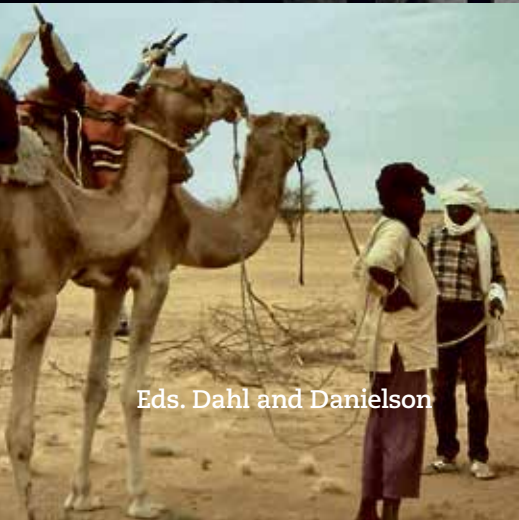




# Faculty of Social Sciences Stockholm University 1964 – 2014



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# Department of Economic History

Ulf Jonsson and Johan Söderberg

IN 1964, when the Faculty of Social Sciences was constituted, the Department of Economic History was a one of the smallest members of the family. Our sister departments in Uppsala, Gothenburg and Lund had in the 1960s been integrated into the education of secondary school history teachers. The future history teacher could choose between specializations in economic or general history, substantially increasing the number of students. In Stockholm, a small number of students from different departments of the Faculty gathered around the seminar table in the one room apartment at Tegnerlunden where the Department was housed. There was also a weekly lecture at Stockholm School of Economics. Thus, it was very much a traditional department, relatively untouched by the beginning of the great expansion of student numbers in the 1960s.

The modest teaching chores gave the acting professor, Ernst Söderlund, a lot of space to pursue his own research. In the last years of his

term, he embarked upon a project concerning the history of *Skandinaviska Banken*. It was in many senses a pioneering work in Swedish banking history. The two volumes on *Skandinaviska Banken* from 1864 to 1939 gave a portrait of a great Swedish commercial bank and its broader role in the history of Swedish banking. Banking history was also the subject of one of Söderlund's PhD candidates, Sven Fritz, who defended his thesis, *Studier i svenskt bankväsende 1772–1789*, in 1967. The thesis deals with an extraordinary troubled period in the history of early Swedish banking and still constitutes an important contribution to our understanding of late 18<sup>th</sup> century monetary history. Two years later, Staffan Högberg's thesis, *Utrikeshandel och sjöfart på 1700-talet: stapelvaror i svensk export och import 1738–1808*, appeared. Högberg's study questioned in an interesting way some of the central views of Eli F. Heckscher on 18<sup>th</sup> century Swedish foreign trade. Both Fritz and Högberg pursued long



**Professor Rolf Adamson, born 1927.**  
(Photo: Per Bergström)

careers at the Department and contributed to teaching and research in a very fruitful way. In 1969, Rolf Adamson became professor at the Department. His arrival coincided with a radical change in the syllabus of history decided on the national level. The future history teachers had to include courses in economic history in their education. In a single stroke the teaching volume increased four times. The existing staff of one professor, two associate professors, Fritz, Högberg and an amanuensis took on a heavy workload, but it was far from sufficient. A number of younger teachers from Gothenburg and Uppsala were recruited on a short term basis. In the early 1970s, a senior lecturer,

Sture Martinius, was recruited from our sister department in Gothenburg. His arrival at the department was a valuable addition to the small senior staff. As all members of the staff, he had to assume a huge teaching burden in these early pioneering years and did so with good humour and loyalty.

The premises at Tegnerlunden ultimately became too narrow, and after an interlude at Tulegatan, the Department finally moved to new locations at Frescati. Together with the Departments of Economics, Business Administration (now Stockholm Business School), Social Anthropology and Political Science we were the first to move to these brand-new buildings in 1970. It was very much a pioneering period, living in a building site that lacked a lot of the services we now take for granted. The library was found in temporary premises. Lunch services were quite rudimentary. No underground connection existed in the first years. The well provided campus of today was still far away.

