

THE EIGHTH HERMANN PÁLSSON LECTURE (2012)

## **The Scots and Early Modern Scandinavia: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Review**

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THE members of this Society are perhaps more aware than anyone else that the study of Scottish-Scandinavian interaction has a long pedigree. We have been able to look at the phenomenon from a variety of angles including toponymy, etymology, archaeology and literature. My main interest in the subject broaches all of these, but it is the interactions of Scots with Scandinavia in the early modern period that remains an abiding passion. Given some notable scholarship in recent years, it is perhaps time to reflect on both the origins of the field, and in what ways it has either been advanced, or controversially, become locked into a simplistic and repetitive narrative. Who, we might ask, is discussing this field now, and how has our understanding changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, if at all?

### **Origins of Scottish-Scandinavian Historiography**

In 1907 Thomas Fisher's book *The Scots in Sweden* was posthumously published.<sup>1</sup> It fanned an interest in the history of relationships between Scotland in particular, Britain in general, and the various Scandinavian kingdoms ever since. It followed on from Fisher's earlier works on the Scots in East and West Prussia, and the Scots in Germany;<sup>2</sup> these works themselves owed much to the work of A. F. Steuart who opened the door on Scottish-Swedish military links with an article in *Scottish Historical Review* in 1904.<sup>3</sup> An aspect of many of the subsequent works on the relationship between Scotland and Scandinavia is that they often present a linear set of unconnected articles or biographies where the only binding glue is that the word Scotland, or Scandinavia (or any

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1 Fischer 1907.

2 Fischer 1902; Fischer 1903.

3 Steuart 1904.

constituent component thereof) is mentioned in the articles' titles.<sup>4</sup> Frequently, there are century-long gaps between the events discussed, yet we are invited to believe in a continuing 'special' relationship of some sort. These authors have sought to tie in a series of disparate events often hundreds of years apart and collect them together as if they form a cohesive argument or amount to a special relationship. There is no doubt that these collections often contain research of great value, but it can be in small measures to scholars involved in a single discipline or with interests in a particularly focussed historical period. This is especially true of those whose interest is directed to the relations Scots had in a given moment with the wider world in general, regardless of historical limitations to one geo-specific area. Where the scholarship has advanced in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is, for the most part, in moving away from the narrative biographies and random collections of articles. Rather, more penetrating questions have recently been asked as to what the presence of Scots actually meant to both the Scots and the Scandinavians (and their neighbours) during specific periods of time. One such work is Alexia Grosjean's critical 2003 study *An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654*.<sup>5</sup> This volume certainly moved the field beyond the antiquarianism of earlier scholarship to what Edward Furgol has described in a review as a "magisterial" assessment for the flourishing of the Scottish-Swedish relationship. Moreover, and crucially, it discussed the gradual replacement of this 'alliance' in favour of strengthening Anglo-Swedish relations during the Cromwellian Usurpation;<sup>6</sup> this is the bit the earlier scholarship tended to leave out: the negative, the nasty, and the often fraught relations between the nations and peoples involved.

Grosjean's book, among others, has added to our extensive knowledge of Nordic-Caledonian links by focussing on an age which saw the mass movement of people, goods and ideas from Scotland to the Scandinavian world – and understanding that it mostly was one-way traffic for all but the commercial aspect. Thousands of Scots moved into Scandinavia, very few Scandinavians contemporaneously moved into Scotland. To understand that difference we have to establish the motivations behind the contacts of the age. This Scottish exodus was prompted by five main types of interaction including:

Diplomatic contact and dynastic alliances (old school kings and queens)  
Immigration and emigration (movement of people)  
Commercial contacts (movement of goods and capital)

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4 Simpson 1990; Donaldson 1990; Fellows-Jensen 2001.

5 Grosjean 2003a.

6 Grosjean 2003a, 239-57, 'England and the demise of the Scottish-Swedish Alliance'. See similarly Murdoch 2000/2003, 166-86, 'The "Englishing" of Britain and the demise of the Stuart-Oldenburg Alliance'.

