. Sigurðsson and O. Stephensen (eds.), *Lovsamling for Island*, 12 (København, 1864), pp. 451–69.

23 A. Kristjánsson, *Endurreisn Alþingis og Þjóðfundurinn* (Reykjavík, 1993), is the most detailed political history for the period 1830–51.

this had changed. What was to be Iceland's political status within the constitutional Danish monarchy? Would the newly restored *Alþingi* now be abolished again?

Sigurðsson took up his pen and wrote the *Hugvekja til Íslendinga* ('Address to the Icelanders'), regarded as probably one of the most important political articles in Iceland's history. Sigurðsson's argument was simple. Iceland's political rights were based on the agreement made between the Icelanders and the king of Norway in 1262–4, when they voluntarily came under the rule of the Norwegian king (but were never annexed). When in 1662 the Icelanders had subsequently accepted absolutism as all the subjects of the king of Denmark-Norway had done, they had renounced their political powers to the king himself, not to the Danish nation. As soon as the present King Frederik VII had relinquished absolutism, Sigurðsson maintained, the political status of the Icelanders reverted back to that of 1264 when Iceland was a separate free commonwealth and in no way subject to the Danish people.<sup>24</sup> Needless to say the Danish administration did not share this interpretation.

In Iceland political meetings were being held, and a petition was signed by 2,500 farmers from all over the country demanding a constituent assembly. In the autumn of 1848 news reached København that a rebellion had begun in Iceland as in the duchies. The rumours gained momentum when it was falsely reported that a militia had been formed to kill all the Danish officials and Danish merchants in the island.

Whether these rumours of unrest in Iceland had reached the royal palace or not, Frederik VII on 23 September 1848 expressed his wish to 'promote Iceland's prosperity and best interests' and that no final decision would be taken about Iceland's position within the Danish realm without the Icelanders being consulted 'in their own assembly in Iceland'.<sup>25</sup> This was a major political step forward for the Icelanders and would eventually lead to the meeting called the *Þjóðfundur* (national assembly).

The *rigsforsamling* gathered in Christiansborg Palace on 23 October 1848. The king appointed Iceland's five representatives. They, Sigurðsson among them, believed strongly that Iceland was not a part of Denmark and thus it should have its own constitution. This was not *their* constituent assembly. In accordance with the king's decision of 23 September 1848 Iceland was not

<sup>24</sup> J. Sigurðsson, *Hugvekja til Íslendinga*, ed. J. Benediktsson (Reykjavík, 1951), pp. 112–30.

<sup>25</sup> 23 September 1848, 'Reskript. . . ang. Íslands forfatningsmæssige Forhold', in *Lovsamling for Island*, 14 (København, 1868), pp. 183–5.

mentioned in the Danish constitution (*grundlov*) and the Icelanders had no representatives in the newly formed *rigsdag*.

*The coming of the national assembly, 1848–51*

While the convening of the assembly was impatiently awaited, certain events happened during the next three years that demonstrated an unheard-of lack of respect for authority. For example, in 1849 sixty tenant farmers, wearing red scarves, went on horseback in the name of 'the will of the people' to the home of Grímur Jónsson, the conservative and unpopular deputy-governor, and shouted 'Long live national liberty! . . . Down with tyranny!' and then they left. Jónsson died two weeks later of apoplexy.<sup>26</sup>

Elections took place in the spring and summer of 1850. To the great disappointment of the Icelanders the assembly was postponed until the following year. The Danish government was busy grappling with the Schleswig secessionist movement. It is important to note that Iceland's struggle for independence was closely connected to developments in Schleswig. While the Schleswig question had yet to be resolved it was unlikely that the government would grant other parts of the realm special privileges. The war in the duchies ended with a Danish victory. Thus the situation in Denmark – when the Icelanders had been promised their own national assembly in 1848 and that of 1851 after the subjugation of the Duchies – was radically different. And the Danish government's bills, now on their way to Iceland, were very different from the expectations of the Icelanders.

On 5 July 1851 the national assembly (*Þjóðfundurinn*) finally convened.<sup>27</sup> The governor, Count Jørgen Ditlev Trampe, was courting popularity by learning Icelandic. His powers had been increased. He had received secret orders enabling him to remove dangerous people and was ordered to do everything he could to uphold law and order. A corvette called the *Saga* was dispatched with the government bills and also twenty-five soldiers, to the amazement of the Icelanders.

The most important political bill regarded the status of Iceland within the Danish realm. To the shock of the representatives, Iceland would no longer be a dependency (*biland*) but would be integrated into Denmark, possibly as a province (this was never spelled out) while the *Alþingi* was demoted to some kind of regional council. The Danish constitution (*grundlov*) of 5 June 1849 was now declared to be in force in Iceland. The Icelanders would have

26 Ó. Oddsson, 'Norðurreið Skagfirðinga vorið 1849', *Saga*, II (1973).

27 The main source for this section is Kristjánsson, *Endurreisn Alþingis og Þjóðfundurinn*.

six seats in the *rigsdag*, though in purely Icelandic affairs the king would consult the *Alþingi*. The members of the assembly reacted swiftly. A committee was appointed by the *Alþingi* to draft an Icelandic constitution. The first article read: 'Iceland has the same king and law of succession with Denmark. All other matters regarding Iceland and Denmark or other parts of the absolute state are a matter of agreement', while successive articles amounted to Iceland virtually becoming autonomous in a personal union with Denmark.

It was 9 August 1851. Governor Trampe dissolved the meeting, though the Icelanders' version of the bill had not been discussed. The members of the Assembly rose and under the leadership of Jón Sigurðsson almost all said: 'We all protest!' This is considered to be one of the most dramatic moments in Icelandic history. Before leaving they added 'Long Live King Frederik VII!' Their quarrel was not with the king. The fate of the Assembly in Reykjavík was similar to the fate of many such assemblies in 1848 and later years where revolutionary movements were crushed by force. At least there was no loss of life in Iceland, the twenty-five soldiers having little to do but parade around during their stay. This was the first defeat in Iceland's struggle for sovereignty.

The next two decades were characterised by political bickering between the Icelanders and Danes, especially regarding financial matters and the demand for a minister for Iceland. In 1871 the *rigsdag*'s infamous Status Laws (*stöðulög*), declaring that Iceland was 'an inalienable part of the Danish realm with special rights', took effect, though the Icelanders never accepted them. The *Alþingi* was not consulted. To sweeten this bitter pill the Danish treasury allotted an annual sum of 30,000 *rigsdaler* to the Icelanders, a paltry sum considering the debt Sigurðsson alleged the Danes owed Iceland after centuries of exploitation. The *Alþingi* never accepted these laws and the steadfast aim remained constitutional government and a personal union.

In 1874 Iceland celebrated the millennium of the traditional year of settlement of Iceland. King Christian IX, the first Danish monarch to visit the island as king, presented his Icelandic subjects with their own constitution, thereby finally ending absolutism in Iceland.<sup>28</sup> The constitution granted the *Alþingi* limited legislative power in domestic affairs and control over the Icelandic budget. The king kept the executive power for himself and had the right to veto all bills. A special minister for Icelandic affairs was to be appointed but, as it turned out, it was the Danish minister of justice who

<sup>28</sup> 5 January 1874, 'Forfatningslov for Islands særlige Anliggender', *Lovsamling for Island*, 21 (København, 1869), pp. 732–57.

took on this role. It must be mentioned that the constitution contained many of the principles of human rights enshrined by the American and French Revolutions.

The political struggle continued. In 1904 Iceland was granted home rule and, in 1918, sovereignty with the Act of Union, virtual independence with a personal union with the king and a joint foreign policy with Denmark. It was not until 1944 that the Republic of Iceland was founded.

## The economy

### *The socio-economic structure*

From 1800 to 1870 the population of Iceland increased by 35 per cent, from 47,000 in 1800 to 70,000 by 1870.<sup>29</sup> Iceland was, as it had been throughout its history, a society of farmers, their families and servants living on fairly isolated farms. Animal husbandry, primarily the rearing of sheep and cattle, remained the foundation of the Icelandic economy and the nineteenth century saw a steady growth in the number of sheep. By 1870 about 70 per cent of the land was in private ownership and 20 per cent belonged to the church, the remainder being designated as public land. The labour market in pre-industrial Iceland was tightly regulated with most of the labour force being required to hire itself out to a farmer. In 1870, 74 per cent of the working population was employed in farming. The land could not support the increase in population, leading to mass emigration to New Iceland in Canada. In all about 15,000 Icelanders emigrated during the period 1870–1914. The artisans and merchants living in hamlets and villages comprised only 3.5 per cent of the population. The growing population would, however, provide the necessary precondition for the urbanisation and industrialisation of twentieth-century Iceland.

Until the late nineteenth century fishing had been primarily organised as a subsidiary occupation and there were restrictions on the settlement of cotters by the coast, because of the farming elite's belief that the labour force was insufficient. Eventually minimum property regulations were stipulated for those wishing to establish a household in a coastal area. Thus a class of independent fishermen only began developing in the middle of the century and by 1870 about 10 per cent of the population were engaged in the fisheries. Fish were abundant and of fine quality, but the Icelanders did not know how

29 The main source for this section is G. Jónsson and M. S. Magnússon (eds.), *Hagskinna: Icelandic Historical Statistics* (Reykjavík, 1997).

to exploit the fisheries, unlike the more technologically advanced foreigners fishing in Icelandic waters. The fisheries had for centuries been conducted in rowing boats of various sizes. In 1800 the total number of rowing boats owned by the Icelanders was 2,021, by 1850 there were c. 3,250 – and 3,317 according to the statistics for 1874. Eventually, however, the Icelanders branched out into decked vessels, the first ones making their appearance in western Iceland. Around 1830 there were thirteen schooners and by 1874 there were sixty-seven. The mechanisation of the fishing industry, however, was to await the twentieth century.

In the nineteenth century the French became a significant presence off the coast of Iceland. They had been fishing on and off since the early eighteenth century, but by 1830–40 there were about sixty *goélettes*, small French sailing ships, mostly from Dunkirk, fishing annually in Icelandic waters. By 1870 the number had increased to 299 with over 5,000 fishermen, peaking in 1884 with over 6,000. In 1856 a request was made by the French imperial government to its Danish counterpart to set up a fishing station in Dýrafjörður in the western fjords, in effect to establish a French colony of perhaps 400–500 men. The Danes found it politic to refer the matter to the deliberations of the *Alþingi*. This proved to be a controversial matter. Jón Sigurðsson was in favour of negotiating with the French on profitable terms, but the motion was narrowly defeated. The majority were afraid of the sheer numbers of French and supported a ban on foreign fishing in Icelandic waters.<sup>30</sup>

### *Trade*

The only issue that was debated and settled satisfactorily between the Danes and Icelanders during this period was that of free trade in 1855. Trade touched the everyday lives of people to an extent that esoteric political debate did not. Free trade meant that foreign merchants would compete for Icelandic produce, leading to higher prices. Besides, as Sigurðsson pointed out, Iceland and Denmark were not ideal trading partners. Denmark bought only a small quantity of Icelandic produce for its own consumption and Denmark could not itself provide the necessities the Icelanders depended on, such as iron, coal and salt, all of which had to be imported into Denmark.

30 E. Pálmadóttir, *Fransí. Biskvi. Franskir fiskimenn við Íslandsstrendur* (Reykjavík, 2009); K. Ólafsson, 'Áform Frakka um nýlendu við Dýrafjörð. Napóleon prins á Íslandi 1856', *Saga*, 24 (1986); K. Ólafsson, 'Dýrafjarðarmálið. Jón forseti og Ísfirðingar á öndverðum meiði', *Saga*, 25 (1987).

And now the times were auspicious. Adam Smith's principles had become a matter of practical politics in many European countries. Thus on 1 April 1855 free trade was finally established in Iceland. Iceland's emphasis on animal husbandry was reflected in the major exports of meat, tallow and wool, while in the eighteenth century stockfish had been Iceland's major marine export. In that century the Icelanders had learned how to cure salted dried fish (*klipfish*) for the Mediterranean market and at least by 1818, if not before, the value of saltfish exports exceeded that of stockfish. Shark-liver oil, for long a popular export, acquired an added value because of European urbanisation with its attendant need for street lighting.

Ships sailed to twenty-five harbours, more or less the same number as in the early nineteenth century. And did foreigners come to trade? Yes, Norwegians who brought timber and British merchants who bought live horses and sheep.

### Education and culture

In the eighteenth century several attempts had been made to establish elementary schools. Though these were unsuccessful, by the early nineteenth century literacy was widespread. Education took place in the home under the supervision of the clergy. Confirmation within the Lutheran church demanded the knowledge of reading. The level of education, as was noted by foreign visitors in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was higher in Iceland than in most other European countries at the time. The Latin School, housed at Bessastaðir from 1805 to 1846, was a joint seminary and grammar school for the privileged thirty to forty students studying there. Clergymen also taught young men in their homes, for example Jón Sigurðsson. The Latin School at Bessastaðir is credited with playing a significant part in the preservation of the Icelandic language. One of the rectors for instance, Sveinbjörn Egilsson, translated Homer into classical Icelandic. The sons of the elite were subsequently educated at the University of København, where Icelandic students enjoyed special privileges. It was not until 1907 that education for 10–14-year-olds was decreed by law. Unlike Norway and Denmark, compulsory schooling in Iceland was a twentieth-century phenomenon. Women's rights were in their infancy. In 1850 they gained equal rights to inheritance with their brothers, but it was not until the 1880s that any significant progress would take place.

