

Staff Structure in Danish and Swedish Mass Universities.

University traditions in Denmark and Sweden, 1945 to 2000, continuities and discontinuities.

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Mass university meant exploding numbers of students and expansion in staff. This paper deals with the emergence of new categories of academic university staff and the distribution of tasks within faculty. Despite similarities in tradition and economic possibilities, Denmark and Sweden chose different ways from tradition to modernity.¹

The distribution of tasks in general is determined by regulations of employment structures, issued by the governments. This paper only deals with the overall structures, the so-called "public life"-mode.²

In literature, it is often mentioned as a problem that staff structures are very different in the Scandinavian countries. Reforms are implemented at different times - and the same title, for example *lektor* has quite different meanings in different countries and in the same country at different times.³ This paper deals with the problem by identifying different phases determined by overall objectives in staff structure reforms. During the last 50 years, the development of employment structures in Denmark and Sweden has passed through four phases. The phases did not occur at the same time in Denmark and Sweden, nor were each phase of the same duration in the two countries. Still, within each phase reforms in staff structure tried to reach the same objectives.⁴

	Overall Objectives	Sweden	Denmark
<i>phase1</i>	adjusting traditions: more research for developing societies	1946 - 1958	1958 - 1972
<i>phase2</i>	technocratism: more teachers for mass university	1958 - 1985	1972 - 1984
<i>phase3</i>	economy - flexibility: more research, controlled funding	1985 - 1993	1984 (1992)-2000
<i>phase4</i>	management - flexibility: concentration and decentralisation of power, institutions' needs	1993 -	2000 -

The interrelationship of research and teaching has been profoundly challenged by the development of modern mass university. Any change in staff structures is either compensation for shortcomings in the former regulation - or an effort to comply with actual needs.

More research, more researchers

After the Second World War it became widely accepted that scientific research as well as research in the humanities and social sciences should form the basis of development of modern and democratic societies. Researchers achieved a new and important position in society. Phase1-reforms aimed to fulfil this intention by forming new categories of young researchers. Internal research pressure supported this as new branches developed and so to say demanded new researchers - and the professors claimed teaching and administrative tasks to be too time-consuming, at the expense of research.

The Swedish phase1-reform was established in 1946. The *docents* were guaranteed more time for research, and new groups of *assistant teachers* were hired to take care of all the teaching. The assistant teachers were divided into two groups, some had only teaching obligations, and others had both teaching and research obligations. The overall picture of the reform was the continuation of integration of teaching and research.

The Danish phase1-reform started ten years later, in 1958. In Denmark, the focus was solely on augmentation of research. Growing numbers of students was not yet a theme. The professors of all branches were given assistants, *amanuenser*, who were to teach and carry out research.

In phase1 the principle of integration of research and teaching did not change, neither in Denmark nor in Sweden. On the contrary, the importance of integration was emphasised (although the Swedish regulation allowed a group of assistant teachers without research duties). Phase1-reforms of staff structure still stuck to traditions. It was expected that the extension of research and the slight increase of student numbers would not change the university's structure or function. However, phase1-reforms did not anticipate the explosion in the number of students in the '60s.

More teachers for mass university

Phase2-reforms were influenced by technocrat thinking and were definitely intended to change structure and function of the universities. The starting point was the exploding number of students in the '60s. Academic staff expanded - with or without reforms.

A few years after Denmark entered phase1, Sweden jumped into phase2 when the Swedish government anticipated growing numbers of students in the late '50s. The Danish phase2 occurred when government responded to growing numbers of students in the early '70s.

The different year of introduction of the phase2-reforms cannot be explained by different rates of growth in the number of students, but by different relations between state and university in the two countries. In the late '50s, Swedish committees made it clear that the Swedish State was responsible for the universities, and in consequence had the authority to make changes within the universities. The general purpose of the reform was to give admission to universities for more students, also from groups with no academic traditions.

The Swedish institution of *kansler*, an official between government and the universities existing for centuries, was appointed as the State's representative from 1964. In Denmark university autonomy was maintained to a much higher degree. Not until 1974, did Denmark develop a department for university management as part of the Ministry of Education. Until then committees on university issues had consisted of a majority of professors.