### **Undergraduate teaching**

The creation of the combined history/economic history programme was a central part of the expansion of undergraduate student enrolment. The teaching volume of the course was some 400 hours per academic year and coincided with the requirement for a full lectureship. In the early 1970s the Department suc-

ceeded to recruit a senior lecturer from our sister department in Uppsala, PhLic Allan Larsson. Larsson was a devoted pedagogue who soon became the main teacher on this combined history/economic history course for future history teachers. He spent the lion's share of his career on this course until his retirement in the late 1990s. It became his fief. Hundreds of future history teachers made their acquaintance with economic history through Larsson's engaged teaching.

However, economic history proper also attracted a growing number of students. In a period when the interest in Marxism and historical materialism was on the rise, economic history became an obvious option for many radical students. Thus, the early 1970s was an exciting period. The Department had to recruit a number of new teachers, often on a part-time basis, while the ordinary staff also increased but at a slower pace. The younger staff, amanuenses and teaching assistants were given a somewhat larger role than today.

The atmosphere of the 1970s was not completely idyllic. In particular, the teaching of theory and method met severe critique from more or less dogmatic Marxist students. The challenge was met by pursuing theoretical pluralism, where different theoretical and methodological perspectives entered the agenda. Rolf Adamson took a very active role in this process, producing a new textbook con-

taining articles from different theoretical schools with introductions posing intellectually challenging questions. Adamson had a strong conviction that theoretical pluralism and openness was an indispensable part of academic education but also a way of stimulating curiosity and intellectual joy.

Certainly, the teaching of theory and method became demanding for teachers as well as for students, but was intellectually very rewarding. The authors of this text vividly remember the difficult tasks we had to face as young teachers when trying to spread the message of theoretical pluralism.

Nevertheless, theoretical pluralism established itself as a general and important trait of the undergraduate courses in general. At each level, a fourth of the syllabus consisted of an array of courses that students could choose. That created a possibility to offer the students intellectual challenges and exploration of new fields. There was, for example, a considerable supply of courses in world and non-European economic history. The time span covered the economic history from antiquity to contemporary issues in developed and developing parts of the world. Some of the options offered did not attract a very large student following. Nevertheless, presenting a broad range of thematic courses became a part of the Department's identity. The younger part of the teaching staff was particularly encouraged to take



**Notice boards in the corridor: a classic mode of communication, almost ousted by Internet development. (Photo: Mats Danielson)**

an active part in the formation of new courses. This contributed to making the Department an attractive workplace. Broad reading habits were encouraged. I (Ulf Jonsson) remember the joy for me as a young teacher exploring new fields, trying to put them into reasonably consistent and understandable courses.

Many students found the possibility to choose, and hopefully find themes close to their

interests, stimulating. This became an asset in attracting students. However, there were also critical voices pointing out that the range of choices was too large. The identity of the Department was too vague, the critics maintained. The critical voices had a point. We had a tendency to constantly add more courses without paying proper attention to what extent they constituted a meaningful whole. Many of the courses did not attract more than a handful of students. We could realistically only offer teaching on a much smaller number of alternatives.

Nevertheless, the wide-ranging interests cultivated in the undergraduate education contributed to making the Department an attractive partner in developing pluri-disciplinary courses. In the mid-1970s, the Department took over the responsibility for two pluri-disciplinary courses, Development Studies and International Relations, involving a number of other departments at the Faculty. These courses were initially given only on a part-time basis as evening classes. Admission was restricted to a fairly small group of 30–50 students. We only offered first term courses. Interested and engaged students were, however, constantly demanding more. The course in Development Studies, involving five different departments, was difficult to manage in the long run. In the late 1990s, the course was closed down. Since two years, however, the Department is involved in a new cross-departmental cooperation on

the theme of Global Development, with the departments of Human Geography, Social Anthropology and Political Science.