Culturally Iceland produced a host of literary figures during the nineteenth century. The Romantic Movement survived throughout the century because

of its close connection with nationalism and the struggle for independence. Icelandic poetry often contained a strong political message. The first Icelandic novel since the sagas, *Piltur og Stúlka* ('A Lad and a Lass') was published by Jón Thoroddsen in 1850. As elsewhere in Europe there was great interest in collecting folklore. Jón Árnason published two volumes of Icelandic legends and folk tales in the early 1860s. As already noted, there were many political journals published during the nineteenth century though the first daily newspaper in Iceland did not make its appearance until 1910. However, other newspapers were published less frequently. One of the most influential, *Þjóðólfur*, was first published bimonthly and then weekly from 1848 to 1912.

Nationalism manifested itself in various ways. The painter Sigurður Guðmundsson designed the formal Icelandic national dress (*skautbúningur*) c. 1860 as well as protesting against the export of Icelandic antiquities to Denmark. In 1863 an embryonic national museum began to take shape with a collection of Icelandic antiquities housed in the attic of Reykjavík Cathedral.

The picture of Iceland in 1870 is, however, bleak. Communications remained primitive, there were no coastal ships sailing to the harbours around the country, instead of roads there were horse-tracks and the first proper bridge was not built until the early twentieth century. The country was served by only eight doctors and leprosy, for example, was three times more common than in neighbouring countries. Over 3,000 Icelanders died from a measles epidemic in 1846 and infant mortality was shockingly high: until the last quarter of the nineteenth century between 250 and 350 of every 1,000 children born died within their first year.<sup>31</sup> According to a Danish doctor who visited Iceland at the turn of the century the Icelanders suffered from a bad diet, inadequate housing and lack of general hygiene.

In 1800 the Icelanders had been apathetic, living in a primitive agrarian society with little thought of changing their lot. By 1870 they had taken great strides forward politically and were intent on gaining independence. As soon as home rule was established in 1904 the economic and social advances already in progress would accelerate.

31 L. Guttormsson, Ó. Garðarsdóttir and G. Hálfðanarson, 'Ungbarna- og barnadauði á Íslandi 1770–1950. Nokkrar rannsóknarniðurstöður', *Saga*, 39 (2001), p. 88.



PART IX

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CONCLUSION



## From the Reformation to the formation of nations and civic societies, 1520–1870

E. I. KOURI AND JENS E. OLESEN

The bloodbath of Stockholm in November 1520 instigated by King Christian II meant the end of the Nordic Kalmar Union under one ruler. It should, however, be noted that Gustav Vasa's uprising, with the help of the Dalecarlians against the Danes, was only successful because of military support given by the Hanse city Lübeck. Gustav Vasa was chosen as Swedish governor in 1521 and became elected king of Sweden and Finland two years later. He reigned from 1523 to 1560. In Denmark King Christian II was deposed and exiled in 1523 by the council of the realm and followed by his uncle Frederik I (1523–33) who also came to rule over Norway. Both Frederik I and Gustav Vasa were usurpers. Christian II was still the legal union king and posed a threat to both new rulers, until he was imprisoned by the Danes in 1531 and held in captivity for the rest of his life.

The new Scandinavian kings had to struggle with social unrest. Swedish peasants rose several times because of taxes imposed by the new Vasa government. The peasants of the Danish region of Skåne (Scania) were, in 1525, supported by Søren Norby, who held Gotland for Christian II. Social protests were mixed with religious protests when the new Protestant ideas spread from north Germany. At the diet of Västerås in 1527 Gustav Vasa took control of parts of the old Swedish and Finnish church estates with the help of the nobility. He thus broke the traditional relations with Rome. In Denmark, Frederik I carefully avoided choosing sides among the confronting religions. However, he steadily tried to secure and strengthen his princely position against the church, but died without having resolved the religious question. The growing ideological tensions among Catholics, Reform-Catholics and radical Protestants exploded one year after the king's death in the so-called Count's War of 1534–6. A Danish-Swedish fleet won a victory against the fleet of Lübeck. The two new Scandinavian kings thus showed their common strength against their opponents and against the Hanse, which had earlier fought for the reinstatement of the exiled King Christian II in

order to uphold their trade interests against the threatening Dutch and increasingly also the English competition in the Baltic.

From the Middle Ages the Baltic area had supplied Western Europe with commodities like grain, timber, flax and hemp. In return the West imported salt, fish, wine, cloth and, increasingly, colonial goods. Thus markets on the southern Baltic coast and subsequently in Scandinavia and also the producing areas in the hinterlands became integrated into the emerging world economy. In the early sixteenth century the 'inland trade' in the Baltic was still firmly in the hands of the Hanse. Hamburg and Lübeck controlled the eastern trade going through the harbours of Danzig, Königsberg, Riga, Tallinn (Reval) and also København, Stockholm and even Turku (Åbo) and Viipuri (Viborg) in Finland.

Frederik I died in 1533. His eldest son, Christian III (1534–59), was victorious against the peasants and other supporters of Christian II. After besieging and winning København in the summer of 1536 he controlled Denmark. A Norwegian uprising under the leadership of Archbishop Olaf Engelbrekts-son of Trondheim was also soon ended. The archbishop fled and died in exile in the Netherlands in 1537. As a result of the uprising, the constitution of Norway was fundamentally altered in 1537 by the new king and his Danish counsellors. In order to control Norway more easily, its status was changed into a Danish province: the existence of the council of Norway with bishops and secular nobles as members was ended. Norwegian affairs were from now on taken over by the Danish council.

The Count's War and an alliance of 1541 between Denmark and Sweden ended the long process of the dissolution of the Kalmar Union. The Count's War is often interpreted as an internal Danish civil war, but rather it constitutes an important focal point in the Baltic region involving the Hanse and a number of north German princes.

After the Count's War the new Danish King Christian III successfully established the Lutheran church in 1536–7. The dramatic incidents associated with the deposition of the Danish Catholic bishops are well known. The king now became the head of the new church and the bishops no longer had political or religious power in society. The Catholic church in Denmark ceased to exist; the medieval dualistic model of society disappeared, and the bishops were replaced by superintendents. The first generation of Danish superintendents (one in Norway) had all studied at the University of Wittenberg and were installed and anointed in København by Luther's friend and colleague Johannes Bugenhagen, who also crowned the king and the queen and reopened the University of København after the model of Wittenberg. Bugenhagen also drafted the new church statutes in 1537.

After the Reformation in Denmark, the church leaders were appointed by the king as servants of the crown. This was especially the case in Norway. Also the question of candidates was solved in København. Nowhere else was the king so free in religious matters. The aristocracy and burghers still dominated the military field and the civic administration. There the power and control of the king was extended step by step.

The new superintendents were all assigned by the king. They were loyal to the new system and swore an oath to the king. In comparison with their Catholic colleagues, they were ecclesiastical civil servants and most of them were of Danish origin. They married daughters of clergymen or rich citizens, thus creating strong relations between the elite clergy and the expanding prominent group of civil servants. The Danish and Norwegian superintendents became important for the building up of a strong centralised early modern state. The Reformation on the whole strengthened the power of the rulers in their old struggle with the aristocracy. This goes some way to explain the developments from 1536 onwards and the introduction of absolutism in Denmark-Norway in 1660.

In Norway the Reformation process lasted longer than in Denmark. The Danish church statutes of 1537 were also used in Norway, and it was not until 1607 that Norway had its own statutes. In Iceland the Reformation was put through after 1550 when the last Catholic bishop, Jon Arason, was executed with two of his sons. The Reformation helped to bring Norway and Iceland under Danish control. The old church had earlier dominated economic life in Iceland. Now the king and his government in København took over.

The Danish Reformation was successful partly because it was built upon an earlier Reformation in the cities. King Christian III thus had solid ground for his Reformation in 1536–7. In Sweden and Finland there were fewer cities and the Catholic church and the conservative peasants resisted the expanded centralised government longer. The Reformation in Sweden and Finland was a top-down phenomenon. It was to last until 1593, before the Reformation officially won during the struggle for power between the Catholic Polish-Swedish King Sigismund (1592–9) and his uncle Duke Karl of Södermanland, who was later to become King Karl IX of Sweden-Finland (1595/1604–11).

The Reformation owed much to the spread of books which provided weapons in the armoury of antipapal and anticlerical writers, although sometimes this new revival of religious fervour also worked in Scandinavia contrary to tolerance and intellectual advance. Because the Reformation stressed the national language, the New Testament and other religious books were translated into the native languages by Christian Pedersen in 1524 and

1550, Olaus Petri in 1541 and Mikael Agricola in 1548. In Iceland the work was done in 1584 by the bishop of Holar, Gudbrandur Thorláksson.

The Reformation in Scandinavia took place within the framework of political and social instability and its progress depended on the complex political changes that have come to be known as the emergence of the nation state. In the struggle for sovereignty the state tried to bring the internationalist Catholic church under local lay control – a policy for which Lutheran theology provided a much-needed justification. The Reformation was in the first place the great revolution in religion and church – with by-products in thought and learning, in constitutional changes, in national and international affairs and, of course, in economic, social and cultural factors in general. Thanks to the Reformation, there was the formation of religious and cultural identities under Lutheranism, and numerous consequences in Sweden and Finland and Denmark, Norway and Iceland encouraged political integration and brought together the divided society of the Middle Ages.

The new Lutheran church in Scandinavia and the breaking of relations with Rome meant to some degree a cultural isolation, since the unity among the Protestants was not the same as that within the Catholic sphere. Many cultural and social ties to the heartland of Europe and the Mediterranean countries were broken off. Close links were forged mainly with Protestant Germany and cultural streams from elsewhere during the late Renaissance came slowly. The educational travels of students were mostly limited to the northern part of Germany and the Netherlands. In Sweden the University of Uppsala was closed and not refounded until 1595. The University of København mainly educated clergymen after its reopening 1537.

During the first phase of the early modern period, Danish foreign policy was traditionally based on three principles: *dominium maris Baltici*, good relations with the House of Habsburg and especially with her possessions in the Low Countries and with France. Later the civil war in France and the rebellion in the Netherlands forced Denmark as guardian of the Sound to face up to its role as the leading Protestant power in Northern Europe. It was apparent that an rapprochement with England would come about and soon Anglo-Danish co-operation became a reality in foreign policy. This gave rise to co-operation between the maritime powers England, Denmark and the province of Holland and Zealand. Denmark played an increasingly active role in international anti-Spanish policy. The fact that the country disposed of an impressive fleet made it attractive as a partner.

This Protestant alignment had great political and military consequences: both Scandinavian kings later intervened in the Thirty Years War. Yet the

complicated military and political developments had major and unexpected repercussions. The defeat of Denmark under the regency of Christian IV (1588/96–1648) by Tilly and Wallenstein in 1626–9 left Sweden the leading political and military power in Northern Europe. Not only did this lead to its victory in the containment of Catholicism and imperial ambitions during the Thirty Years War, but it also enabled Sweden to subdue the weakened Denmark, from which Sweden seized the eastern Danish provinces and later two important Norwegian provinces. Power politics rather than religion – as often in history – came to be the driving forces in international relations.

Culturally, the Reformation meant the inauguration of a new focus on art and architecture, which were used as instruments of political expression. In the centres of kingly power in both Denmark and Sweden, the Renaissance visions of Italian humanism were translated into works of arts and palaces, which would bolster monarchical authority through both the symbolism and function of their forms and decoration. King Christian IV became the supreme example of the humanistic prince with respect to art and architecture in early modern Scandinavia. Royal palaces, churches and even the stock exchange of København were amongst the numerous splendid buildings.

When the Catholic church disappeared as an independent political factor in Scandinavia, loyalty towards the kings as heads of the church took on a more actively religious aspect. Social discipline was strengthened. The king was the head of the population as *pater familias*, as were men in their families. During the sixteenth century women seem to have lost influence in economic, social and religious matters, but during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries their position improved.

After the Reformation there was no more rivalry between the state and the church in Scandinavia. The Reformation was a state-driven project, not a protest from below. The laws and norms of the state were the same as those of the church. The legal and moral codes remained identical. That Sweden and Finland still share a prominent position as the most law-abiding countries in the world partly has its origins in this consensus. In both countries the local clergyman was the obvious representative of the church, the crown and the local peasants. He personified the state–church combination. In seventeenth-century Norway, he was, more than in the other Nordic countries, a civil servant.

