

3.3 Dynamics in land use and animal husbandry in Sweden

Room 107

Convener: Jesper Larsson

Chair: Janken Myrdal

Janken Myrdal is professor of agricultural and rural history at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden. He has built up a group of agrarian historians in the 'Section of Agrarian History' at the university. The Section started 16 years ago, and since then has produced 11 PhDs and a number of other books and articles. For many years the research group worked with the history of animal husbandry (leaf cutting for fodder, fencing, animal care, etc). Janken Myrdal started as a medievalist, and wrote his dissertation (1986) on agriculture and technology change in Sweden 1000–1520. He also has published on later periods, for instance about peasant diaries from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Lately he has been studying global agricultural systems in a long term perspective. He was the editor of the five volume 'Svenska jordbrukets historia' 1999–2003, which is going to be published in the one-volume: 'The Agrarian history of Sweden'.

3.31 Per Lagerås – Long-term changes in land-use according to pollen data

Animal husbandry has always been important in upland regions with poor natural conditions for agriculture. A new series of well-dated pollen diagrams from the South Swedish Uplands reveals an interesting picture of grazing dynamics in a long-term perspective. The pollen data reflect the temporal and spatial extension of grasslands and may be used for tentative interpretations of grazing regimes and pasture management. Thanks to good chronologies, the pollen data may also be compared with the archaeological and historical record. During the Neolithic and Bronze Age much of the uplands were used for extensive grazing, possibly in a system of long-distance herding. During the Iron Age a more intense but still mobile grazing system was introduced in some areas, possibly in combination with shifting cultivation. A widespread introduction of permanent pastures started in the middle ages, in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. After a short period of abandonment and re-growth of woodland, agricultural expansion once again resulted in increased grazing from the sixteenth century onwards, which subsequently resulted in the establishment of heathland. Why heathland expanded during this phase and not earlier may be due to a combination of increased grazing pressure, management by fire and climate deterioration.

Per Lagerås is palaeoecologist at the Swedish National Heritage Board, Archaeological Excavations Dept. in Lund. He has a PhD in Quaternary geology from Lund University and he is Associate Professor at the Department of Agricultural History, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, in Uppsala. His research focuses on long-term agricultural history and cultural landscape development.

3.32 Anna Dahlström – Short- and long-term changes in grazing intensity 1600–1850, applications for current biodiversity

Throughout the agricultural history, gradually intensified land use has been interrupted by longer periods (centuries) of stagnation or crises. In addition, there have been land use shifts on the scale of decades. Variations in the scales of centuries and decades were primarily determined by events outside the control of farmers. There were also variations (in time and space) on even smaller scales. Small-scale dynamics are an essential part of understanding pre-industrial agricultural systems and were largely determined by the way the farmers were running the farm. Here I will explore possible causes behind, and the functionality and ecological effects of, such small-scale variations, by using cadastral maps, livestock tax registers, probate inventories and peasant diaries. The focus lies on animal husbandry and the use of hay meadows and pastures in south-central Sweden 1620–1850, e.g. variations in livestock number, individual strategies in the organisation of grazing and mowing within a hamlet and changes between years.

Anna Dahlström has a PhD in Agrarian History from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. She is currently at the Swedish Biodiversity Centre. She has taught field courses about pre-industrial land use and biodiversity

in Romania and courses in agrarian history and conservation biology at universities. She is participating in the Erasmus IP program, 2010–12 with Germany and Romania. She has recently published a number of papers, including (with L. Lennartsson, J. Wissman, and I. Frycklund), ‘Biodiversity and traditional land use in south-central Sweden – the significance of timing of management’, *Environment and History* 14 (2008) and ‘Historical grazing pressure in south-central Sweden, 1620–1850’, *Grassland Science in Europe* 13 (2008).

3.33 Jesper Larsson – The rise and expansion of transhumance in Sweden 1550–1850

The summer farms (fäbodars) in Sweden were part of an agricultural system from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Based on the investigation of court records, a chronology for the summer farms has been developed. Estimates demonstrate that livestock underwent considerable changes from the second half of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. There was a huge increase of sheep and goats concluded to result from the enlarged market integration. The establishment of summer farms enabled the expansion of stockbreeding and was connected to secondary occupations, and thereby a prerequisite for the division of homesteads.

The summer farms and the agricultural development in Northern Sweden were part of a general European trend in the early modern period. People started to work harder with more division of labour. The increase of work was connected to an increase in trade. The leap in agricultural development in Northern Sweden would not have been possible without the female workforce on the summer farms. The advantage of the agricultural system in the north of Sweden was lost when livestock grazing and fodder collection moved to the fields during the second half of the twentieth century.

Jesper Larsson has a PhD in agrarian history from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala. He works with culture heritage for the county administration in the region Jämtland. His research interest is upland agricultural systems.