Even after the introduction of second and third year courses, the students at these levels were relatively few. Nevertheless, those who remained were a very interested and engaged lot, making teaching on these levels demanding but intellectually rewarding. The debates could be highly animated. Ideological clashes were frequent. For teachers, some knowledge of Marxist exegesis did facilitate the task. Still, openness and scholarly curiosity characterized most of the students. Of course, it is easy to view these days in a nostalgic light. Endless struggles over the exact meaning and interpretation of some of the more obscure passages in the third part of *Capital* could be tedious, but reminiscences of these confrontations tend to fade away. Memory is always selective.

During the 1990s, the problem of recruiting second and third term students became less urgent. The following of second term students in international relations expanded rapidly. This former part-time course now offered a full-time day track, which enlarged the recruitment potential. International relations (IR) became more closely connected to the Department. Instead of part-time teachers recruited on a temporary basis, a small number of full-time teachers contributed in order to secure the necessary continuity and stability. At the turn

of the new millennium, Örjan Appelqvist became a full-time lecturer in international relations. He started off with great enthusiasm and contributed both to the intellectual and pedagogical development of the course. For more than a decade Appelqvist devoted the lion's share of his energy to international relations as a teacher and director of studies. A couple of years later Thomas Jonter, a historian from Uppsala, was recruited. Thomas became the first professor in international relations at the Department. A core of IR teachers was gradually formed. The close connection and cooperation with the Department of Political Science that was so important in the formation of our teaching in international relations continued, and part of the staff came from that environment. Today, the teaching staff that devotes most of their time to IR has expanded considerably. Political scientists coming from different political science environments are giving courses on a part-time basis. The link between us and the Department of Political Science constitutes a valuable asset in developing the IR education. In the last few years, however, the Department has also endeavoured to strengthen the links between economic history proper and international relations, and recruited a number of lecturers with competence in both disciplines.

Over the last decades, the student following has continued to increase. The pace has been more rapid for international relations than for

the old core discipline. The international relations part of the Department is now larger than that of economic history proper. However, there is also a significant flow of students between the two specializations. Students move between the disciplines. Also, and more importantly, there is a high degree of intellectual interaction. The internationalization of research is reflected on the undergraduate level. Both disciplines have changed. A historically informed international political economy (IPE) has become a central element in our teaching of international relations. This direction is very much in tune with the present theoretical discussion among IPE scholars. Influential researchers like Barry Buzan, Richard Little, John Hobson and George Lawson, to name just a few, have recently argued for a more systematic use of historical perspectives to develop the discipline. The long historical view is indispensable for the understanding of how economic interaction and sociocultural forces have changed the global system and the strategic patterns of power and dominance. Within IPE there is a tension between scholars focusing on contemporary themes and historically oriented researchers. Our conception of IPE is clearly on the side of the latter. We also try to make another strand of IPE that takes the gender dimension into account, labelled 'everyday international political economy', a part of the curriculum.

World and global economic history have expanded in the curriculum of the old core discipline. Historically, Swedish and European economic history was the dominant component. The change towards a greater place for non-European themes started already in the 1970s, but this trend has been further reinforced over the last years. Global history focusing on the economic and social interaction between different parts of the world in a long term perspective serves as a further bridge between economic history proper and international relations. Today, global history is a vital part of the intellectual landscape. At global history conferences IPE scholars, economic historians, historians and a bunch of other social scientists meet and exchange views in a dynamic and fruitful manner. We try to capture and reflect this in our undergraduate education.

Finally, the expansion of international relations and the somewhat slower increase in student numbers in economic history have contributed to enlarging the basis for third term and advanced undergraduate studies. At the advanced level, the two disciplines cooperate and complement each other even more than in the earlier stages where some of the basic elements have to be emphasized.