Cultural contacts (transfer of ideas, books, art)

Negative contacts (war, piracy and political intrigue)

These categories are pertinent for all peoples in every age, and there is a degree of overlap in each. That some Scots went to war against the Scandinavian monarchs should not be overlooked simply because there is something historically inaccurate about the portrait we have of the relationship between the Scottish nation and other countries in Europe, including the Nordic ones. This 'comfortable history' often portrays a happy time when all was well and everyone got along just fine. Examples declaring that the closest relationship Scotland had historically with another nation can be found in numerous publications relating to Ireland, Russia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands and France among others. These, of course, would all seem to be mutually exclusive as surely not every nation could have maintained a 'special relationship' with Scotland. We might also ask why England seldom features in such discourse,<sup>7</sup> especially given that it is the only nation on earth which shares a land border to Scotland? Nevertheless, such declarations of 'specialness' become repeated by rote, as do errors in Scotland's relations with other places beyond the singular: Scotland only had one factor in Hamburg and the only interest there was in Shetland fish; Scotland had no trade with Spain – it was Catholic and too far south: The Auld Alliance with France ended in 1560 because Scotland had a Reformation and so on. All these assertions have been repeated in print – but all have been recently challenged in the research of Kathrin Zickermann, Siobhan Talbott and Claire McLoughlin among others.<sup>8</sup>

What both older and recent research is actually telling us is that some Scots did well in and on the behalf of each of these host locations, for example in Bergen, and that such communities, like that in Gothenburg, could be of importance to Scotland through the exploitation of commercial opportunity and involvement in Scottish politics.<sup>9</sup> Other Scottish communities appear to have been of no consequence at all for their homeland, for example the Scots in Sigtuna which became something of a retirement village for former soldiers.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless the tendency remains to try to make something

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7 Murdoch 2007, 890-913.

8 Zickermann 2005; Zickermann 2013; Talbott 2010a; Talbott 2010b. Claire McLoughlin is currently completing her thesis, 'Scottish-Iberian Commercial Connections, 1580-1750: The Impact of Dynastic and Political Unions', at the University of St Andrews. All three scholars have undertaken their research as part of the 'Scotland and the Wider World' project within the Institute of Scottish Historical Research.

9 Østby Pedersen 2005, 135-65; Behre 1990, 107-18; Grosjean and Murdoch 2005, 191-223.

10 Palm and Undin 2012, 110-27.

'historically special' from the amalgam of potted episodes sewn together into a single narrative. In the Swedish case, a book that stands out as perhaps being over celebratory is *Britain and Sweden: A Thousand Years of Friendship*.<sup>11</sup> This is an odd title given that neither Sweden nor Britain have existed as fully independent political entities for the last thousand years, and certainly we can demonstrate periods of outright antagonism between the two geopolitical entities at several points in their histories (I hesitate to call them nations, kingdoms or states given the time period suggested). For example, during the second and third Anglo-Dutch wars of the 1660s and 1670s, Scottish privateers delighted in attacking neutral Swedish shipping at a time when other Scots settled and traded from within Sweden; indeed, many of the Swedish ships taken by Scots were owned wholly or in part by other Scots.<sup>12</sup> To highlight the contradictory nature of the problem of over-positivism, consider the Professor Anna Bieganska (a modern Polish scholar) who in every one of her dozen or so otherwise excellent articles about the Scottish-Polish relationship includes an irritating statement of the love of the Scots for Poland;

'The Scots were aware of their origin and maintained close links with their fellow countrymen. They were also loyal to Poland, a country which they chose as their new homeland, and were conscious of the advantages they enjoyed there'.<sup>13</sup>

Yet this implies the existence of a homogenous Scottish nation in which all members thought as one. Further, this view does not sit comfortably with historical events which indicated the opposite was true. For example, consider a particularly virulent anti-Polish spy network orchestrated by Swedish, Polish and London-based Scots in the 1620s, and in particular Sir James Spens of Wormiston.<sup>14</sup> The network sought to destabilize the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and undermine a Polish army ostensibly being assembled to invade Sweden for the purposes of re-Catholicizing Sigismund Vasa's former kingdom. But before we start to believe that the Spens spy-network proved the Scots valued the Swedes over the Poles, we have to consider that they were largely working against a group of fellow Scots, assembled by Sir Patrick Stewart, who were bent on overthrowing Gustav II Adolf in favour of restoring Sigismund to the throne of Sweden. As it developed, Spens and his agents set up the British merchant-factor in Poland as a fall guy leaving poor

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11 Andrén, et al. 1997. Less eclectic in time period is Steckzén 1959.

12 Murdoch 2010a, 237-82.

13 Bieganska 2001, 27.

14 Murdoch 2010b, 45-65.

Francis Gordon's reputation in tatters while also bankrupting Patrick Stewart and leaving him looking rather foolish.