The Lutheran Reformation in Scandinavia, as in England, was primarily a matter of royal policy, which induced the slow mass diffusion of the new faith. Varied political and national conditions produced two main types: one Danish–Norwegian–Icelandic and the other Swedish–Finnish. These are still

national Lutheran churches to which almost the entire population belongs. The Reformation's consequences can still be seen not only in the church and state but in society as a whole. According to Lutheran ethics man's graces can come only from hard work. This has brought with it prosperity, which can be seen, for example, in the model of the Scandinavian welfare state. Even the weakest links of society are cared for. There is also little corruption.

Nor did pietism in the eighteenth century change the situation. Unlike in contrast to the Holy Roman Empire, it did not evolve into distinct low-church subcultures. As for Denmark, Professor Erik Pontoppidan (1698–1764) reformed the Danish church in a way which placed the low-church faction within the church. The Danish authorities, therefore, did not perceive any threat to the established system from the low-church faction. The nineteenth century was to prove different. Now civil servants, including state clergy, fought against the revival movements which they no longer controlled.

In Denmark and Sweden, pietism and Swedenborgianism were to exert long-lasting effects. King Frederik IV (1699–1730) banned entertainments on Sundays and feast days, frowned upon dancing and closed the theatres. Failure to attend church, previously decriminalised, was once again made a crime. During the reign of King Christian VI (1730–46) the pietist values propagated by his father were reinforced. Not only were Erik Pontoppidan's writings to have immense influence on Danish spirituality, but they were also to be of considerable importance throughout Scandinavia as well.

In Denmark the established church did not expand geographically as in Sweden and Finland, where the spread of population northwards and westwards saw the creation of new parishes and the need for new churches. The Swedish King Karl IX (1604–11) ordered the construction of five new churches in Swedish and Finnish Lapland by 1605. These new wooden churches not only served a religious function, but also complied with the king's wish to integrate all of Lapland, including the adjacent Norwegian Finnmark, into the Swedish kingdom. At the same time the Danish king Christian IV was eager to secure control of the northern regions of Norway in order to claim sovereignty of the territories and the Sami people. With the Treaty of Knäröd in 1613 after the Kalmar War (1611–13) all Swedish claims to Norwegian Lapland were abandoned, but in Finnish Lapland the power of the Swedish crown was strengthened. Not only did Lutheran clergymen preach the Word of God there, they also used their pulpits after 1766 to promulgate the royal proclamations, which had previously been read out in parish halls or other public buildings. Thus, as elsewhere in Scandinavia, the church became the voice of the crown, as well as that of God.



When the American colony of New Sweden had been established in 1638 by the Delaware river, the Swedish Lutheran church was soon to follow in its wake. Yet the presence of the non-Christian Indians and Reformed Dutch colonists settling nearby led to confrontations between the two Protestant faiths. The situation among the various Protestants improved before the middle of the century, and by 1655 even a few Jews, who had come as traders to the colony, were free to practise their religion. The Swedish Lutheran church was also present in Sweden's tropical colony of St Bartholomew, acquired from France in 1785, where most of the inhabitants were Roman Catholic. Religious toleration prevailed there until the middle of the nineteenth century.

In the Danish colony of the West Indies a Lutheran church was built in the city of Charlotte Amalie on the island of St Thomas in 1793 and a second one in Christianssted on the island of St Croix. In 1917 Denmark sold the West Indian islands to the United States.

Toleration in the Scandinavian colonies in the Caribbean occurred earlier than in Scandinavia itself. In the middle of the eighteenth century Catholicism was still a capital crime in Sweden. However, under the initiative of the enlightened King Gustav III (1771–92), the situation began to improve. He succeeded in granting religious toleration to Catholic immigrants to Sweden; their mercantile and other skills were too valuable to lose. This consideration was also applied to Jews. In 1782 Jews were granted permission to settle in Stockholm, Göteborg and Norrköping, where they were encouraged to engage in trade and industry and even permitted to build synagogues. But ownership of land in Sweden as well as membership of craft guilds still remained closed to them. Nor were Jews allowed to marry or employ Christians. By 1838 they had received most of the rights of Swedish subjects and in 1870 they were given citizenship.

The Nordic countries are well known for decent behaviour towards their Jewish fellow citizens. But, as elsewhere, the first stages were a bit complicated. In Denmark Jews were favoured for economic reasons and they were allowed to settle down already in 1673. In 1684 they received in København freedom to practise their religion and in 1849, were given full civil citizenship. In Norway, which in 1814 entered into a personal union with Sweden, the situation was different. In the constitution of 1814 Jews were forbidden to enter Norway. This provision was revoked in 1851 but not until 1891 were the Jews granted the same rights as other dissidents. In 1672 the first Jews were granted permission to settle in Turku (Åbo). Since 1809 Finland had been an autonomous grand duchy under the Russian tsar. The Jews living in Finland

were mainly Russian soldiers and their families who in 1858 had gained permission to stay there. When Finland became independent in 1917 the Jews were given full citizenship. The first synagogue was built in Helsinki in 1908.

In Iceland, Greenland and in other Danish Arctic dependencies the Lutheran church managed to keep up a strong position. Its strength owed much to the quality of its leadership, but in eighteenth-century Iceland, as on the Continent, Lutheran piety tended to decline even if, in administrative terms, the church there underwent a period of consolidation and centralisation. Reykjavik became the ecclesiastical centre. By contrast to elsewhere in Northern Europe, the numerous Evangelical sects, which flourished in the early nineteenth century, did not take root in Iceland.

The nomadic Sami people lived in the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Their religion was pantheistic, but Christianity spread slowly, partly through missionary activities. This was important not only for religious reasons, but also as a means of integrating them better within the Danish-Norwegian and the Swedish-Finnish states. Also colonisation changed the territorial groups in northern Scandinavia. The expansion of Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian colonists meant occupation of the areas where only nomadic Sami people had lived earlier. In Finland, Swedish colonisation, linked to the expansion of Swedish power, affected the western and southern coastal districts, which have since then largely remained Swedish-speaking.

The Union of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland was, after the Count's War in 1534–6, definitely buried and replaced by two Lutheran princely early modern states. Development in Denmark-Norway and in Sweden-Finland during the sixteenth century was in many respects the same. Both moved from the old medieval domain state towards the early modern tax state. The money was spent for military purposes, especially on mercenaries. The administration in Denmark still rested on the main castles and fiefs (*len*), but slowly more and more income from taxes landed in the royal chamber in København. Developments in Sweden were more advanced. With the help of tax-books and pay-lists it became possible for the crown to control the local administration. The *lensmän* were more and more taken from the lower ranks of the aristocracy and some non-aristocrats were appointed too. Income from taxes generally rose because of rising exports, but also thanks to a more effective administrative apparatus and fertile production years.

An important military tool was a professional navy. The two Scandinavian states became pioneers in Europe and both strove to build up fleets constructed for war at sea. During the Count's War a combined Danish–Swedish fleet won a victory over a combined Hanseatic fleet, and in the Seven Years

War (1563–70) Lübeck was reduced to a minor ally of Denmark. The Swedish fleet during these years was perhaps the best in Europe.

Another area which cost much money was the construction of modern castles and fortifications. Old castles like Nyborg, Malmöhus, Akershus, Kalmar and Örebro were modernised and new fortifications, as in Vadstena, were constructed. In addition to providing protection against outside threats, the new fortifications were built in order to preserve the realm against possible internal riots. In Denmark new taxes were imposed and accepted by the council, and in Sweden Gustav Vasa called together the four estates (*riksdag*) to discuss the taxes. In Sweden and Finland the local representative of the crown often negotiated with the peasants in order to secure tax-paying and also to minimise the risk of rioting.

The Nordic states were to develop into conglomerate power states. Sweden was to build up a regional seaborne Baltic empire from 1561 onwards and later conquered several Danish and Norwegian provinces (Skåne, Halland, Blekinge, Gotland, Bohuslän, Jämtland, Härjedalen) and new Baltic and German territories.

The relations between København and Stockholm and the provinces can be characterised as an active interplay. They had different groups to interact with in different parts of their realms. The provinces had different social structures, which created different political cultures and different elites. This perhaps explains why Gotland, Härjedalen and Jämtland were incorporated after their acquisition by Sweden in 1645, whereas the Skåne provinces and Bohuslän experienced an initial period as conglomerate provinces, between 1658 until their incorporation in the 1680s. In the former case, there was no nobility and no burghers, except in the small town of Visby in Gotland. The political cultures of these societies were upheld by peasant elites, which might have been considered less dangerous to challenge than aristocratic or urban elites.

The Finnish border with Russia was drawn in Teusina in 1595, replacing the old peace treaty from Pähkinäsaari (Nöteborg) of 1323. After 1660 the borders between Denmark and Sweden were not further changed in spite of Danish aspirations in two wars (1675–9, 1700/9–20/1) to reconquer her lost eastern territories. Between Norway and Sweden the border was adjusted in 1751 with small corrections including an article concerning free passage of the nomadic Sami people (*Lappedicillen*).

The Danish realm from the second half of the seventeenth century consisted of Norway and the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein – and after 1815 also the duchy of Lauenburg near Hamburg – as well as Iceland, the

Føroyar and Greenland. After the disastrous war against Prussia and Austria in 1864 Denmark lost her duchies and was reduced to a small European power. It was to last until 1920 when north Schleswig, after a plebiscite, was reunited with Denmark. During the Napoleonic Wars, Norway was lost to Sweden in 1814; this meant a new personal union for Norway with Sweden which was to last until 1905.

Sweden lost her Baltic empire at the end of the Great Northern War (1720–1) and only kept Wismar, until 1803 (pawned to Mecklenburg), and Swedish Pomerania north of the Peene river until 1815, when Prussia took over this region. As a result of the war of 1808–9 with Russia, Finland became an autonomous grand duchy under the rule of the tsar until its independence in 1917. Parts of the country had been conquered by the Russians earlier. These regions, called Old Finland, were now joined with Finland proper. The period after the Napoleonic Wars prepared the ground for Finland, Norway, and to some extent also for Iceland, to become independent national states. Denmark and Sweden, as old kingdoms, were transformed into nation states within their fixed national borders during the nineteenth century. Nation states and national principles, and not the ideas of Scandinavianism from the first half of the nineteenth century, decided the future for the Nordic countries.

State formation has often been explained as a result of the rise of national consciousness, political interaction between rulers and socio-economic groups, or war and international politics. Most of the explanations regard competition between states as the driving force behind resource extraction and the development of strong structures that form states. Changing military technology has also been seen as an explanation for state formation, especially in the early modern period. Such explanations, however, ignore the organisational context, particularly a state's capability to demand the payment of taxes to it and to make more efficient use of resources.

One important role in state formation was, according to recent research, primarily constituted by the building up of navies. Actually, the Danish and the Swedish early modern navies were, until the mid-seventeenth century, among the largest in Europe, and the absence of any competing strong naval power on the eastern and southern coasts of the Baltic was a precondition for Swedish expansion in the seventeenth century. Control of the sea gave the Swedish army greater operational freedom in the Baltic region. The absence of competing navies until the eighteenth century shows that the development of naval power was difficult and required a long-term policy and capabilities which most Baltic powers lacked. Early on Denmark was in

possession of a powerful navy and was a strong enemy to Sweden, but the Danish political system, where the king and the council were fighting each other in order to control foreign policy, prevented Denmark in the long run from competing with Sweden.

The reason why Denmark and Sweden were able to build up naval power was mainly due to their stability and centralised control of human, financial and material resources. This made it possible to develop new forms of social control from the top of the hierarchy. Political decision-makers were able to enforce centrally determined policies with operational forces, which could act with a certain degree of autonomy. They could also project resources and power over long distances and could dominate societies which had weaker state organisations. This was the case especially during the Swedish imperial expansion. The break-up of her Baltic empire during the Great Nordic War 1700–20/21 was partly caused by the fact that also other states had developed efficient organisations for warfare.

There are good reasons for arguing that the Swedish Vasa dynasty in the sixteenth century was operating in competition with old Swedish institutions (the Nordic union monarchy, the aristocracy, the peasant militia and the Catholic church, and other institutions of the old social order). This enterprise was successful and provided the dynasty with domestic resources and organisational capabilities, which could be used on the Baltic market. The creation of a navy allowed the state to intervene at sea and in territories across the sea, which gave a substantial advantage in competition with those powers without naval strength. Once committed to imperial expansion, the Swedish Vasa state had the resources to enable it to take the initiative in both military and economic terms. The sixteenth-century Swedish navy was, to an astonishing degree, not reliant on foreign resources. Foreign technology was used, but the number of foreign specialists was small and naval leadership was mainly found among the traditional elite groups in Sweden. Furthermore, it is probable that Swedish resources were much cheaper than Danish or other foreign resources. Wages were lower, raw material cheap and transaction costs could be kept low.

As for the nobility, in Denmark there was a rapid growth in the aristocracy from 1600. The economic and demographic decline took place only after 1660. In Sweden there was in the sixteenth century a tiny nobility and the concentration of property was in the hands of new aristocratic groups. There was, however, an explosive increase during the war-ridden seventeenth century of military officers and the advent of *homines novi* – in deep contrast to pre-absolutist Denmark – and subsequently the militarisation and bureaucratisation

of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Compared to their Danish and Swedish counterparts the number of the Finnish and Norwegian aristocracy was small.