The first decade of the new millennium was characterized by the implementation of the Bologna system. Although some aspects of this work were quite tedious, and some parts of the

framework may seem less fruitful, overall the intellectual mobilization around important pedagogical issues gave the daily work at the Department a new energy. In particular the advanced level (master's studies) did profit from this concentrated effort. The Bologna model, offering a broad range of thematic courses for the students to choose from, is well-adapted to the traditions of our Department. Cooperation with other departments was encouraged. A new master's programme with the departments of Human and Physical Geography 'Globalization, Environment and Social Change', has proved to be highly successful with Human Geography as host department. Students from all corners of the world gathered around a common interest in understanding the global challenges of our time. Within the programme, our Department is responsible for one of the four mandatory first-year courses. We also give two optional courses in the second year: 'A New Global Food Order? Global/local Encounters, Contradictions, Tensions and Conflicts', and 'Feminist Theories, Economic Restructuring and the Gendered Global Division of Labour 1600–2000'. It was and is a pleasure to take part in teaching and developing the programme. The construction of the programme is an example of collegial cooperation at its very best. There is a constant respectful and fruitful interaction between the departments. The advanced levels of international relations and

economic history proper also gained from our presence in the program. The optional courses are open to our own students as well as to those studying in the program. The number of courses in English open to Swedish and international students has expanded rapidly. We had offered some basic undergraduate courses in English before the Bologna process, but it was a marginal part of our teaching. A course on the historical and theoretical problems of European citizenship was given during more than a decade and attracted a stable and fairly large number of students over the years. Now we can offer a large number of courses in English, although primarily on the advanced level.

Having such a substantial part of the advanced level courses in English is, of course, not without problems. However, this is a difficulty we share with the rest of the Faculty and a fact we have to accept. A small country with a small language can never expect to attract international students by giving courses only in Swedish. Internationalization of university education is here to stay. Student mobility over national borders has always been a valuable part of higher learning. During the heydays of the nation state system, the intellectual exchange on the personal level became more restricted. Student exchange requires a *lingua franca*, once it was Latin, later on French and now it is English. In the literature and the intellectual content of courses we have to open up for perspec-





Like in other departments, bright cloths are the last resort for handling the white austerity of the rooms and corridors of Södra huset. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

tives from traditions other than the Anglo-Saxon, even if it is served through translations.

The cooperation with other departments in the Faculty does not only involve master's students. We are also part of a BA programme in 'Global Development' hosted by the Department of Social Anthropology. The BA programme in 'International Relations and Eco-

nomic History' also involves several other departments of the Faculty. In the fourth and fifth semesters, students can choose relevant courses in, for example, political science, human geography, gender studies, sociology, and economics. The gender perspective constitutes a significant part of the basic courses in the program. Thus, the role of gender studies in

our research profile is well reflected in all of the undergraduate programs and courses. Furthermore, the programs reflect a more extensive and systematic cooperation between the different departments of the faculty than we had before. In many senses, cooperation between different disciplines is easier to realize within a programme rather than within a course. With in a full BA or MA program, each discipline can develop its perspectives in a more extensive form and contribute to a deeper understanding of the issues covered in curriculum.

The renewal induced by the Bologna process did not only cover the advanced level but also undergraduate education in general. A fairly radical process of change can inspire efforts and have effects larger than the original purpose. You start thinking in new directions. One effect was the renewal of the part-time evening classes. Instead of giving a full 30 ECTS credits course, we embarked upon shorter thematic courses of a new kind. An interesting experiment was courses which combined fiction and economic history. The initiative came from two of the more experienced senior lecturers, Ronny Pettersson and Yvonne Svanström, who later became teachers in two of the courses. This adventure was developed in a very cheerful and creative atmosphere by a group of teachers who also later engaged in the teaching, including one of the authors of this article, Ulf Jonsson. Cross-reading of economic historical and

fictional texts was a central element in the curriculum. Which aspects of a past reality does a fictional text reveal? How does it differ from the knowledge produced by professional economic historians? Those were the overarching question posed. We gave four short courses, two juxtaposing Swedish fiction with domestic scholarship in economic history and two covering the world history. The First World War constituted the chronological dividing line.