Swedish phase2-reform set up a new group of teachers, *universitetslektorerne*, who solely had teaching responsibilities and no obligations to carry out research. The phase2-*universitetslektor* had permanent tenures - but very few possibilities to make a career, as research experience was required for the appointment to professor or *docent*. Swedish professors and *docenter* were expected to be the excellence within research and had wide responsibilities in research and research-education. In the late '50s, the professors still had full authority. In the outset, *docent* and *universitetslektor* had the same qualifications. The *docent* had to do research but only held a temporary position. The *universitetslektor* had to teach but had a permanent tenure. The structure for research was rather complicated and hierarchical, the researchers were selected for research, and they received their tenure rather late. The technocratic element of the reform was showed in the idea of "rational" division of labour in teaching and doing research. Swedish phase2 lasted for more than twenty years.

The outset of phase2-reforms was a growing number of students in the '60s. In Sweden, it was foreseen, but in Denmark, it seemed to come as a pure surprise. In the '60s, Danish phase1-reform was extended when *instruktører*, elder students and fresh graduates recieved fixed-term appointments - and no or very limited possibilities for research. The group of *amanuenser* grew heavily in the '60s, and they felt it to be increasingly unsatisfactory to be assistants to the professors. The *amanuenser* wanted responsibility and a greater say in decision-making.

The Danish phase2-reform was implemented in 1972. Like in Sweden, a new group of teachers was set up. In Denmark they were also called *lektorer*, but had duties of teaching, doing research and administration. In fact, the only difference between the Danish *lektor* and the professor was the title - and in the first years, some difference in the level of research. However, after a Danish reform of university management in 1970 the *lektor* was equal to the professor in terms of decision making concerning matters of curricula and the university's external affairs. The Danish study structure was not changed until 1988, when a reform of the bachelor- and Ph.D.studies was introduced. In the '70s, attempts were made to integrate academic and vocational studies. The objective was not clearly defined and the reform failed at the same time as Marxist students and technocratic politicians had huge battles.

The egalitarian Danish system meant that the number of professors was – and still is – low, compared to international standards. The introduction of the phase2-reform in the early '70s, a few years after the student rebellion, coincided with the deterioration of the professors' authority.

The Danish student rebellion in the late '60s managed to do what the state could not: The rebellion subverted traditions within the institutions. It should be noticed that the students' rebellion only was successful in matters where students and state had coinciding interests, e.g. undermining of the professors' authority, and not on for example changes to the curriculum. The students, so to say, paved the way for governmental administration of the universities by undermining traditions.

For a period Danish transformation was a complicated game of alliances between traditional academics, critical students and state technocrats.⁵ In the '80s state and technocrats were reinforced and did not need the alliance neither with critical students and staff nor with academic traditionalists.

In Sweden, on the other hand, the student rebellion could not find allies in the state or elsewhere and consequently had less influence on the development of the universities. Swedish social democracy had fought traditions on its own.

In Denmark, the phase2-reform meant that research remained linked to teaching needs, and research needs were not expressed separately. The Danish research system was not very structured - each individual had the possibility to make his or her own strategy of research. Sweden faced a reform of postgraduate studies in 1969, future researchers' studies were formalised.

In the late '50s, Swedish State had made it clear that teaching the masses would challenge traditions; the group of teachers-not-researchers emerged despite of numerous protests from the university

milieus. In Denmark, traditionally autonomous universities managed to disguise the fact that increased numbers of students meant new challenges to university traditions - at least until student rebellion in 1968 made it clear that innovations were unavoidable. This background means that the idea of integrating of teaching and research is still strong in Denmark, but in reality, teachers-not-researchers have been important concerning maintenance of the Danish universities since the '60s.

Economy - flexibility

Phase3-reforms concentrated on the amount of research conducted, like phase1-reforms did in the '50s. The governments in Denmark and Sweden wanted more research, controlled funding and were concerned about the lack of young researchers. Had the underlying ideology in phase2 been technocratic - in phase3 it was economic. Research funding was a theme, as was the best use of human resources in research. Phase3-reforms occurred in the early '80s in Denmark and in Sweden.