Sometimes these intra-Scottish conflicts in Scandinavia were driven by political developments, but more often by personal circumstance: a family feud, competition in business, opposing political or religious beliefs and simple mercenary motives (both civilian and military). The latest research explores these complicated relations as well as the usually more celebrated 'glorious' episodes. Thus we learn of one exiled Scot who distanced himself from his compatriots in Stockholm as he believed they strayed from their Calvinist heritage by joining the Swedish Church. Indeed, the devout Presbyterian merchant Patrick Thomson, a resident in Norrköping for fifteen years, sought self-imposed exile from the other Scots in Stockholm as he felt that 'All the Scots here are Lutherans or Atheists, the English are worse if worse can be [...] so I come heir alone.'<sup>15</sup> Some Scots made a public spectacle of their Lutheranism, such as Daniel Young till Leijonancker. When the English merchant community got together to buy a communal grave in Stockholm's Maria Kyrka for 600 rdl., Leijonancker purchased one for himself under the altar for 1200 rdl. the following year. Not only that, but he also owned plots in several other Stockholm churches.<sup>16</sup> With such overt support from the Scots community, it should come as no surprise that the Swedish Lutheran clergy itself included several notable Scottish-born clergymen and even more of Scottish parentage.<sup>17</sup>

Examples like these remind us that it is not nations or states that develop an empathy with another region or people, but individuals. We often have many groups from one ethnic background operating, even integrating, into overseas countries that might actually be in conflict with either their host community or, as clearly happened in Scandinavia for many Scots, members of their own

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15 National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, Russell Papers, RH15/106/608, Patrick Thomson to Andrew Russell, Stockholm, 22 April 1686. It is not certain Thomson here uses the word 'atheist' in the modern context, but instead possibly to denote individuals who were neither Presbyterian nor Lutheran. Given the subsequent statement about Englishmen, and wondering what might constitute something worse than atheism to such an ardent believer, it is possible (though not proven) that he is referring to Scottish Episcopalians as the atheists. As Thomson may have believed Episcopalians were the cause of his exile, he would have been aware that they were at least influenced by Calvinism, as stated by Archbishop Archibald Hamilton. This may have raised them above Anglicans to some extent in his estimation. There were, of course, pure atheists to whom Thomson may have been alluding. For one self-confessed atheist and her subsequent conversion to Christianity, see 'Mistress Rutherford's Conversion Narrative'.

16 Stockholms Stadsarkiv, 'Maria församling, register över döda', vol. 1656-80, 320 and 544. The English merchants bought their grave on 9 December 1675. Leijonancker bought the grave near the altar on 7 June 1676.

17 For these Scottish Lutherans, Catholics, Calvinists and Orthodox Christians in northern Europe at this time, see Murdoch 2006, 84-124.

nation. What these examples do show is that by the early modern period, a variety of factors had contributed to the presence in Scandinavia of thousands of Scots, with similar numbers in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and significant numbers in England, Ireland, and the rest of Europe.<sup>18</sup>

## **James VI, Anna of Denmark and the Oldenburg Alliance**

When James VI married Anna of Denmark in 1589, an older Scottish alliance with Denmark-Norway was revived. This ensured continued dual citizenship for the subjects of the houses of Stuart and Oldenburg within each other's kingdoms, and would last until the mid-seventeenth century. As part of that agreement, there was also a military component. This saw both James VI and Christian IV binding themselves to support each other in times of war. In turn, this led to a fresh exodus of Scottish fighting men to Scandinavia. Surprisingly, perhaps, this did not always work out to the advantage of the House of Oldenburg.

Military migrations brought literally tens of thousands of Scottish soldiers and sailors to both the Copenhagen and Stockholm administrations, reaching a dangerous climax during the intra-Scandinavian Kalmar War of 1611-13. Those Scots in Danish service mobilized at land and sea, including one noble colonel and two admirals. As the main Danish ally, King James was expected to further aid his brother-in-law Christian IV with still more troops, and a force of some 6000 men were prepared for action.<sup>19</sup> The problem was that King James did not want to see Sweden militarily defeated by the Danes, but preferred the concept of a balance of power where Christian Europe could concentrate on tackling external threats, particularly those posed by the Ottoman Empire. As the research of Alexia Grosjean has demonstrated, James was playing a dangerous double-game with his brother-in-law, Christian IV. Several thousand Scottish soldiers were already in Swedish service with 3000 more covertly sent by him in 1612 to shore up Sweden's army and thus maintain the Scandinavian balance of power.<sup>20</sup> Some 300 of these were famously killed crossing through Norway at Kringen<sup>21</sup> – the source of epic Norwegian poems and songs – though 2500 Scots more passed through via Trondheim unmolested only a couple of months later, alas without giving rise to any similar literary gems from Norwegian poets.