In Denmark the period 1536–1660 was dominated by the aristocracy. They possessed about half of the country's estates, strengthened their position juridically and economically and were represented by the council. Together with the king, the council played a decisive role in politics and the estates were seldom summoned. Whether the king or the council was the driving force in Denmark-Norway, the administration was centralised and became more effective. This was also the case with the Sound toll, which from now on had to be paid according to the size of the loading. The king had a right to the tax income, but the taxes were granted by the council. The aristocracy had a monopoly of the fiefs, and new officials were appointed with the consent of the council. The power of the Danish monarchy was generally strengthened, but subject to the approval of the aristocratic elite – Denmark was still an elective monarchy. A partition in 1544 of the crown's possessions in Schleswig-Holstein between King Christian III and his brother Duke Adolf, which was followed by further partitions in 1564 and in 1580, caused a complex situation creating an enduring conflict until 1772 between the Danish king and the dukes of Holstein-Gottorp.

Norway was dominated by Danish nobles and officials, and only one-tenth of the fiefs were in Norwegian hands. In spite of the so-called *Norgesparagraf* of 1537, Norway was governed as an independent part of the Danish realm with its own laws. In 1572 a Norwegian vice-regent was appointed for the first time. During the 1640s a Norwegian army was allowed by the Danes to be built up in order to attack Sweden from Bohuslän, but also to defend the country against possible Swedish attacks. During the sixteenth century, Iceland and the Føroyar were closely attached to the Danish crown. A governor in Iceland was appointed as its highest representative.

The societies in Denmark-Norway and in Sweden-Finland were, since the medieval period, constituted by estates, which at the end of the period were transformed into social classes. The aristocratic estate was politically and economically strong during the early modern period and dominated politics against the king of Denmark; the peasants were practically without political influence. In Sweden the four estates, since the late medieval period, were represented at the *riksdag*. In spite of monarchical power during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries both Scandinavian states were in reality governed more like a *monarchia mixta*. Also, during the period of absolutism – Denmark from 1660, Sweden from c. 1680 at the latest – the monarchs had to

rely on loyal officials. The formation of modern constitutional governments and parties only started during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Scandinavian states witnessed heavy losses in war, especially in the seventeenth century. There was, however, a growing population at the end of the early modern period in these conglomerate, multi-ethnic Nordic states. The relatively autonomous regions of the Swedish realm included Sweden proper, Finland, the Baltic and German territories, so that several large ethnic groups – Swedes, Finns, Balts, Germans and Sami – were encompassed. Similarly in the Danish realm, Danes, Norwegians, Faroese, Icelanders, Frisians, Germans and Sami lived together in largely, but not by any means totally, separate administrative regions.

The situation in the Baltic region dramatically changed when, in 1558, Ivan IV launched an attack against Livonia. Soon Sweden, Denmark and the Polish-Lithuanian state became directly involved in the ongoing struggle. The Livonian War in 1558–83 has traditionally been interpreted in geopolitical terms, asserting that Muscovy was looking for a passage to the Baltic Sea. According to revisionist interpretation, however, the war's origin was Ivan's short-term interest in getting tribute to replenish his treasury. In the last stage of the war, Sweden captured a number of Muscovite strongholds along the coast of the Gulf of Finland.

The Danish conglomerate state during the sixteenth century expanded its territory with the peasant republic of Ditmarschen – divided between King Christian III and his brother in 1559 – and the island of Saaremaa (Ösel). This island was bought in 1558 from the German Teutonic Order and kept until 1645. In 1561 the Swedes installed themselves in Tallinn and in northern Estonia. The architect of Swedish imperialism towards the Baltic was Duke Johan of Finland. The rivalry in the Baltic after the break-up of the German Teutonic Order was one of the causes for the Seven Years War of 1563–70. The war between Frederik II of Denmark and Erik XIV of Sweden ended without loss of land; but the Swedes had to pay a great sum of money for Älvsborg castle north of Göteborg. When King Frederik II died in 1588, his son, the future Christian IV (1588/96–1648), was only 4 years old. An aristocratic regency governed Denmark-Norway with some help from the young king's grandfather, Duke Ulrich of Mecklenburg. Christian IV had to sign a charter in 1596 on becoming king. He was soon heading for a collision with the council to control Danish foreign policy and to build up a Danish *dominium maris Baltici*.

In Sweden kingship was strong from the reign of Gustav Vasa (1521/23–60). The council did not achieve its old strength possessed during the late

medieval period and chose to collaborate with the king. As in Denmark, a great part of the church estates came under the control of the crown and this, together with the administrative reforms, strengthened the royal hand. Sweden was made a hereditary kingdom. When Gustav Vasa died in 1560, he was followed by his eldest son Erik XIV (1560–8). Among Gustav's four sons three were to become kings of Sweden, in opposition to each other. In 1568 Johan, Gustav's second son, took Erik prisoner and became king himself. During his reign he met political and religious competition from his brother Karl, duke of Södermanland, Närke and Värmland. When Johan (1568–92) died, he was followed by his son Sigismund (1592–9), who had already been chosen king of Poland. The Swedish aristocracy allied with Duke Karl and after military victories he was crowned as Karl IX in 1604. The claims from the Polish branch of the Vasa dynasty on the Swedish crown were to last until 1660.

Swedish relations with Denmark had priority, but Russia occupied foreign policy more and more. During the 1550s and again in 1570–95 there was war with Russia with changing theatres of war in Finland, Karelia and Estonia. When Johan was duke of Finland, he had been active in taking over the northern part of Estonia. Later, as king, he also strove to control Russian trade with England via Archangelsk in the north. The city of Helsinki was founded in 1550 as a means of dictating the trade from Narva and Tallinn. The levying of soldiers as well as the construction of fortifications strengthened the character of Finland as a border country to the east. The Finnish nobility became important in Swedish politics.

Although Swedish politics during the second half of the sixteenth century were characterised by conflicts within the royal family, the country was strong enough to wage war against Denmark, Russia and Poland. The strong centralised kingdom, with new power structures and an increased access to resources, altogether made this policy possible.

During the seventeenth century the population of Scandinavia rose from *c.* 1.6 to *c.* 2.6 million. The late medieval crisis in population was relieved by the cultivation of new land. In Norway many old deserted farms were again taken into use. In Swedish Norrland and in Finland expansion took place and new areas were opened for production. The agrarian techniques, however, did not change and so the old forms of agrarian production did not create much surplus. Farming was stamped by market relations – the farmers and peasants being more fully integrated in the European money economy and trade – and increasing prices. This happened early, especially in Denmark, and in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Denmark produced a surplus



of grain while Sweden and Finland were usually self-sufficient. The Danish export of grain to the northern part of the Holy Roman Empire and to Norway increased, and also the demand for meat rose in the German and Dutch cities. The Danish king and the duke of Holstein-Gottorp profited enormously from this trade. The aristocracy started to allocate their estates and bought up peasant land. Many impressive manors and castles were built in Denmark in north-German Renaissance style. The same development took place in the duchies, where landowners especially from Holstein came into possession of great capital. The *Kieler Umschlag* developed into an international centre of finance. Rich peasants in the duchies also profited from the excellent trading conditions. In the rest of Scandinavia production mainly rested on the peasant farms. The Swedish high nobility also profited, but most of them lacked the possibilities for allocating their estates according to the Danish model. In Sweden and Finland it was mainly the peasants, and not the nobles, who drove agricultural expansion.

In Norway the timber trade with the Netherlands and England expanded enormously after the sixteenth century and led to conflicts between peasants and civic tradesmen. In addition the traditional fish trade survived there and also in Iceland. The crown engaged in this trade. Mining became important in Norway, but not as much as in Sweden. The Sala silver mine was very profitable, and Gustav Vasa invited German experts to Sweden in order to modernise the production. At the end of the sixteenth century Swedish production of iron and copper rose steeply. The importance of copper as a commodity with exchange-value is well known. The monopoly on copper production enabled the crown to turn Swedish coinage, which had not been accepted abroad, into an internationally acceptable medium of exchange. With Dutch investment there was also gun production, important to the Swedish military *perpetuum mobile*. From Sweden and Finland timber products were exported to Western Europe. The main tar-burning areas were in Finnish Ostrobothnia and Karjala (Karelia). Finland was a major supplier of tar to the Royal Navy. There were also a number of ironworks in Finland. A third of the workers were of German and Walloon origin.

As a consequence of rising exports from Scandinavia, native traders were more and more involved in international commerce encouraged by their governments. Stockholm and København became the leading trade centres. In Sweden-Finland the country people were obliged to deliver their products to the 'uptowns' (*uppstäder*), i. e. towns endowed with the right to act as middlemen between the countryside and the towns with the monopoly on foreign trade. Domestic trade was restricted to a vertical route between rural production and foreign consumers, and between European producers

and domestic consumers, with few middlemen operating in between. The main issue for the crown was to make taxation possible at each level of this system, even if the main structure of the system still followed a medieval formula. The important difference was the way in which it was implemented in the seventeenth century. The early Vasas of the sixteenth century were often unrealistic in their assessments of the capability of the crown to effect a royal mandate on the Swedish market; similarly limited was their ability to understand the nature of the Swedish economy. This economy can be viewed as a shortage economy with a scarcity of capital. These characteristics limited the crown's freedom of action regarding economic policy. In spite of this, large-scale projects with the aim of reforming the Swedish market were launched in the sixteenth century, as were laws aimed at regulating trade, production and economic behaviour. Most laws and projects were, however, never realised. This pattern was to be changed during the reign of Gustav II Adolf (1611–32) and his chancellor Axel Oxenstierna from the second decade of the seventeenth century. Now the approach became more pragmatic, but only when it came to choosing the means to acquire a non-negotiable objective: to establish a taxable market and preferably a market that was growing as well.

As the Swedish crown strove from the second half of the seventeenth century to get more control of the domestic trade, it also developed its taxation. When transforming the Swedish market into a taxable shape, the government had to deal with four different groups of market participants: the country people, the uptown burghers, the burghers of the staple towns and the foreign merchants. The attitude towards each of these four groups varied considerably. They constituted a hierarchy where the peasants formed the base and the merchants the top. The crown's freedom of action so far as the peasants were concerned was limited because major intervention could lower production. The same limitation was present at the top of the hierarchy. If the custom duties on goods brought to Sweden were increased, the foreign ships were likely to reduce the number of their visits or to avoid Swedish ports completely. The uptowns were thus the big losers of the tax-oriented staple-town system of the seventeenth century. The merchants of the uptowns repeatedly asked for the privilege to ship their goods abroad, but the Swedish government refused and even decreased the existing limited rights to foreign trade.

All in all, the connection of the Swedish economy to the European economy was to be established in the Swedish staples. The former view of Swedish integration into Europe was that it took place on a broad front

during the seventeenth century. More recent research has, however, documented that this connection happened with the help of the crown and a very small number of financiers. A majority of the merchants of the Swedish staples continued to trade with the same ports as their ancestors had done since the late Middle Ages. One example of Swedish participation in the process of integration on the European market was the Dutch import of wood from Stockholm's hinterland, which from the 1640s escalated to such an extent that the prices rose substantially in Stockholm. The dominance of the Swedish capital and other *stapelstäder* was to last until 1766, when the Finnish clergyman and politician Anders Chydenius successfully put up arguments against this old system in the *riksdag*.

International commercial relations between Scandinavia and Western Europe were increasingly influenced by monetary policy, bullion flows and credit instruments. Trade led also to regular migrations that affected not only art and science but also language and lifestyle in Scandinavia. Traditionally, the Germans had settled in the major towns. Step by step came other foreigners, like the English, Scots and, above all, the Dutch.

Both Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland were, from the sixteenth and especially the seventeenth centuries, organised like other Western European power states. In these countries society was built up in order to wage enduring wars with other powers and thus enormous sums of money were spent on armies and navies. The state acquired a monopoly on the use of violence and this development promoted administrative and political centralisation, usually to the benefit of the princely ruler. European constitutional law became increasingly concerned with justifying this concentration of power. These developments favoured large centralised states, and conversely the expansion of the armed forces depended on the size and wealth of the society and the government's ability to mobilise its resources. Military innovations and new taxation systems promoted the development of the state and fiscal and social structures.

The power struggle between Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland for *dominium maris Baltici* ceased to be a somewhat balanced conflict and became a fight for survival for Denmark. This change was a result of the countries' involvement in the Thirty Years War. Their rivalry became internationalised and Denmark's security was undermined by the presence of Swedish troops during the 1630s to the south of the Danish border. Denmark's involvement in the war between 1625 and 1629 revealed the vulnerability of the southern flank. Prestige lost in 1629 at the Peace of Lübeck and violations of Danish territory made it necessary to strengthen the country's defences.