These courses attracted a very engaged and interested student following. For the teachers it was an extremely intellectually rewarding experience. The discussions were animated and full of surprises.

Over the years the Department has been heavily involved in summer courses. This year we are only giving one such course, 'The Swedish Model'. Thematic afternoon courses have also been an important part of the teaching programme. For the moment we give just one, 'Gender, Power and Work in Sweden, 1800 to 2000'. Such courses depend on the availability of interested teachers. When the ordinary programs expand there is less room for efforts of this type. Nevertheless, it is a resource that can be easily activated.

Undergraduate education at the Department is, of course, not without difficulties. We are struggling as much as any other university department with what we regard as insufficient resources. Still, there are also achievements to

be proud of. Hopefully, we have contributed to give the students a more complex understanding of how the world we live in has evolved and equipped them with analytical tools useful in a large number of societal arenas.

### **Graduate and post-doc research**

Sixty doctoral dissertations have been published at the Department of Economic History since 1969. Some patterns with regard to choice of subject matter and period of investigation deserve a comment. Four aspects will be discussed below: (i) a shift towards more recent history, (ii) the internationalization of the fields of study, (iii) the growing share of women in the production of dissertations, and (iv) the tendency of dissertations to grow in volume.

(i) An obvious tendency is that dissertations increasingly deal with relatively modern periods. This trend dates as far back as 1970 (Adamson 1988:56). Most dissertations from the Department presented before the turn of millennium, however, still dealt with the pre-industrial era. Not more than one fourth of the dissertations were devoted to the period after 1900. This has changed dramatically in recent years: eight dissertations out of ten have an emphasis on the period after 1900.

To some extent, this chronological shift is due to the fact that before the year 2000 the research at the Department was dominated by

the Agrarian project (see below), which dealt with nineteenth century conditions only. However, the movement towards modern history is deeper than that, and is well-known not only in economic history but also in other historical disciplines in Sweden. The growing contemporary orientation reflects an ambition to understand and explain the far-reaching transformation of society today. Perhaps it can also be seen as an expression of a renewed political engagement that turned to other fields when the interest in political history weakened during the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>1</sup>

(ii) A connected phenomenon is that international fields of study have gained in popularity. Yet, this trend is weaker than could be expected. Before the turn of millennium, about one dissertation out of ten dealt with international economic history or international relations, a share which since then has doubled. This proportion is expected to grow significantly in the next few years as it is well in line with the research profile among current doctoral students.

The internationalization of research fields has had the effect of a growing number of dissertations being written in English. Before the turn of millennium, only one dissertation out of ten was published in English. After that date, the proportion has been around one third. Swedish still dominates as the language

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<sup>1</sup> This is argued by Arne Jarrick in (Jarrick 2000:40-43).

of dissertations. It is mainly dissertations dealing with international subjects that are written in English, and that share is as we saw still rather low.

(iii) A third tendency is that the proportion of women among authors of dissertations has risen, from 29 per cent before the turn of millennium to 41 per cent thereafter. The number of PhD students was small during the 1970s, but expanded to comprise about thirty at the turn of millennium. For many years most of these students were males. The proportion of female students was about one quarter at the beginning of the new century, but has since then risen substantially. Today there is a clear majority of women in graduate studies. At the same time, the total number of PhD students is smaller than it was at the turn of millennium.

The changing sex proportion has not had any appreciable effects on the age at PhD completion, the choice concerning the period of investigation, or the length of the thesis. Neither has the choice of an international research field or the language of the thesis been affected. There is, however, a relation with regard to the use of a systematic gender perspective. We will soon return to this.