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18 The usual boast of 30,000 Scots in Poland-Lithuania has been recently revised down. For the more probable figure of 5-7,000 see Murdoch and Mijers, 2012, 320-7. The problem exposed here is the conflation with 'ethnic Scot' as opposed to a 'migrant Scot'.

19 Murdoch 2000/2003, 39-40, 189-90.

20 Grosjean 2003a, 34-8.

21 For this episode, see Michell, 1886.

In addition to trying to even up the military contest James deployed two Scottish ambassadors as chief negotiators for the Scandinavian powers.<sup>22</sup> It is from them we learn that events in Scandinavia might easily have had devastating consequences in Britain. Thus Robert Anstruther wrote to his step-brother James Spens:

‘That if this matter is not speedily looked unto, it will breed a great inconvenience between England and Scotland, and if there be a day of battle, then the English and Scots will cut one another’s throats [...] there has passed some message already between some of the nations’.<sup>23</sup>

A successful Stuart-brokered resolution to the Kalmar War did not just ensure peace between the Scandinavian kingdoms, it also prevented an embarrassing situation where the Scots in the Swedish army would effectively be at war with the largely English army that had been sent to serve Christian IV commanded by Lord Willoughby, perversely sent under the terms of the Scottish-Danish alliance of 1589. Despite the successful conclusion of the Kalmar War which both kept Sweden free and Denmark-Norway in check, there were larger wars looming. None saw the arrival of so many Scots as those who went to war in the Scandinavian phases of the Thirty Years’ War (1618-48), a subject which has received some critical analysis since the mid-1990s.<sup>24</sup> This collective corpus of scholarship has advanced the role of the soldier away from the simplistic representation of mercenary participation or heroic service and has considered such motivations as dynastic loyalty, confessional persuasion, political aspiration, social climbing, kith and kin loyalty, the evasion of justice, and coercion alongside financial considerations in seeing Scots prepared to fight abroad. It has certainly looked at the impact on the battlefield, but also the effect on devastated communities who lost their men through violent deaths. It has looked at the place of the common soldier as well as the officer class, and also to the importance of women as well as men.<sup>25</sup>

### **The Thirty Years’ War, 1618-48**

The war at the heart of these studies broke out in 1618 and ultimately affected most of Europe and drew in resources from across the globe. The

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22 Murdoch, 2011, consulted online at: <http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714/essays.aspx>

23 Riksarkivet, Stockholm, Anglica V (un-foliated). Robert Anstruther to James Spens, 18 July 1612.

24 See the various contributions in Murdoch (ed) 2001; Worthington 2003; Grosjean 2003a, 74-111.

25 On the role of women in warfare, see Talbott 2007, 102-27.



Danish phase, *Kejserkrig*, lasted four years between 1625 and 1629.<sup>26</sup> A central persona in the war was the half-Danish, half-Scottish icon Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia. In Britain the plight of this Stuart princess and the entry of her uncle Christian IV into the war were frequently woven together by pamphleteers and military recruiters alike. Add into that mix the heady potion of confessional alignment and the role of straightforward finance in attracting soldiers to service is greatly diminished.

Some 6000 English and 13,500 Scots served Denmark-Norway in this war, rallying to the cause of Elizabeth and the reformed religion, albeit there were notable Catholic officers amongst them. Robert Nithsdale was selected as the general of the Scots despite his 'addiction' to the religion of Rome. As Charles I asserted, this did not detract from his loyalty to the House of Stuart.<sup>27</sup> The Scots uniquely received permission to fight under Scottish colours in the Danish army on the proviso they added the *Dannebrog* to them, albeit Christian IV was not pleased about it.

'His Majesty [of Denmark] would have the officers to carry the Dane's crosse, which the officers refusing [...] Captain Robert Ennis was sent into England to know his Majestie of Great Britaine's will, whether or no they might carrie without reproach the Dane's Crosse in Scottish colours.'<sup>28</sup>

These soldiers, often decried as mercenaries, clearly illustrated their belief in themselves as an allied army rather than hirelings and risked the wrath of two kings to make sure this was understood.<sup>29</sup> We must be under no illusions as to the importance of this contingent. Scots formed one of the largest single components of the Danish-Norwegian Army. Scottish officers outnumbered Danish officers by a staggering 3:1 ratio in Christian's army and were given key commands of garrisons, towns and regions, including the important Danish province of Skåne.<sup>30</sup> But the cost in Scottish lives was horrendous. The Treaty of Lübeck extracted Denmark-Norway from the war in 1629 by which time some 12,000 of the Scottish contingent of 13,700 were dead, something William Lithgow was keen to remind Charles I about in his poem penned in 1633.