Again, the two countries followed different paths. The Swedish *universitetslektorer* were highly qualified researchers, who had no opportunity for research in their present conditions of employment. New blood to the research community was assured by giving the *universitetslektorer* the right - but not the obligation - to do research. The 23 years old Swedish system with a split between teaching and research was now softened.

The Government's main argument was not traditional Humboldt ideas about integration of teaching and research; it was hardly mentioned. The Government's argument was entirely based on economy, as a more "rational" exploitation of resources in university faculty was wanted. When the Swedish phase2-reform, instituting teachers-not-researchers, was launched in the late '50s, it was understood as "rational", separating teaching and research, and providing excellent research conditions for the researchers regarded to be the best. The division of labour was to maximise the output. However, when the reform was rejected in the '80s, the criticism was that the reform was not rational, but stiff (as opposed to flexible). A return to interrelated teaching and research was made - for economic reasons. The Swedish example shows how economic arguments won over Humboldt arguments concerning integration of teaching and research.

The staff reform was part of a larger reform of integration of all post-secondary education institutions, not only universities but also schools of vocational educations. The reform also gave representatives of the trades and industries a say in the management of universities - the relationship was deepened by hiring part time professors who kept their main jobs in private enterprises.

The Danish phase3-reform tightened the rules for recruitment. In the '60s and '70s, Denmark had experienced lack of an academic work force and consequently did not formalise the recruitment very much. In the '80s, when the Ph.D.degree was required for the first fixed-term appointment, it was made more difficult to obtain a permanent appointment. The individual's right and duty to research was maintained, but in early '90s, new jobs for researchers-not-teachers were created. Although the principle of integration of teaching and research was maintained, steps were taken to enable a separation. In early '80s, a budget reform assured that state funds for teaching and for research were separated. The Danish continuation of the integration of teaching and research meant that research (and funds for research) was tied too close to teaching demands, according to state officials. Since the late '70s, Danish policy has been to establish control of research, separating research and teaching. In the early '80s, this was institutionalised by separating university funds for teaching and research, although the tenured staff maintained their individual rights to teach and conduct research. In the '90s, the separation was deepened when the Ministry of Research was separated from Ministry of Teaching.

Despite the differences, Danish and Swedish phase3-reforms had one common argument; more flexibility was necessary!

However, this is flexibility as a tool for the Governments and for the university managers. That is, neither more flexibility for the individual nor the power to control one's own working conditions. A flexible structure gave university managers the possibility to redefine tasks for the staff. According to Sennett, flexibility means the undermining of traditions, reinventing institutions in a way so the connection to the past is broken. Reinvention of universities implies that the distribution of teaching and research is no longer in the hands of (senior) staff but in the hands of university managers.⁶ Categories of phase2-reform were fixed and the individual knew his or her rights and duties - but could of course wish it to be different. Flexible phase3-categories made rights and duties unclear: Swedish *lektorer* had to apply for grants they might not obtain. Danish *lektorer* experienced that their right to define the subject of their research was limited as funding became still more controlled. With the notion of flexibility, the focus was shifting from the integration of the many new students and staff in universities to economic and managerial subjects. The notions of distribution of teaching and research were shifting and within this process was the fact that decision-making shifted from the professors to the university managers. Phase2-reforms broke the tradition of professors' authority, but maintained fixed categories of staff. Phase3-reforms completed

the break with traditions by making it very clear that economic arguments were leading in university management.

Institutional management - flexibility

Phase4 is an intensification of flexibility. For the first time, the amelioration of research or teaching is not the main objective. Neither is the focus to integrate new members in university society.

Phase4-reforms focus on the management of the single university and intend to make the staff categories as broad as possible, in order to give university managers tools for flexible management.