(iv) A fourth tendency is that dissertations have become more voluminous. Dissertations defended before the year 2000 comprised on average 261 pages, whereas those put forward

after the turn of millennium can boast an average of 335 pages (in April, 2014).

This reality is far from the norm of 160 pages that the 1969 national reform of graduate education established. The upward curve is not unique to economic history at Stockholm University. The length of a dissertation does not tell us anything about its quality. Yet, it is not unreasonable to think that more voluminous manuscripts take more time to finish and contribute towards a prolongment of the study time. There may be several reasons behind the tendency towards more voluminous dissertations. Word processing has made it easier to write long texts, and new technology of printing has reduced the cost of publication. However, this can hardly be the main explanation. An important factor could be that the student believes that a future research career is made problematic unless he/she can display a voluminous dissertation. Expected competition among post-docs can thus play a part (Lindgren 2004:631-39, Lindberg 2004:188)

The national reform of 1969 also aimed at increasing the number of young PhDs. This has not been realized at our Department. The mean (as well as median) age at completing the PhD is 41 years and has not changed appreciably over time.

What has happened, then, with the thematic content of the dissertations at the Department?

Research was for several years during the 1970s and early 1980s dominated by the so-called Agrarian project, the actual name of which was “Structural change and mechanisms of adaptation in Swedish agrarian society during the period of population growth in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries” (*Det svenska agrarsamhällets strukturförändringar och anpassningsmekanismer under folkökningsperioden på 1700- och 1800-talen*). The project was headed by Professor Rolf Adamson and was financially supported by the Council for Social Science Research and thereafter by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Fund. Six doctoral dissertations were published from the project. Even today this appears to be the biggest single project in terms of staff that has existed at the Department.

Research in the Agrarian project dealt with questions regarding estate organization, socio-economic stratification, the development of poverty, the introduction of new tools, and enclosure movements. There was a considerable variety in the theoretical approaches used, where international research discussion gave inspiration and sociological theory played a larger part than did formal, neoclassical economic theory. Institutional economic theory was beginning to be seriously explored, however. One of the approaches that was discussed was the theory of the peasant economy formulated by the Russian agrarian economist, A.V.

Chayanov. It tried to account for the fact that small production units based on family labour continued to be viable in agriculture. However, Chayanov’s approach proved to be less useful than expected, due to important differences between Russia and Sweden (Adamson 1988:52 f)

The transformation of Swedish agriculture soon became an attractive field of research at other economic history departments in the country as well. Much of the existing knowledge of the agrarian sector during the nineteenth century is the result of extensive research carried out during the 1970s and 1980s.

During the 1980s, graduate studies expanded at the Department, and also became more varied thematically. One of the new fields was that of labour and industrial history. A recurrent theme was the relation between capital and labour and the causes of change in the labour process. These studies were often inspired by historical materialism. Harry Braverman’s thesis on the degradation of work under capitalism was lively debated, but in the end it received limited support. Later on, studies of industrial history tended to focus more on entrepreneurial history and innovations, usually with a basis in Schumpeterian theory. In several cases there has been a strong international orientation of these studies, dealing with topics such as Indian industrial history or microfinance in the Caribbean.

A rather unexpected new feature of the research profile of the Department appeared in



The Department resides at the 9<sup>th</sup> (topmost) floor of Building A. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

the mid-1980s as Arne Jarrick defended his thesis on psychological social history. He argued that psychology, especially psychoanalysis and Piaget's cognitive psychology, could fruitfully be used in historical study. Empirically, Jarrick made an attempt to understand the Moravian Brethren in Sweden in the eighteenth century by means of an analysis of autobiographies. Jarrick formulated an approach in terms of mentality which became a point of reference in several dissertations. These studies dealt with, e.g., secularization in the eighteenth century, the treatment of children during the same century, and the care of the psychologically disabled. As Jarrick was appointed professor of history in

1997 and left the Department of Economic History, this research profile was no longer upheld.