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26 Murdoch 2000/2003, 202-25

27 Danish Rigsarkiv, TKUA, England AI. Charles I to Christian IV, 8 February 1627.

28 Monro, 1637, vol. i, 2. Charles I eventually gave the Scots the choice of two colours. One had a *Dannebrog* with a Saltire in the corner, the other had a Saltire with a *Dannebrog* in the corner. The comment was added by Charles that the officers could choose the one they wanted, but that they had to choose one in order to get the king of Denmark's pay. The sketches are recorded in The National Archives (Kew), SP75/8, f.61. 'The state of the King of Denmark's Army', March 1627.

29 Murdoch 2000/2003, 208-15.

30 Murdoch 2003, 1-28.



‘Thus look to Denmark  
where twelve thousand lye  
Serving thine Uncle,  
sharpest fortunes try’<sup>31</sup>

The remnants of the Scottish army in Denmark who were still fit for duty transferred into Swedish service – a fighting force of probably less than 1200 men in total.

## **The Lions of the North**

When Sweden entered the coalition against the Habsburgs in 1630, the Danish contingent of Scots joined some 12,000 Scots already served in her army. By the conclusion of the war it is estimated that the total number that had served reached about 35,000 Scots. However a combination of natural wastage, battlefield fatigue, injury and death meant that at any one time numbers were seldom above 10,000 and usually less. Their importance to Sweden came not just through weight of numbers, but also in the roles they fulfilled within the military hierarchy of the army. Some 200 Scots served as officers, up to a quarter of the entire Swedish total. Moreover, at least 70 of these attained the rank of colonel while a dozen became field marshals or generals in this 18-year period.<sup>32</sup> The most notable of these was Field Marshal Alexander Leslie, though one of his understudies, Robert Douglas, also rose to become Field Marshal in the 1650s.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, two of Sweden’s greatest military victories of the war could not have been accomplished without the Scottish presence. Of these, the Scottish role at Breitenfeld in 1631 has been long known.<sup>34</sup> More recently another major battle, Wittstock in 1636, has been shown to have been a largely Scottish victory in terms of conception and execution. Discussion of this event can be found in a recent edition of this journal, alerting us to the significance of this Society in disseminating cutting-edge research in the field.<sup>35</sup> The important point to note about both battles is the recognition Scottish soldiers, particularly officers, gained from participation in these brutal engagements. Quite often it was reward through positions such as governorships, or other forms advancement in society.<sup>36</sup> Again, Alexia Grosjean has highlighted that there were more Scots ennobled

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31 Lithgow 1633.

32 Grosjean 2003a, 105-111.

33 The most complete work on Robert Douglas remains Douglas 1957.

34 See, for example, Captain John Forbes, 1631. See also Monro 1637, vol. ii, 63-5.

35 Murdoch, Zickermann and Marks 2012, 71-109.

36 Grosjean 2003b, 53-78.

in Sweden in a 20-year period than in a comparative time frame at home in Scotland.<sup>37</sup> The important caveat is, of course, that in order to reap such rewards one had to survive; the statistical evidence suggests that the odds were very much against it. That being said, the Scottish contribution was well understood by contemporaries. In 1640, when the Scottish Covenanters went to war with their half-Danish king, their provisional government sent out envoys to seek support for their cause.<sup>38</sup> Sweden was the first country to recognise the provisional regime, a stance which the Swedish regent explained to his own state council in the following terms:

*“Och såsom den Skottske nationen haffver nu ifrån een rund tijd, vid pas 60 åhr, hafft stoor kundskaper och umgenge med oss, och en god deel af bemålte Skotske nation bevijsst vår framfarne Konungar och Chronan berömelige tienster, att och för denne skull dess lycha och välstånd haffver icke mindre varit oss önskelig än den Skotske nationen sielfver”*

‘The Scottish nation has for some 60 years, had a strong relationship with Sweden, and a good many Scots have shown our Crown worthy service ... in whatever manner we can help the Scottish nation, we will not be slow to act.’<sup>39</sup>

These were not idle words. In addition to beginning the process of international recognition for the rebelling Scottish regime, Sweden released officers and men to bolster the Covenanter Army including Field Marshal Alexander Leslie. They provided him with enough weapons to equip 12,000 men and finances for many more. This included sufficient artillery for the Covenanter Army – 60 cannon. Moreover, they supplied five Swedish naval warships to transport the above to Scotland.<sup>40</sup> The impact should not be overlooked: without Scots having served in the Swedish army, there would have been no Army of the Covenant (it was effectively Leslie’s Army from Sweden reconstituted) and all that implies for the wider British Civil Wars and the subsequent evolution of parliamentary democracy.