In the early modern period Denmark and Sweden saw a wave of urbanisation while in Norway and Finland only a few new towns were founded. Most of them were in the coastal areas. Their populations were relatively small but in administration, trade, cultural and religious life they played a considerable role. Yet most of the people lived in the countryside. The social structure of rural Scandinavia was different from that of most of the rest of Europe. The agrarian population were personally free legally and in practice. In the field of comparative agricultural history it has been shown that while Danish large-scale farming until the late seventeenth century remained rentier estates based upon production and sale, Swedish agriculture could hardly sustain national consumption while in the seventeenth century lords rented out land, and used tenant labour for extensive building activities. After all, Danish society remained affluent until the advent of the tax state, able to sustain an urban population of some 20 per cent, Sweden only some 10 per cent.

Danish society was marked by its mainly agrarian character, which made the country sensitive to international economic developments and fluctuations. Denmark was involved in six wars in the seventeenth century. To a great extent, the evolution of the Danish power state reveals a recognition of a military need for greater security, more efficient armed forces, and the social, administrative, political and economic consequences of this process of adjustment, including the disparity between the growth of the army and of available resources. The Danish tax state was established between 1630 and 1680 at the latest.

There was broad agreement between the king and the council about Denmark's military requirements and the need to uphold the country's prestige. The development of the power state in Denmark manifested features that were common to Europe, but the military and administrative expansion of the state and the mobilisation of the economic resources were limited by the political and social structure inseparable from the nobility's dominant social position. The reaction from some of the estates in the 1630s and 1640s, provoked by frequent extraordinary taxation and economic depression and combined with King Christian IV's adventurous foreign policy, encouraged the council to show restraint in imposing further taxation and reinforced its opposition to the use of professional soldiers.

The practical maxim *pecunia nervus rerum* ('money is the nerve of all things') was trusted by the Scandinavian governments. When the existence of the Danish state was threatened in the late 1650s, the councillor Gunde Rosenkrantz proposed that all the country's resources should be mobilised

and that everyone, regardless of privilege, should contribute financially. This view was realised by the introduction of absolutism in 1660, which made it possible to administer and to finance the state's activities in a new way. Now it became possible to tax social groups which had previously been untouched and to collect tax revenue more efficiently. The military economic burden was, however, too heavy for the state to sustain. The problem was partially solved by foreign subsidies. In 1584 King Frederik II had regarded the navy as Denmark's best defence. In the 1660s Hannibal Sehested, the minister of finance, recommended the expansion of the navy in order to make Denmark an attractive ally. It was to last until 1689, when the military needs of Denmark were reduced according to the Treaty of Altona. It was, however, only with the establishment of cavalry farmsteads, the development of a Danish *indelningsverk* system and the treasury report of 1685, which proposed that this system should be extended in order to reduce the army's dependence on taxation, that an attempt was made to adapt military expenditure to the realistic capacities of the state.

Sweden's development towards a centralised power state had started during the reign of Gustav Vasa and continued under his sons. As Swedish expansion reached areas further south and westwards along the Baltic coast, the war was carried on in regions which were integrated into the world economy. As a consequence, Swedish military operations became increasingly dependent on coinage in order to hire mercenaries from the international market.

Sweden's financial system had been in harmony in the sixteenth century, which was dominated by use-value; this was not the case in the seventeenth century. Gustav II Adolf (1611–32) and Axel Oxenstierna tried to remove the discrepancy between an economy oriented towards use-value and the growing need for exchange-value by pumping great resources into mining and manufacturing. However, it became impossible for the Swedish state to wait until transactions were finished, and thus Sweden soon after 1630 started to borrow money against future revenue. This brought Swedish practice into line with the way in which warfare was financed on the Continent, bankers providing the money in the short term and debts being accumulated for the future. This system of finance made the problems Sweden faced when peace was concluded acute: creditors and soldiers had to be paid and the armies disbanded. Despite all the problems of financing both war and peace, this system survived until 1675, when for the first time Swedish territory provided the theatre of operations and new solutions had to be found.

The solution adopted by Karl XI (1660–97) to maintain the army was the *indelningsverk* from the 1680s, which seemed well suited to meet the needs of

the armed forces in the light of Sweden's experiences during the Scanian War. This system laid a solid ground for his son Karl XII (1697–1718) and during the Great Northern War.

The development of the Swedish power state took place especially in the periods c. 1620–40 and c. 1680–1720. Characteristic for these two phases was that the whole society was subordinated to the needs of the 'military state'. During the reign of Gustav II Adolf this was secured through a centralisation and a concentration of power in the hands of the king. This was achieved partly because of the king's great personal authority and partly through a deliberate reorganisation of existing structures of control and administration and the creation of new ones. During the reign of Karl XI old structures were replaced by new ones and there arose an all-embracing military and civil bureaucracy headed by the king. The difference between the two periods was that Gustav II Adolf's 'military state' was an instrument of conquest and war, but Karl XI's was designed for defence and preparedness for war. Under Gustav II Adolf, Sweden became committed to Continental warfare and Swedish society was organised to meet these needs. The period from c. 1640 up to c. 1680 was characterised by a growing tension between the system devised to finance and procure resources for Continental warfare and the insufficiency of domestic resources for maintaining Sweden's defences in peacetime. A solution to this problem presupposed a redistribution of wealth. This did not happen until the reign of Karl XI, when the 'military state' was reorganised with the aim of maintaining on Swedish territory a large standing army and a body of naval seamen even in peacetime without ruining the country. The new system also meant that there was no dualism between civil and military life.

The *theatrum Europaeum* revealed ever-changing protagonists in a large group of actors. When the Peace of Westphalia (1648) – together with the Pyrenees Peace (1659) and the Oliva Peace (1660) – overcame, through international law, the principle of unity of diversity, Europe including Scandinavia enacted a ballet of nations. The imperial expansion of Sweden in particular has been the object of much scholarly debate. Some have argued that the expansion was caused by political and military factors, others that the expansion was economically motivated in order to control the trade between Russia and Western Europe. Also the interests of the aristocracy have been stressed by some historians. The wars with various enemies had, however, all one common goal: to control Baltic trade. A combination of these interpretations thus seems appropriate, because the conquered territories were further developed by the economic plans. With the peace treaties of

København, Oliva and Kardin in 1660–1 Sweden reached its greatest territorial size in her expansive imperial development. The strategy of the Swedish government was from now on to uphold the status quo and friendly relations with the Holy Roman Empire, but because of alliances with France, the country was forced into new wars.

As was the case in Denmark in 1660, the introduction of absolutism in Sweden c. 1680 took place after a war – in this instance against Denmark-Norway and Brandenburg in 1675–9. Swedish state power and administration now became more effective. Other economic, administrative and juridical reforms were made during the reigns of Karl XI and Karl XII. The value of the reduction of noble estates to the crown has been estimated at 2 million silver coins in 1697, when Karl XII ascended the throne. Swedish nobility possessed in c. 1700 one-third of the farmsteads; fifty years earlier it had had two-thirds. This development improved the finances of the state and, in the long run, strengthened the social and political role of the peasants too.

In England, France and later also in Spain and Scandinavia, the royal party succeeded early on in eliminating competition for royal power. The common feature in Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland was the establishment of a governmental apparatus, centrally and locally. In Denmark the start of bureaucratisation – in Max Weber's sense – took place only after 1660, just as has been stressed in the case of Sweden, though under aristocratic auspices. Danish absolutism introduced a hereditary principle and the *Lex Regia* from 1665 was the most absolutistic constitution of all the European constitutions of the time. The administration was renewed after the Swedish model, and the old nobility was gradually pushed aside. The titles of counts and barons were introduced in 1671. In Denmark and Norway absolutism generally meant the breakdown of the old administrative system. Thus the council was abolished and replaced by a new *conceil*. The old *lensmænd* were further replaced by officials after a system used in the Holy Roman Empire and in Sweden. This new system was to cover Denmark, Norway, Iceland, the Føroyar and the royal parts of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. A royal court was founded in 1661 in København, in 1683 a law for Denmark was published and in 1688 for Norway. In order to strengthen the Danish finances a list of all 750 estates was drawn up in 1688. The crown possessed 24 per cent of the value of the soil, while the few free peasants had 1.5 per cent of the total tax value. In Sweden and its provinces lists were made out in 1699–1709.

Danish absolutism was from the very beginning a royal personal absolutism, but moved during the eighteenth century towards a bureaucratic form. After the death of Frederik IV in 1730 it was not possible for kings to control

all administrative cases in detail. Thus the ministers of the administration and the personal councillors to the king became more and more engaged in state affairs.

During the eighteenth century the Danish king ruled his territories as an enlightened ruler, whereas in Sweden-Finland during the Age of Liberty, *Frihetstiden* (1720–72) political power was mainly exercised by two proto-parties at the *riksdag* thus effectively limiting the political role of the king. The Norwegian constitution of 1814 introduced constitutional monarchy followed in 1849 by the first Danish democratic constitution. In 1866 a modernisation of the Swedish parliament took place, changing the old four-estate *riksdag* into a modern two-chamber system.

State power manifested itself in the Scandinavian societies via taxes and conscriptions during the seventeenth century. The rural inhabitants were further controlled and tied to the state through laws and moral control. Severe punishment was normal. Witchcraft flourished during the seventeenth century. In Finland and Iceland several men were convicted of witchcraft.

During the seventeenth century Scandinavia generally saw the introduction of new elites. The old nobility had formed a closed group with an exclusive ideology, but it was necessary to ennoble others in order to secure members belonging to the aristocratic estate. The Danish and Swedish crowns often ennobled officials. In Sweden there was a vast number of ennoblements. The Swedish and Finnish aristocracy expanded enormously during the seventeenth century and a new class of officers and officials with aristocratic privileges became a politically important group. Also, the old nobility changed into a nobility of service. In Norway the aristocratic group in society was still very small. Norwegian tradesmen and officials were often recruited from Denmark, the duchies, the Holy Roman Empire or from the Netherlands. Rich officials and burghers in Norway invested in mining and in the export of timber. The lifestyle on the Continent was imitated by many and French and German became common languages among nobles in Scandinavia. As in some other European countries, even during economic recession and demographic decline, arts and literature managed to survive in Denmark and Sweden because of wealthy Maecenases. The survival of humanities in general depended partly upon the sponsorship of aristocratic interest.

The development of a new aristocratic elite of officials demanded education. In Sweden new schools and gymnasiums were constructed, the University of Uppsala was enlarged and new universities were founded in other parts of the conglomerate state: Tartu (Dorpat) in 1632, Turku (Åbo) in



1640, Lund in 1668. The University of Greifswald, founded in 1456 in Swedish Pomerania, belonged to the Swedish realm from 1648 until 1815. Clergymen and civil servants were now educated at the universities. Many Danish and Swedish noblemen went on a grand tour to Europe, returning home with new ideas and inspiration from the Continent.

The Enlightenment also spread in Scandinavia. The eighteenth century witnessed the publication of more printed books and texts than in the centuries before. The learned societies and academics, which were manifestations of a need for new knowledge and also of an incipient public sphere, were not established until the middle of the eighteenth century. Other societies were also founded and weekly and daily newspapers spread from the capital cities to various social groups in the countryside. Book-printing expanded and the number of bookshops and travelling booksellers grew; broadsheets and single prints became popular among common people. Also salons and clubs created public rooms for public discussions. Civic groups established a public sphere as in Europe. Participation was not only the privilege of a small social elite; more participants became involved in debate and slowly changed the whole political culture. More and more people learned to read and write. Thanks to the popular education by the Lutheran church, most Scandinavians were able to read at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The Great Northern War (1700–20/21) ended the imperial epoch in Sweden. The following years were peaceful both for Sweden-Finland and for Denmark-Norway. The Age of Liberty in Sweden and Finland (1719–72) ended absolutism. It was a period of parliamentary rule when the *riksdag* with its four estates governed finances, legislation and foreign policy. The king was more or less reduced to a symbolic figure with some influence over state appointments. A political culture with social networks developed within the framework of the parliamentary system, which guided political action both formally and informally. The Swedish *riksdag* saw the formation of two proto-parties, characterised by the wearing of hats and caps. The confrontation between the aristocratic members of the *riksdag* and the non-nobles started in 1719 and became violent in 1723, but soon the gap between the groups within the society of estates decreased. This happened largely because of the development within two areas: non-nobles advanced in service without ennoblement, and many aristocratic estates went into non-noble hands. For the levelling of the social ranks in Sweden the years 1730–60 are of special importance.

An aristocratic reaction followed in 1762 and sharpened the contrasts between the estates. The Act of Freedom of the Press of 1766, inaugurated

by the Finnish clergyman and politician Anders Chydenius, opened possibilities for creating public opinion. The aristocracy was strongly attacked in publications demanding the abolition of noble privileges. The Age of Liberty ended in 1772. The coup d'état by Gustav III reshaped the strong political position of the Swedish king. In Denmark the short period of enlightened reforms in 1769–72 by the German Johann Friedrich Struensee was followed by a return of the political role of the royal court and of conservative politicians.