The Swedish reform entitles each university to set up new posts, even as professors. At the same time, the posts are not defined, but open to changes according to institutional needs. As a part of the reform *universitetslektorer* with high qualifications achieved the possibility to be promoted to professors, even when there was no vacant professorship. The same issue was discussed in Denmark but rejected by the Government.

In Sweden the students were seen as "consumers of competence" - and the universities as providers or even producers of competence. A view on the universities as enterprises gained a foothold.

Fixed staff categories in former phases are now understood as protection of the individuals. The autonomy of the single institutions might go beyond the freedom of the individual academic member of staff.

Teaching and research enjoy the same status, none is more important than the other. This seems very democratic and seems to demonstrate much care for the students and their education; many students have experienced that a good researcher is not always a good teacher. However, it makes phase4staff categories different from previous categories since the selection of the individual is no longer based on an evaluation of her or his research.

In Denmark, universities experience full time teachers for the first time. However, it has to be stressed that this is only a formalisation of what have been the everyday conditions since the '60s. Full time university teacher- jobs are only given to teachers with at least five years of part time university teaching experience.

Universities in Denmark and Sweden

The outset for this study was the integration of universities in East-Denmark / South-Sweden from the late '90s, the so-called *Øresunds-universitetet*. The integration process is aimed at a synergy

effect when the major universities of Copenhagen and Lund are brought together in the *Øresund* region. Until now, the universities - which are geographically close - have been oriented towards the national settings, not towards the regional ones. Although the phase4-reforms may seem similar, the paths followed to arrive there are very different.

Differences between Danish and Swedish universities have been mentioned over the years. In 1934 Swedish Karlgren pointed out that the University of Copenhagen was much more easy and relaxed than Swedish universities at that time. For example, it was observed that in Denmark new tenures could be established when qualified researchers were available, in contrast, in Sweden the number of professors was stable. Karlgren concluded that the differences between Danish and Swedish universities were too serious to be overcome.⁷ Norwegian Skierbek concluded in 1982 that Danish academic life was less formal than Swedish and explained it by the university's integration in the city and life of Copenhagen whereas Swedish universities were situated in smaller towns.⁸

This study points to differences in Danish and Swedish ways to solve modern problems in university. Especially the differences in public administration and in the process of transforming traditions into modernity are followed and the difference in the distribution of tasks within academic staff is identified. The strong Swedish State and the Swedish social democracy changed traditions of the universities. The autonomous Danish universities kept to tradition for as long as possible, which was until the student rebellion in 1968. The students did what the state could not do; they challenged traditions. Did the mixture of citylife and universitylife provide Danish academics with certain autonomy? Or was the Danish Government less interested in establishing managerial organs for university because until 1928 University of Copenhagen was the only university in Denmark?

It is my hope that the identification of the phases1-4 provides a method to cross-national comparison of development in staff structures of some difference but yet with coincidences in objectives, although not in time.

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² MartinTrow: More trouble than it's worth. *The Times Higher*, Oct.24, 1997. The important aspects of the actual implementation of staff structure reforms in the universities, the faculties, (private life and working life-modes) is not dealt with here.

³ Bertel Ståhle: *Universiteten och forskarna - från stagnation till förnyelse*. *Universitetsforskare. forskarutbildning och forskarrekrutering i Norden*. 1996. Kirsten Voje: *Forskere i Norden*. 1988

4. The phases would of course be more detailed if important matters such as management of the universities and structure of education were taken into consideration.
5. An example is seen in my study of the history of Roskilde University Centre: Else Hansen: En koral i tidens strøm. Roskilde Universitetscenter 1972 - 1997. (summaries in English and German available)
6. Richard Sennett: The Corrosion of Character. 1998 (Danish edition: Det fleksible menneske. 1999). Additionally, Sennet links up flexibility with specialisation of production and concentration of power without centralisation. Also these characterizations of flexibility are interesting for the analysis of staff structure.
7. Anton Karlgren: Dansk universitetsliv mot svensk bakgrund. Nordisk Tidskrift. 1934, pp.223-249.
8. Gunnar Skirbekk: Dansken, svensken - og nordmannen. Syn og Segn. 1982. Hefte 8. pp.477-481