However, when speaking of war it is important not to glamorise or over-celebrate what are actually dreadful events in our history. Nor should we think that the martial arena was the only one in which Scots developed closer

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37 Grosjean 2003a, 138-59.

38 Murdoch 2010c, 42-67.

39 *Svenska Riksrådets Protokoll, 1621-1658*, vol. viii, 97-217. 8 July 1640. The debates leading to this exclamation are discussed in Grosjean 2003a, 166. A full version of the document is available in translation by Grosjean and Murdoch 2007, 214-23.

40 Grosjean 2003a, 165-82.

ties with Scandinavia in the period. The other spheres of interaction are also receiving a more nuanced understanding of our past than the often simplistic version previously painted.

## **The Civilian Dimension: Denmark-Norway**

Where once Scottish commerce was portrayed as the preserve of the lowly pedlar, recent studies into Scottish merchant networks have been rewriting the orthodoxy. Taking each Scandinavian country in turn, we will start with Norway. It is no surprise that Scots populated several Norwegian towns, many of which have recently been evaluated. The influence of Petter Dass in the far north is interesting, but he was Norwegian by birth. Though mostly known for his activities as a priest and songwriter, he was also involved in the Norwegian fishing industry.<sup>41</sup> However, the influence of this legendary ethnic Scot sometimes overshadows the less well-known, but economically more important, activities of others in the Scottish-Norwegian diaspora, even in the far north. Earlier in the seventeenth century, a Scottish community developed in Finnmark where Admiral John Cunningham served as *Lensman*, or regional governor, between 1619 and 1651. Rune Hagen has estimated that Cunningham brought in some 20 Scottish families, who settled in the region, so a total population of probably around 100 souls is not unlikely.<sup>42</sup> His estimates are important in reminding us of the rural as well as urban community development in this period. Trondheim has also been shown to have been a vibrant location where Scottish fish, timber and iron merchants were based. These often worked in consort with Norwegians or fellow migrants from England. The iron foundry and sawmills at Mostadmark fell into Scottish hands for decades, with Sir William Davidson and consul John Paul owning the works consecutively.<sup>43</sup> Ultimately however, Mostadmark returned to Norwegian control, helped by other Scots who fell out with Davidson in particular. Regardless of the activities of these northern Scots, it is indisputable that Bergen remained the largest Scottish community of Denmark-Norway, and also the most frequently discussed. Easily the most sophisticated understanding of the Bergen Scots to appear in print is the work of Nina Østby Pedersen in the collection *Scottish Communities Abroad* in 2005.<sup>44</sup> The numbers of Scots Østby Pedersen discusses are impressive, over 300 citizens, but what is of more value is the contextualization of the community

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41 Still a valuable article on Dass is that by Simpson (1985, 53-64).

42 Hagen 2003, 29-52.

43 Murdoch 2006, 193-202.

44 Østby Pedersen 2005, 135-65

alongside other migrants such as the German Hansa merchants. All together these various Norway-based Scottish communities and the trade they spawned gave rise to the term *Skottetiden* (the Scottish Period) in Norwegian history. This period was contextualized alongside Dutch commercial activity very succinctly by Sølvi Sogner in 2003.<sup>45</sup>

While Denmark and Norway were bound in a regal union throughout the period discussed here, Bergen was not the only city of choice, despite its obvious dominance as the premier destination for the migrant Scot. Scots also settled in numbers on the Jutland peninsula, the Danish archipelago and the three counties of eastern Denmark which are now part of southern Sweden. These communities received close examination in Thomas Riis's important two-volume set *Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot*.<sup>46</sup> From Professor Riis we learned that Elsinore became the main community on Sjælland, larger even than the Copenhagen community. In this town the hereditary keepership of the Sound Toll devolved to the Lyell family for a period lasting from the 1520s and throughout the seventeenth century.<sup>47</sup> Numerous settled merchants, many of higher status, such as David Melvin in the 1660s and Patrick Lyell in the 1680s, became particularly successful.<sup>48</sup> Despite the undoubted influence of these men, it is important to flag up that for all that the dynastic relationship was between the Edinburgh and Copenhagen governments, it was Norway, not Denmark, that received the largest numbers of Scots into the Oldenburg state. If nothing else, this highlights the importance of Østby Pedersen's study in complimenting the work of Riis, and reminding us of the value of broadening our research beyond the artificial confines of political boundaries. The commercially minded were seldom deterred from trading across borders, regardless of the notional importance dynasties attached to borders and treaties. Further proof of this, if it were needed, is found elsewhere in historical relations of Scotland and Scandinavia.