The fundamental shift during the Age of Liberty in Sweden seems to have taken place in the late 1750s and not in 1765–6. In an international comparison, the political practices in Sweden during the Age of Liberty show many similarities to other parliamentary systems in Europe. Social exchange and patronage as tools for gaining political support were common everywhere. The political importance of the public sphere was increasing in several European countries especially in the second half of the eighteenth century. There was an increase of the printed word as well as in the number of coffee houses. England was in many ways the leading country in this respect. The Seven Years War in 1756–63 and the French Revolution played a vital role in the growth of public discussion about different economic and political conditions. This was crucial for the rise of political ideas and of groups supporting the ideas of freedom and liberty. As a consequence, there were extensive mobilisation activities among the public. Many of the groups demanding changes, however, lacked influence and connections to the political elite. What is unique in the Swedish example is that these groups managed to be heard by the *riksdag*.

King Gustav III restored royal autocracy and ensured the position of the aristocracy. Over the years he met growing resistance from the aristocracy, but was supported after a war with Russia in 1788–9 by the *riksdag*, where royal authority was strengthened at the same time as decisive improvements to the social standing of the non-noble estates were confirmed. A radical aristocratic opposition had the king assassinated in 1792 at the Opera House in Stockholm. His son, later Gustav IV Adolf, followed him on the throne, but was not to rule for many years. During the month of March 1809 he was exiled as the result of the loss of Finland to Russia. After the death in 1810 of the Danish Prince Christian August, who had been adopted as heir to the Swedish throne, the French Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte was elected as crown prince and adopted by Karl XIII. With Karl XIV Johan (1818–44) a new dynasty in Sweden came into power.

The new Swedish Crown Prince Karl Johan participated in the battle of Leipzig in October 1813 against Napoleon. He had long had plans for getting

Norway as compensation for Finland and soon with his army moved towards the Danish duchies, where the Peace of Kiel was concluded on 14 January 1814. Norway was lost by Denmark and was to form a personal union with Sweden. The island of Helgoland was handed over to England, but Greenland, Iceland and the Føroyar stayed under the Danish crown. The struggle for Norway under the leadership of the Danish Prince Christian Frederik and other prominent Norwegians was to last until October 1814 securing among other things the democratic constitution of Eidsvold on 17 May 1814.

In Sweden and Finland, the forms assumed by local government, which reflected in many respects the way in which the towns and the countryside were organised in social, economic and political terms, had long existed, but it was only in the 1830s and 1840s that such local institutions were legalised in Denmark and Norway. If we speak of the transformation of subjects into citizens as central to the overall nation-building process, the changes which affected local communities, especially the towns, can be captured by reference to the transition from municipalities of burghers to municipalities of inhabitants.

Religious revivalism was not the same in Nordic countries. Grundtvig formulated his ideas about the complete human being while Denmark was still an absolutist state, and once civic freedom had become a reality, it was natural that a 'broad people's church' should be developed which still contains different shades of opinion. The same was true of Norway. The state church in Finland was relatively broad in its outlook and able to integrate individuals with different views. The authorities preferred that religious rebirth should occur within the sphere they controlled rather than with separatist free churches. Developments in Sweden were characterised by the establishment of a free church, even if there was also a revivalist movement in which laymen played an important role within the state church.

The period from the Congress of Vienna (1814–15) up to the Paris commune (1870) saw in Scandinavia the coming of a new economic order. In both towns and the countryside the economy started to change its old static nature, which had been characteristic for a very long time.

The agricultural revolution had started in Scandinavia around the middle of the eighteenth century as a consequence of the Enlightenment and rationalistic principles. With the help of state legislation on enclosure and land distribution, the old cultural landscape in the Nordic countries slowly changed, since enclosure required the relocation of the farmers and their dwellings from the old village or hamlet to be nearer the tilled land. Better communications in the form of roads and canals and the building of railways

helped to build up industrial activity and promote exports. Old leading trading houses were often transformed into industrial enterprises: capital and skills were accumulated from foreign trade, and shipping was applied in expanding new areas of business and production. A special business class developed, including large-scale entrepreneurs. Generally improved financing and the emergence of a capital market and the liberalisation of production paved the way for industrial concentration.

The opening of the British market linked Scandinavia to international trade. Agricultural production derived great benefit from the new export opportunities which made themselves felt from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, not least because of the dismantling of British protectionism. The removal of these obstacles to free trade created good prospects in the long run for the export of timber products. Norway had good transportation links to the rest of Europe, but timber export ultimately became just as important to Sweden and Finland, where the opening of the Saimaa Canal, which reached the sea at Viipuri (Viborg), in 1856 made it possible to exploit the vast timber resources of the interior. The Swedish iron industry expanded once the British Bessemer method (1856) was adopted in the middle of the nineteenth century.

In Scandinavia a process of social differentiation was generally going on among the peasants in the countryside; the same was the case within other groups in society. In the cities social differentiation also increased. Rich and wealthy merchants were helped by the improved trading conditions. It was from this elite that the leading magistrates were chosen. In this way an elite developed among the burghers as on the Continent. They had interests in textiles and manufactures and imitated an aristocratic lifestyle. Such groups were to be found especially in Stockholm, Göteborg and in København but also in Bergen, Trondheim, Kristiania, Helsinki and Turku.

During the eighteenth century new groups in society came into existence. They did not belong to the old bourgeoisie, nor to the ranks of the aristocracy. During the seventeenth century very many officials and officers had been ennobled. During the eighteenth century many men of low social status secured middle-ranking posts, but they were no longer always ennobled. Since the introduction of absolutism in Denmark-Norway, it was no longer necessary to belong to the noble group in order to obtain high official posts or to possess tax-privileged estates. An important motive for ennoblement had disappeared. The new groups in Scandinavian societies point towards the emergence of a new middle class. These developments paved the way for the dissolution of the old society of estates and the creation of a class-based society during the nineteenth century.

It is characteristic of the Scandinavian countries, as elsewhere in Europe during the nineteenth century, that social reaction took place at different levels. 'Public opinion' generally spread at the same time as the new modern society was shaped. State-authorized societies were founded and later they were followed by voluntary associations among the lower social groups. The period after the revolution of 1848 generally created a form of liberalism in Scandinavia which was highly defensive compared with earlier periods. From the 1860s onwards, a spirit of consensus was dominant in the Nordic countries. Popular mass organisations started to emerge and also political parties and organisations.

The ongoing changes in Scandinavian society had effects on everyday life. The standard of living generally saw improvements and also the rise of bourgeois urban lifestyles. Old social relations and collective traditions changed into a society of different classes. Popular and secondary schools as well as folk high schools were founded, and also the universities underwent an important transition with more scholarly disciplines being studied. Architecture and art followed international trends, but had also their own profiles in all the Nordic countries. This goes for literature too.

Denmark declined from a conglomerate state to a small nation state. The question about Schleswig, the Danish language and the liberal constitution from 1849 and also the existence of engaged national movements supported the change from state and dynasty to people and community. Finland became in 1809 a grand duchy under the leadership of the Russian tsar. This was a positive change in the country's history. During the nineteenth century it developed politically, culturally, socially and economically to become, in 1917, an independent nation state. After 1918 Iceland had only the king and foreign policy in common with Denmark. In 1944 the country finally became independent.

Also Norway underwent changes and modernisation during the personal union with Sweden from 1814. The national Norwegian culture was, as in Finland, consolidated and the development of institutions, infrastructure, and communications secured. The national idea was not especially prominent in Sweden, but did not leave the country unaffected. Also there it is possible to discern a nation-building process, which took speed after 1870. During the period from the Swedish-Russian war (1808–9) up to 1870 an embryonic sense of Swedish national identity began to spread also in rural society. Cultural nationalism too provided Sweden with a collective memory as a nation state.

The history of Scandinavia from *c.* 1520 to 1870 can be characterised by growing cultural and social interaction and intensified political-economic

relations with the leading European powers during the early modern period. The development went from the two conglomerate states, Denmark-Norway and Sweden-Finland, to units later to become nation states: Norway, Finland and Iceland.

During the period discussed in this book a growing modernisation and integration with Western Europe took place. The expanding early modern international Baltic trade brought political, diplomatic, economic and cultural attention towards Scandinavia. Migration and transfer of ideas took place first and foremost from the Holy Roman Empire and the Netherlands, and later also from England and France.

## Select bibliography: primary sources, general surveys and secondary works

Note on alphabetisation: the order of works listed below follows the Scandinavian alphabet, with æ/ä, ø/ö, å and Ð coming at the end of the alphabet.

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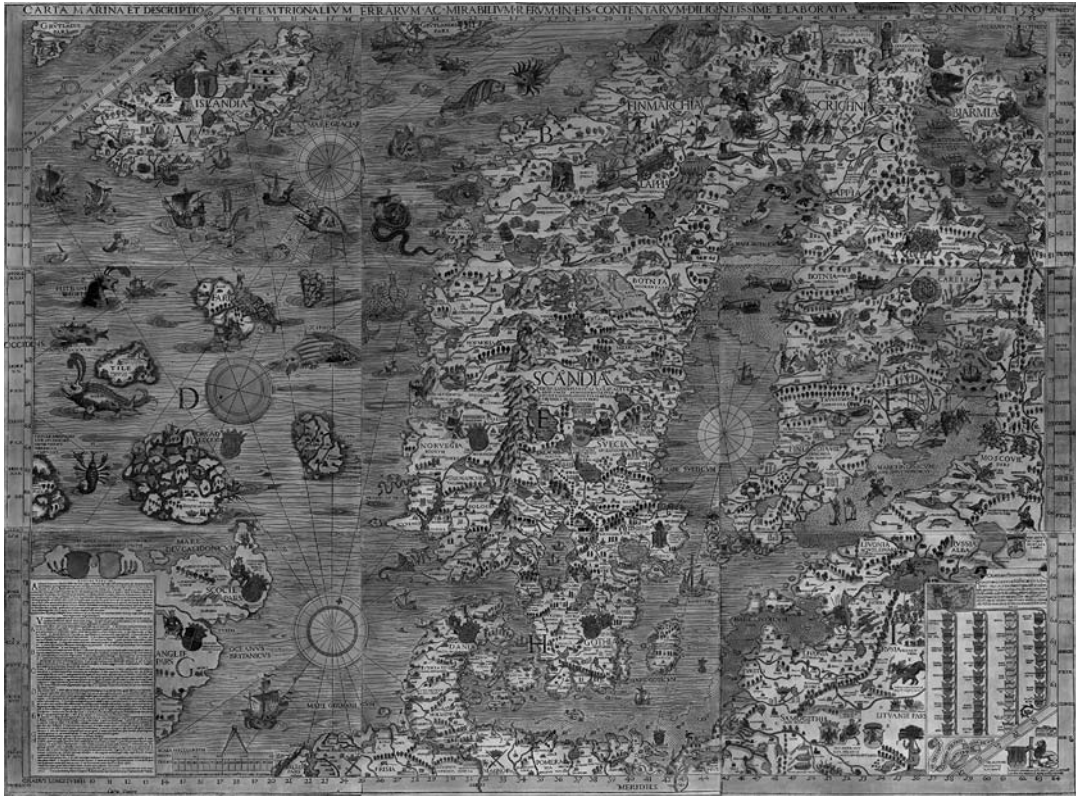
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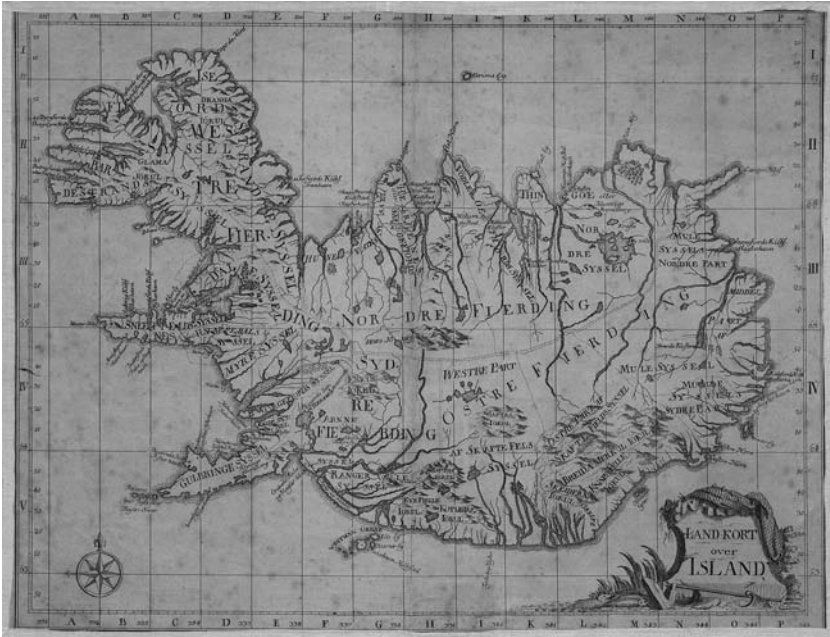
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1 Carta marina. A wall map of Scandinavia created in 1539 by Olaus Magnus (1490–1557). Public domain.