Another new turn of research at the Department in the mid-1980s was the introduction of the study of medieval economic history. The first dissertation with this focus was published by Janken Myrdal who investigated medieval arable farming in Sweden. From the late 1990s onwards, medieval and early modern economic history has been studied in three additional dissertations, and has also attracted some post-graduate researchers.

As a result of this slow but cumulative process, the Department today is the only one in the country which can present broad research



Classic Ethiopian folk painting on leather reflects the strong international interest of the department. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

based on medieval sources, as well as on time series with a length of up to 750 years. What may be labelled ‘long-term transformation of economic and social systems’ has become one of the profile areas. Recently, three researchers from the Department (Rodney Edvinsson, Bo Franzén and Johan Söderberg) have collaborated with the Riksbank, Sweden’s central bank, as well as with economic historians from other parts of the country, in the project ‘Historical

Monetary and Financial Statistics for Sweden: Exchange Rates, Prices and Wages, 1277–2008’. A volume with this title, published in 2010, presents new statistics on the transformation of the Swedish monetary system from the medieval era until today, focusing on exchange rates, consumer prices and wages. Another volume dealing with house prices, stock returns, national accounts and the Riksbank balance sheet, 1620–2012, will be published in 2014.

Around the turn of millennium, dissertations with an explicit gender perspective began to come forward at the Department. This line of research received firm support as Ulla Wikander, a well-known pioneer in the field of gender history, was appointed professor of economic history at the Department in 1996. A strong profile has successively been built up in this field. The interdisciplinary project, ‘Gender, citizenship and public policy. The transformation of Swedish society in a gender perspective, 1848–2000’ (*‘Genus, medborgarskap och offentlig politik. Det svenska samhällets omvandling i ett genusperspektiv, 1848–2000’*), involving researchers from the departments of Political Science, History and History of Ideas, played an important role in the formative stage. The gender perspective has widened the scope of economic history through researching gendered informal economies such as the sex market, pornography and domestic work. The theoretical side of gender research has been further developed since Professor Paulina de los

Reyes joined the Department in 2009. She is one of the researchers taking part in the introduction of the concept of intersectionality, which has been shown to be an inspiring and useful tool for the analysis of power and inequality.

The theme of gender and economic history has mainly attracted female doctoral students. However, there are also examples of postgraduates turning towards gender studies at the Department after completing their PhDs.

On the other hand, there are fields which predominantly have caught the interest of male students. In particular this applies to the history of economic ideas, macroeconomics and industrial history. Out of a total of about twenty dissertations in these fields, not more than two have been written by women.

### Current trends

As is obvious from the account given above, the research carried out at the Department is, to say the least, multifaceted. There is an obvious need to make priorities and to focus on a smaller number of research areas.

Therefore, a research strategy for the Department has recently been formulated. This document states that the Department of Economic History has two main research areas: ‘economic history’ and ‘international relations’. In both areas social science research is undertaken based on historical source material. One example is the benefit that research in international politi-

cal economy can have from a historical perspective on globalization. By emphasizing fields where the Department has comparative research skills, it wishes to connect the two areas and create an internationally competitive scholarly environment. We also strive to increase publication in leading journals and to raise the level of external research funding.

Research in economic history explores how mankind has solved sustenance problems over time, nationally as well as internationally. Within the overarching theme ‘Long-term Transformation of Economic and Social Systems’ three areas are central:

- (i) Why does economic development occur, and what explains it? Within this area research is undertaken with both a Swedish and a global perspective. The aim is to discern forces behind the divide of the world into rich and poor regions during a time period of several centuries.
- (ii) How does gender and economy interact in society? Within this field questions pertaining to the historical gender division of labour in the light of normative perceptions of male and female connotations on different levels of society.
- (iii) How has the exploitation of natural resources over time interacted with social organization and technological restructuring and what are the societal effects of this?