### **The Civilian Dimension: Sweden (Finland)**

Despite the Stuart-Oldenburg relationship, Scottish migration to Sweden continued and eventually outstripped the numbers settling even in Norway. Sweden became very important to Scotland as it produced essential commodities for a developing maritime nation, including timber, tar and iron. The quest to get into the market for these goods led to the formation

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45 Sogner 2003, 293-303.

46 Riis 1988.

47 For more on the Lyell family, see Kathrin Zickermann's article in this volume.

48 Riis 1988, ii, 198, 218-19, 232 and 235; Murdoch 2006, 7, 76, 80-3, 156-61, 221-2, 350-1.

of significant communities, particularly as Dutch competition in Norway intensified. The best known of the Scottish communities in Sweden developed in Gothenburg. According to Fisher's 1907 publication:

'Naturally the Scottish trade took the shortest route, and first selected those ports on the Western coast of Sweden that seemed to offer the best chances'.<sup>49</sup>

The insistence on Gothenburg's prominence in Scottish-Swedish history is one repeated by a number of scholars over the years.<sup>50</sup> It is true that two out of twelve of the seats on the City Council were reserved for members of the Scottish nation at the foundation of the city in 1621. The guaranteed position for two councillors undoubtedly drew Scots to the town, including Sweden's second richest man by the 1630s, John MacLean from Mull. The community continually renewed itself, and received its greatest boost with the arrival of Colin Campbell in 1730 who, with other Scots and notable Swedes, helped establish and run the Swedish East India Company.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the historical focus on Gothenburg, the Stockholm Scottish community pre-dated the Gothenburg one and can be traced back to the time of the Kalmar Union. The striking fact is that the Stockholm Scots were some six times the size of the Gothenburg community in the 1600s (some 350 identifiable resident Scots compared to only sixty named individuals in Gothenburg over the same period). Until recently, perhaps because of the importance of Fischer's earlier work, this community has largely gone unnoticed.<sup>52</sup> Some 30 men, including the splendidly named Blasius Dundee, became prominent in Stockholm already in 1560s, long before Gothenburg had even been founded.<sup>53</sup> With no institutional limitation to the numbers on the city council, more Scots reached higher positions within the city including councillors and mayors, in addition to those who found places in the parliament (*Riksdag*), the council of state (*Riksråd*) and the Swedish Church. Additionally, Scots also sat in the College of Commerce (*Kommerskollegium*), College of Mining (*Bergskollegium*) and the Treasury (*Kammarkollegium*), reaching positions of authority they simply could not attain within either Gothenburg or, indeed, the entire neighbouring Oldenburg state. While Denmark-Norway's civic culture determined to hamper foreign influence, the Swedish state embraced the opportunities these individuals brought, whether Scots, Germans, Dutch

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49 Fischer 1907, 7-8.

50 Behre 1986, 133-50; Grage 1986, 112-15.

51 *A Passage to China*; Ashton, 2003.

52 Murdoch 2010d, 31-66.

53 Lager-Kromnow 1992, 231.

or Walloons. In light of this new understanding, it seems the two-councillor strategy for Scots in Gothenburg had not been an advantage at all, but rather the opposite: they were not blessed by being allowed two councillors, actually it seems they were restricted by it. The Germans and Dutch were allowed four councillors each, for example. Thus, when looking for the most important Scottish community in Scandinavia, Stockholm is easily of the greatest significance, particularly in terms of entrepreneurial and political opportunities, and specifically between 1660 and 1710.

Narrowing the focus even further, in a 20-year period from 1670-90, Scots also simultaneously served as the main Swedish trade commissioners in Dunkirk, Brussels, the Hague, Bremen City, Bremen *Stift*, Wismar, Lübeck, Helsingør, Copenhagen and London. All of these Scots-turned-naturalised Swedes have demonstrably been shown to have facilitated trade with fellow Scots, often despite Swedish regulations which theoretically forbade such actions.<sup>54</sup> This embedding of Scots into Swedish institutions both significantly enhanced commercial opportunities, and subsequently obscured the importance of Scottish-Swedish trade by making it seem entirely Swedish. For example, in 1672, the Scottish cloth manufacturer, Daniel Young sat as a member of the Swedish Parliament. He successfully used his position to ensure that his countrymen had a commercial advantage over their English competitors. Moreover, when Young became *Kommersråd* (the senior councillor of trade for Sweden) in the 1680s, he declared Scottish wool products free of all Swedish customs duties. He gave countrymen, including the previously mentioned Patrick Thomson, seals, flags and letters which made a number of Scottish ships 'legally Swedish' allowing them to sail 'toll free' through the Danish Sound.<sup>55</sup>