2 Land-Kort over Island. Map of Iceland, 1752 by Niels Horrebow (1712–60). © National and University Library of Iceland.



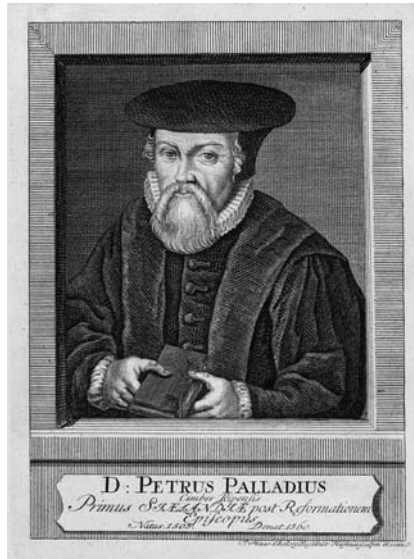
3 Christian II of Denmark (1485–1559) in *The New Testament* by Hans Mikkelsen (†1532), 1523. Woodcut, 130 x 85 mm. © Kings College, London.



4 King Christian III (1503–1559), 1550, painting by Jakob Binck († c. 1569). Courtesy of the Museum of Danish National History at Frederiksborg Castle, Hillerød.



5 King Gustav I Vasa of Sweden (c. 1496–1560), 1542, painting by Jakob Binck († c. 1569). Courtesy of Uppsala University Library.



6 Peder Palladius (1503–1560), Lutheran bishop in Denmark immediately after the Reformation. He made visitations of the parishes and published many books. Courtesy of the Royal Library, København.



7 Statue of the Swedish reformer Olaus Petri (1493–1551) by Theodor Lundberg in front of the Cathedral of Stockholm. Public Domain.



8 Statue of Mikael Agricola (1510–57), bishop of Turku (Åbo), Finnish reformer and founder of literary Finnish. The statue appears in Helsinki Lutheran Cathedral and was sculpted by Ville Vallgren in 1887. Public Domain.



9 Protestant worship, Church of Horslunde, Denmark. Courtesy of the National museum of Denmark, København.



10 View on the Sound depicted in Braun and Hogenberg's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* (published between 1572–1617). Courtesy of Lund University Library.



11 Portrait of King Christian IV of Denmark (1577–1648) by Pieter Isaacsz (1569–1625), c. 1611–16. Courtesy of the Museum of Danish National History at Frederiksborg Slot, Hillerød.



12 King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden (1594–1632), painting by Matthäus Merian the Elder (1593–1650). Photo Samuel Uhrdin, Skoklosters slott, Sweden.



13 The Swedish Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna (1583–1654), 1635, painting by Michiel Janszoon van Miereveld (1567–1641). © National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.



14 Christian IV of Denmark on the ship *Trefoldigheden* in the battle of Kolberger-Heide, 1644, 1866, painting by Vilhelm Marstrand (1810–73). © 2014 Sprogmuuseum.





15 Queen Kristina of Sweden (1626–89) on Horseback, 1653, painting by Sebastien Bourdon (1616–71). © Prado, Madrid, Spain / Bridgeman Images



16 King Karl X Gustav (1622–60), 1652, painting by Sebastien Bourdon (1616–71). © National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.



17 Portrait of Frederik III (1609–70) King of Denmark 1660, painting by A. Wuchter.  
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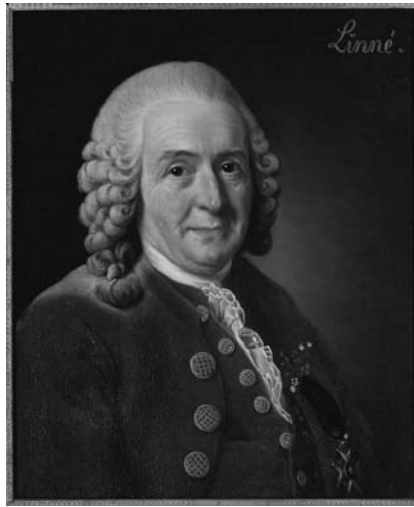
18 The introduction of absolutism. The Hereditary Homage, København, 1660. Painting  
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19 The Swedish King Karl XII (1682–1718). Painting by David von Krafft after an original by Johan David Swartz. © National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.



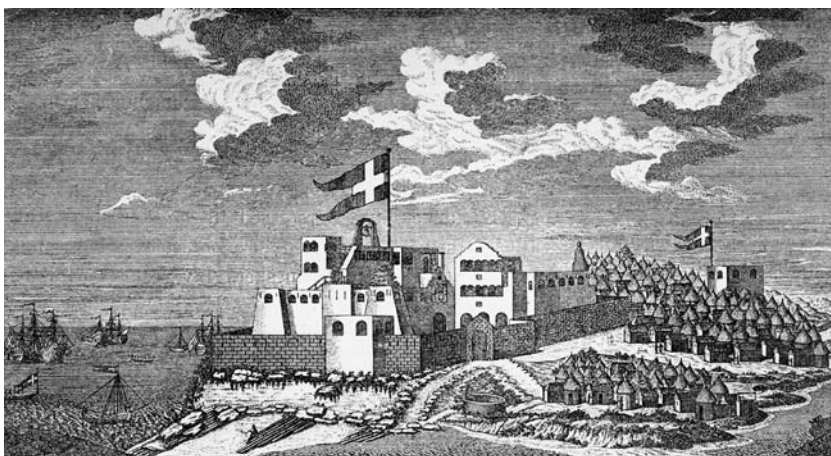
20 The Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546–1601). Courtesy of Lund University Library.



21 Portrait of Carl von Linné (1707–78), 1775, painting by Alexander Roslin. © National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.



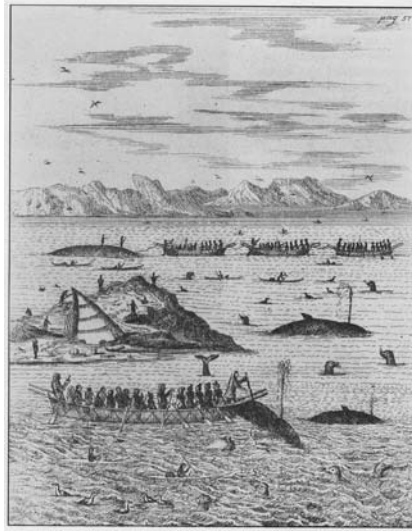
22 Engraving by the Swedish artist Thomas Campanius Holm, 1702. The engraving, depicts a friendly exchange between local Indians and traders in New Sweden, on the Delaware river. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



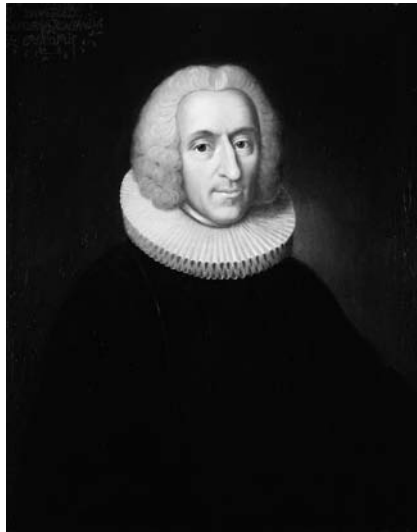
23 Danish colonial Fort Christiansborg (now Osu Castle), Accra, Ghana as it was in 1760, from *Afrika, dets Opdagelse, Erobring og Kolonisation*, published 1901. © Danish School (20th century) / Private Collection / Ken Welsh / Bridgeman Images.



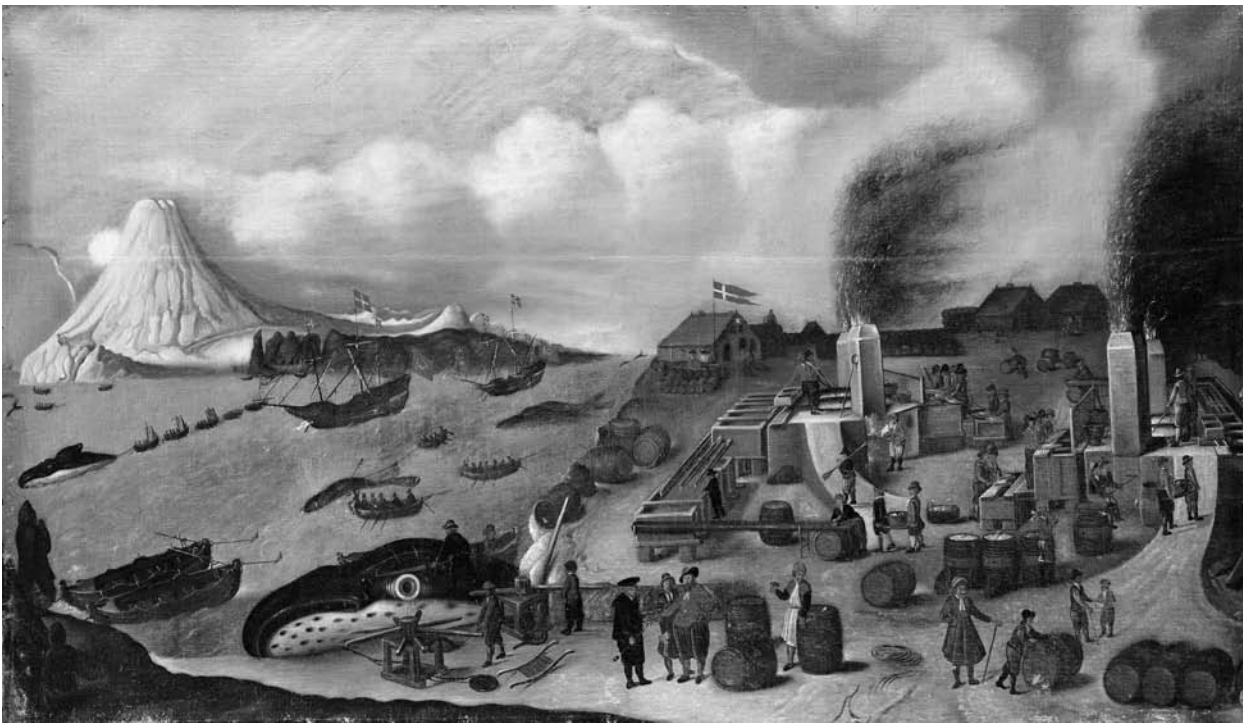
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25 Motive from Greenland, 1741 by Hans Egede (1686–1758). Courtesy of the Royal Library, København.



26 Hans Egede (1686–1758), Greenland's apostle. Painting from 1740/1747 by Johan Hörner (1711–63). Courtesy of the Museum of Danish National History at Frederiksborg Slot, Hillerød.



27 Danish whaling station on Svalbard, 1634, unknown artist. Courtesy of Skoklosters slott, Sweden.



28 City of Bergen, Norway, 1803. Courtesy of the Royal Library, København.



29 The coronation of King Gustav III of Sweden 1772, c. 1789, painting – incomplete, Carl Gustav Pilo (1711–93). © National Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.





30 Oil painting of Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt (1757–1814), a Finnish and Swedish courtier and diplomat. Councillor of Gustav III of Sweden and later of Alexander I of Russia. He was of great importance for securing the autonomy of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Painting from 1799/1801 by Josef Grassi (1757–1838). Photograph by Markku Haverinen 2009.

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31 Medieval castle in Turku (Åbo), Finland/ Turun linna. The castle is the largest surviving medieval building in Finland from the late thirteenth century. © Mikhail Olykainen / Shutterstock.com.



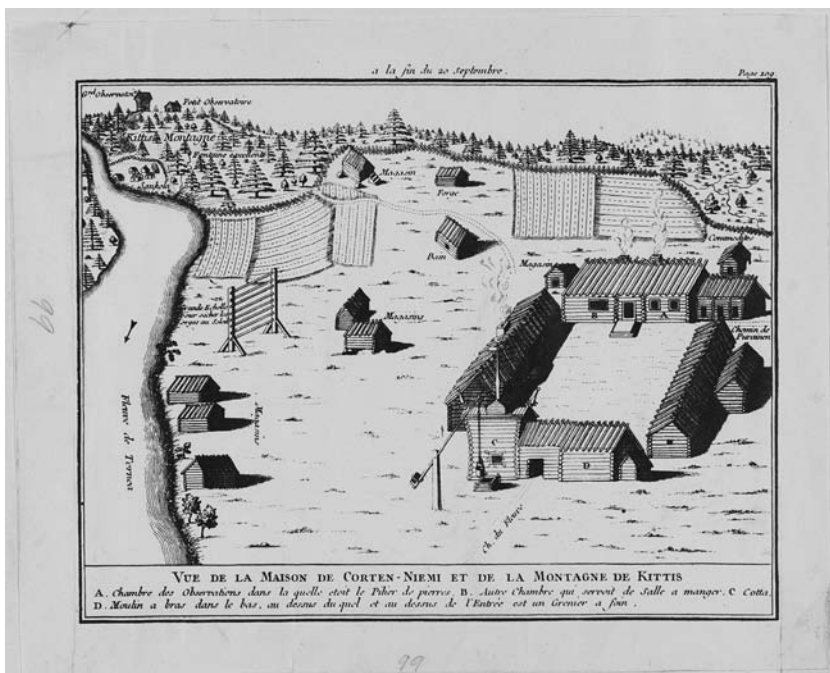
32 Børsen (stock exchange), famous building on Slotsholmen in central København, Denmark. © Jorisvo / Shutterstock.com.