In recent years, the field of international political economy has become one of the main areas of research at the Department. This field is connected to international relations. Research on the redistribution of natural resources and power in the global system, from a historical perspective, has priority. Three areas are seen as particularly important:

(i) The interplay and the friction between local and global arenas. Focus is on places and human beings' roles in the global system and consequences of shifts in resources and power for economic and social development. Questions of gender, ethnicity and class are central.

(ii) How flows of commodities, services, human beings and ideas interact and shape relations between agents, nations and macro regions. A central issue is how markets and political organization have been formed from a historical perspective.

(iii) The relationship between natural resources, energy and security in the international system, the development of global markets for water, oil and nuclear power and the political security consequences of this development.

A significant step forward for the field of international political economy is the recent start of Stockholm University Graduate School of International Studies (SIS). SIS is a comprehensive faculty and multidisciplinary

programme for PhD students with financial support from the Board of Humanities, Law and Social Sciences at Stockholm University. The purpose of the SIS is to combine the strong points of research from the various institutions. It will offer a broad curriculum, strengthening interdisciplinary research and the international profile of Stockholm University in the field of international studies. A competitive international and multidisciplinary research programme is developed in collaboration with the Department of Human Geography ('global urbanism'), the Department of Political Science ('international and European policies'), the Department of Media Studies (Division of Journalism, Media and Communication) and the Faculty of Law ('public international law'). The PhD students will participate in SIS courses, receive tutorial support from the SIS departments, participate in SIS organized seminars and take advantage of the broad international network within the SIS.

### **Concluding remarks**

Over the fifty years that the Faculty of Social Sciences has existed at Stockholm University, the Department of Economic History has evolved from a marginal position to a workplace employing more than 40 persons. We have a thriving undergraduate education with a total exceeding one thousand students in the



Members of the Department who are awarded with prizes are also honoured on the wall of one of the corridors. Here Janken Myrdal, Rasmus Fleischer, Fia Sundevall, Johanna Raeder, Rodney Edvinsson and Ulrika Söderlind. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

calendar year of 2013. There are two distinct parts, ‘economic history’ proper and ‘international relations’, giving us a stable base. The regular staff includes four full-time professors, nine senior lectures and a number of part-time teachers and post docs. We are offering a broad social science education and training. The strength of the undergraduate teaching in economic his-

tory and international relations is the extensive range of themes and the plurality of perspectives.

The advanced level is far more extensive than it has ever been. The recruitment potential for graduate students is more stable. It is quite a considerable development. Undergraduate teaching in economic history is no longer just a

complement for some interested students in economics. ‘Economic history’ and ‘international relations’ do recruit students coming from most of the faculty disciplines and our students continue their education at a broad range of departments.

The research and graduate education at the Department of Economic History has undergone major transformations since the 1960s. What is perhaps most striking is that it has maintained a theoretical and methodological openness, combined with an ambition to carry out solid empirical work, throughout this long period. In recent years, the changes have been unusually comprehensive, affecting all levels of teaching and research. This is primarily due to the fact that the field of economic history has widened to include more elements from international relations. As a consequence, economic history is not quite what it used to be. It has become not only more international in its orientation but also more open to the study of political organization and power. Even when researching Swedish themes, the interaction between the national or local/regional context and global forces are kept in mind. The contribution of economic historical research is to put forward the indispensable longer view and this is very much part of our long term research strategy. In the future, research at the Department and the perspectives and theoretical approaches from economic history and international political economy will continue to enrich each other.



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Researchers and PhD students of the Department of Economic History were often placed at the Red Cottage annex at Frescati Backe. Guests remember interdisciplinary seminars marked by intellectual creativity as well as a gourmet culture. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

The Department of Economic History is mainly located in Building A in Södra huset. (Photo: Eva Dalin)





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