The profits of such covert Scottish trade were routed into the coffers of the Swedo-Scottish families or, in many cases, repatriated back to Scotland via banking hubs located in Hamburg, Amsterdam or the large Rotterdam-Scottish community.<sup>56</sup> As Adam Smith once observed:

'The entrepreneur, by directing his industry in such a manner as its produce may be of greatest value, he intends only his own gain ... yet by pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.'<sup>57</sup>

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54 Murdoch 2006, 207-48.

55 Ibid. 2006, 216-19.

56 For the Rotterdam community, see Catterall 2002.

57 Smith 1863, 115-16.

This is really the crux of the most recent scholarship on Scottish commercial connections with Europe in general and Scandinavia in particular. We are constantly reminded that we are dealing with individuals whose agenda was often self-serving, but who perhaps had an impact they did not intend. Indeed, Scottish families had a discernible impact on their host societies through their significant contribution to the very fabric of Scandinavian society while at the same time ensuring kith and kin in both Scotland and other overseas communities shared in some part from their endeavours.<sup>58</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, allow me to make some observations to try to tie up a lecture that has only been able to skim over a variety of themes. Firstly, the Scots cannot be excused their part in the imperial expansion of Scandinavian states, even into neighbouring Scandinavian territories. Some of these Scots mentioned above actually extended the bounds of the Oldenburg state, such as Admiral John Cunningham's voyages of exploration to Greenland and the Labrador Coast in 1605 and 1606. Others participated fully in aggressive Swedish expansionism during *Stormaktstiden*, the Swedish Age of Greatness. This reached its epoch in the Thirty Years' War, which, for reasons discussed above, had clear implications at home. The impact of these military Scots was felt in Denmark, Sweden, Britain and across the Habsburg Empire. It resulted in suffering for tens of thousands of soldiers, many more civilians and the aggrandisement of only a few of the survivors. But it also provided the manpower for a revolution that embedded Presbyterianism into the Scottish Church and also promoted the concept of limiting monarchical authority. In so doing, it paved the way for similar revolts in England and Ireland by those who felt aggrieved at royal policy.

That said, Scots also played an important role in the development of Scandinavian cities and their infiltration into the institutional apparatus of Sweden in particular was breath-taking. It is their own understatement of the same which was both the key to their success and contributes in no small part to our historical forgetfulness to the significance of their presence. Crucially, the continual movement of generations back and forth across the North Sea raises some interesting questions relating to identity: at which point did Scottish or any other foreign families become Scandinavian? How long did they maintain any sense of their ethnic origin; how did their networks function – answers have been suggested in the sources discussed in the course of this lecture, but there is still much to do.

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58 For the Scandinavian evidence, see Murdoch 2006, 228-40; For a more detailed analysis on one particular community in Europe see Murdoch 2012, 38-57.



And in answer to the question postulated at the start of the lecture: yes, I believe we have advanced the field considerably in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Certainly there are those who will wish to continue rehash the tales of Scottish soldiers in Scandinavia as mercenaries and repeat that her merchants were simple pedlars despite of the evidence to the contrary. Moreover, there are those who will continue focus on episodes such as the Kringen massacre or see Gothenburg as the main city where Scots operated. Such views are diminishing and the academic community has moved on. We are now integrating the scholarship on Scottish Scandinavia with that of the excellent work being done on Scots in other regions of the world, and with studies which focus on other ethnicities in Scandinavia, particularly the Dutch, Germans and Walloons. Perhaps most interestingly from a personal perspective is that the methodology for studying the Scottish-Scandinavian connection has caught the attention of English scholars who are replicating it and testing English links against the Scottish comparative.<sup>59</sup> Only once these other studies are complete will we actually know the answer to the question of how important Scandinavia was to Scotland in this period (and/or vice versa).

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59 Two of my doctoral students in particular are worthy of mention in this context. Dr Adam Marks recently completed his thesis. The focus of it was 'England, the English and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2012). The role of Scots as the benchmark for the English involvement in the Scandinavian armies is a major component of the thesis. Similarly, Adam Grimshaw is currently undertaking doctoral research into English commerce in Sweden in the seventeenth century, also at the University of St Andrews. He too is replicating the methodology applied to recent Scottish scholarship, with a comparative analysis very much in mind.

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