33 View of Stockholm's Royal Palace in the old city (Gamla Stan). © JeniFoto / Shutterstock.com.



34 Louhisaari (Villnäs) manor house, a mansion in south-west Finland in late Renaissance style, 1655. © Aivar Mikko / Alamy.



35 Line drawing of a Finnish peasant farm in Pello, Finnish Lapland. © Reginald Outhier, *Journal d'un voyage au Nord en 1736 et 1737* (Paris, 1744).



36 Pulpit of historic Tornio (Torneå) church in Finnish Lapland, 1696. © Claudine van Massenhove / Shutterstock.com.



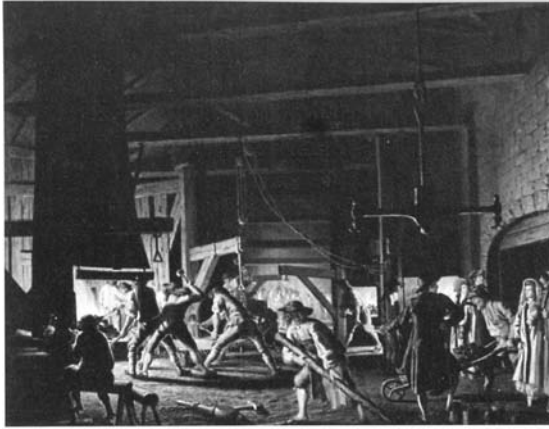
37 Anders Chydenius (1729–1803), famous Finnish clergyman and member of the *riksdag*. He was the leading Nordic exponent of economic liberalism, freedom of speech and religion. Painting from 1770 by P. Fjällström (1719–90). © University of Jyväskylä / Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius.



38 The Danish Crown Prince Frederik VI in front of the Liberty obelisk in København. Painting 1839 by Christoffer-Wilhelm Eckersberg (1783–1853). © The Museum of National History on Frederiksborg Slot.



39 Line drawing of tar production in Pohjanmaa (Österbotten), Finland. Copper engraving, I.H.S. From Carl Fredrik Mennander & Eric Juvelius, *Tiärtlwärcckningen i Österbotn*, 1747, Åbo (1752).



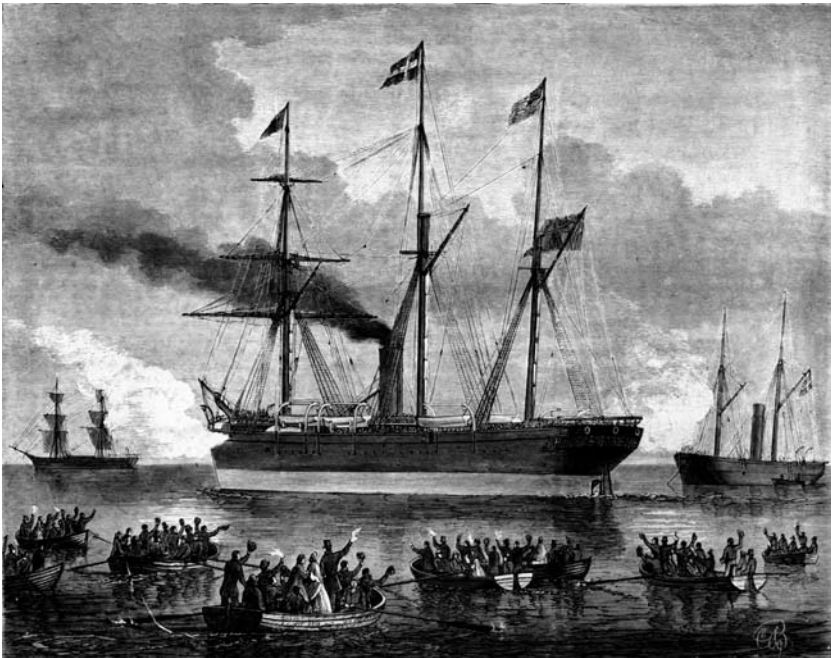
40 Early industry in Sweden. Painting by Pehr Hilleström (1732–1816), 1782.  
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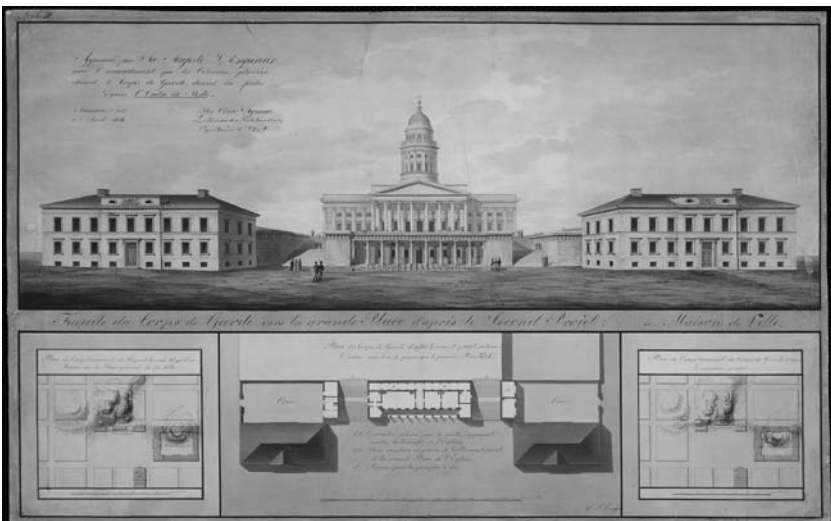
41 Sami people. Photo by Karolina Kristensson. © Nordiska Museet.



42 The Haugians. Painting by Adolf Tidemand (1814–76), 1852. © The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo.



43 Immigration to North America from København 1866 (aboard the SS Ottawa).  
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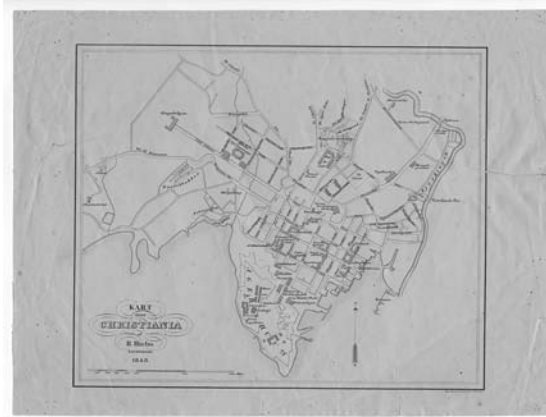


44 The new centre of Helsinki. Drawing by the German architect Carl Ludwig Engel  
 (1778–1840), 1818. © The National Archives, Finland.





45 The interior of the National Library in Helsinki, by Carl Ludwig Engel, 1840. Photo by Sanna Järvinen. © The National Library of Finland.



46 Map of Kristiania, Oslo in 1848. © Uppsala University Library.



47 The English bombardment of København 1807. Painting by Christian August Lorentzen (1749–1828), 1807. © Museum of København.



48 View of Suomenlinna (Sveaborg) castle and the islands in front of Helsinki. Mid-eighteenth century. © Tero Sivula / Shutterstock.com.



49 Tsar Alexander I of Russia (1777–1825) meets representatives of the Finnish estates in Porvoo (Borgå) in 1809. Oil painting by Emanuel Thelning (1767–1831), 1812. Porvoo Cathedral Chapter. Photo by Markku Haverinen.



50 Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844) (oil on canvas) by Christoffer-Wilhelm Eckersberg (1783–1853), 1814. © Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden / Bridgeman Images.



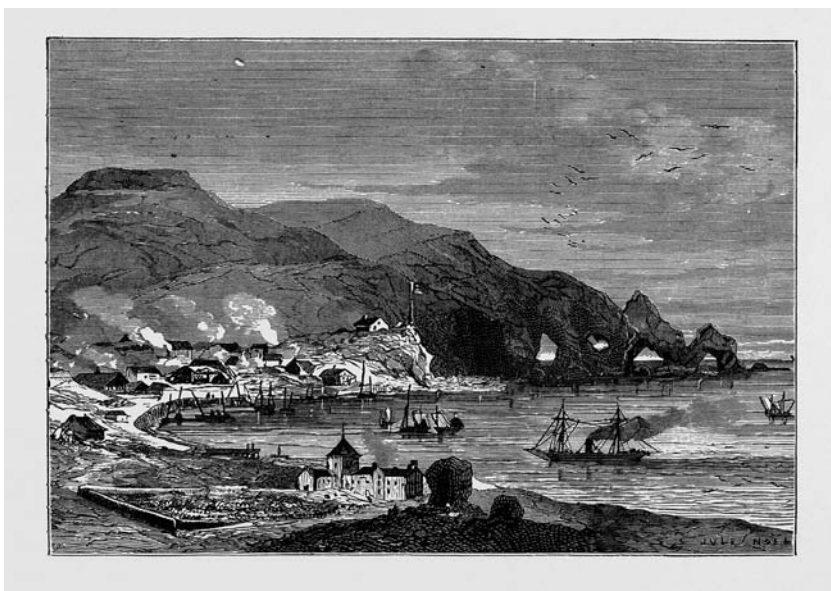
51 The National Assembly at Eidsvoll passing the Norwegian constitution in 1814, 1885 (oil on canvas) by Oscar Arnold Wergeland (1844–1910). © The Storting Building, Norway / Photo © O. Vaering / Bridgeman Images.



52 Portrait of Charles Jean Baptiste Bernadotte (1763–1844) after a painting by Francois Joseph Kinson (1771–1839) (oil on canvas), Joseph Nicolas Jouy (1809–90). Château de Versailles, France / Bridgeman Images.



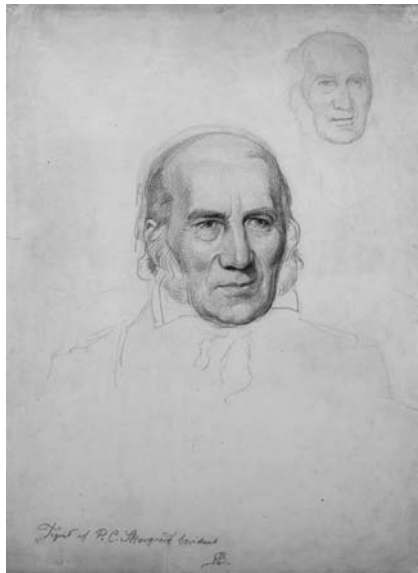
53 The constitutional assembly in København 1848. Painting by Constantin Hansen (1804–80), 1861/65. © The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Slot, Hillerød.



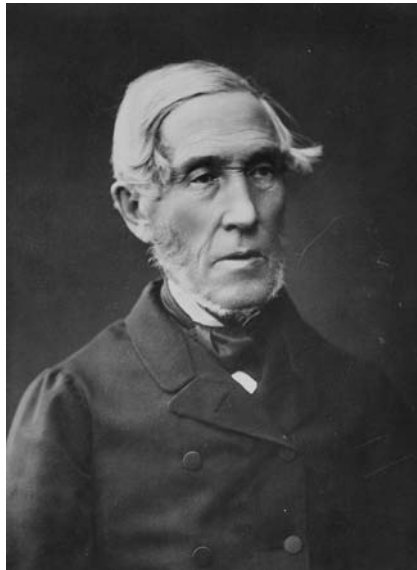
54 Thorshavn, the capital of the Føroyar. © Private Collection / Liszt Collection / Bridgeman Images.



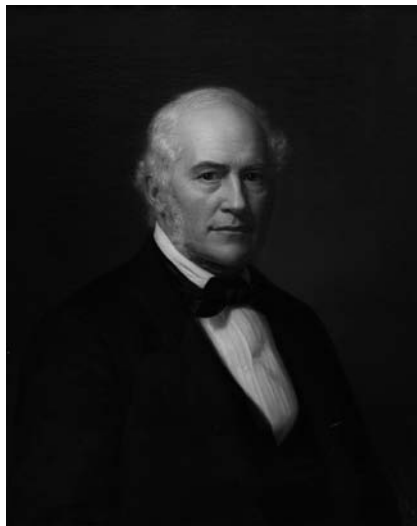
55 Henrik Gabriel Porthan (1739–1814), professor at the University (Academy) of Turku (Åbo), a pioneer in many academic fields in Finland, the ‘Father’ of Finnish history. Painting by J. E. Hedberg, 1799. © Helsinki University Museum.



56 Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872). Drawing by P. C. Skovgaard (1817–75), 1846. © The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Slot.



57 Johan Vilhelm Snellman (1806–81) in the 1870s. Snellman was a Finnish philosopher and statesman. © National Board of Antiquities, Helsinki.



58 Portrait of the Icelandic politician Jón Sigurðsson (1811–79), 1866, by Schiött, owned by the Icelandic Parliament, photographed by Sigurður Gunnarsson. Painting by Þórarinn B. Þorláksson.



59 The Norwegian poet Henrik Wergeland (1808–45). Reproduced by courtesy of the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage.



60 Part of the entrenchment at Dybbøl 1864. Photograph taken after the end of battle.  
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