

The Publication Policies and Practices of the Nordic Archives

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Abstract: After briefly introducing the subject of publishing by Nordic archives, the author provides a brief historical overview of archival developments in each of the Nordic countries. He then discusses many of the significant publications produced by the archives of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.

About the author: Dr. Harald Jørgensen was educated at the University of Copenhagen and the University of Århus. He began his professional career as an archivist at the National Archives in Copenhagen in 1934. In 1956 he was named chief archivist. Between 1962 and 1977 he served as director of the Provincial Archives in Copenhagen. Dr. Jørgensen has published a wide variety of archival and historical studies and has edited several volumes of Danish archival journals. He has been awarded honorary membership in several organizations, including the International Council on Archives and the Danish Archives Union.

Introduction

For more than one hundred years, the central archives of the Nordic countries have been issuing various types of publications ranging from annual reports to edited documents to historical monographs. Under different forms and under changing conditions, the archives of all countries have carried out active publishing programs. The practical results of these policies have depended largely upon the changing personal interests of the several directors. Periods of reduced activity have been followed by periods of renewed efforts.

In some of the written instructions for the directors there are fixed rules concerning the publications policies. Section five of the instruction for the Danish director, which was signed by the minister for church and education on 16 December 1896, contains a requirement that the literary activity of the central archives be planned by the director. He is required to publish periodic reports of the activities of the archives as well as inventories of the collections. The Swedish instruction of 6 September 1924 is more detailed. Every year the director is required to publish a report on the activities of the archives and, in addition, to issue articles and reports concerning subjects of interest for the archives. Furthermore, he is obligated to publish inventories and studies concerning the administrative history and other aspects of Swedish history. The latest edition of the Swedish instruction, dated 3 December 1965, is more brief. Section 7 stipulates that the archives shall facilitate the access to both Swedish and international archival materials, publish a report on the activities of the archives, and issue original archival material of interest for scientific research work. Although the formulation is brief, the meaning is quite clear. Publishing is one of the duties of the archives.

Two decisive conditions are necessary in order to fulfill the requirements for publishing activities. The staff of the institution must be interested, and it must possess the necessary academic background. It is also necessary that the institution have sufficient funds to pay for the printing.

As for the preconditions of the staff, it is evident that the majority of archivists in the Nordic countries during the past century have taken a vivid and positive interest in publishing. The list of their private publications concerning history, both Nordic and international, is very long. Many of them have also participated in publishing long series of original historical sources. With very few exceptions, all directors of the central archives have been prominent historians. Some of them had been professors of history at universities prior to being named archivist. To be eligible for nomination, every archivist is required to possess a university degree. Some have held doctor's degrees. Most degrees have been in history. Demonstrated skill in writing and publishing is also a prerequisite. Because of this staff policy, the archival agencies have been anxious to give the staff the opportunity to preserve and develop their skills. Archivists have not been required to carry out a full and normal working day, and they may be on leave for six months or more with full salary. As long as these publishing policies are retained, archivists must be given only those tasks that demand a special skill, such as preparing publications. Temporary conditions can complicate this procedure, but both the agency and its professional staff must be interested in overcoming these difficulties in the best possible way.

Normally, it is preferred that the preparation and the completion of a publication be carried out in the institution and within the normal work schedule. In practice, however, many archival publi-

cations have been completed outside work time on the employees' own time. The archivists involved have found the publications so interesting that they have completed them. In such cases the agency has been able to pay some salary. It should be noted, however, that the older generation of archivists was more willing to undertake this kind of work than is the younger one. It is an undisputed fact that the present directors have more trouble than their predecessors had in convincing their younger staff to accept jobs on a private basis.

The second necessary condition for publishing is, of course, possessing the necessary funds. The agency must have sufficient funds at its disposal to pay salaries and printing costs. Most Nordic archival institutions have had a fixed amount budgeted for publishing purposes. Never have all requests been fulfilled by the minister of finance; however, the long list of publications demonstrates that considerable amounts of money have been provided for publications. When budgeted monies have been inadequate, the archives have turned to the great scientific foundations for additional support. On several occasions, the needed money has been donated. At present, all Nordic archival institutions are faced with great financial problems because of the general economic crisis. This unfavorable situation coincides with the heavenward flight of printing costs. This most unfortunate situation can hinder many future useful and desirable publications. Instead of using the traditional high-quality printing materials and methods, archives have been forced to use more simple and less expensive means of production. Some archival institutions of the Nordic countries have already purchased their own primitive printing equipment.

A General View of Nordic Archives

Nordic archives have existed for over three centuries. The original and main purposes of these institutions were to receive records from the central administration, to safeguard the materials, and to prepare them for use by the existing royal administration. Archives were established as instruments of service for the government and for the administration. As a rule, unauthorized persons were not granted access to the records. During the eighteenth century, the restrictive policies were changed; and historians and other scholars were allowed to use the noncurrent records. It became necessary to arrange for special research rooms for the private visitors, and the archival institutions were obliged to prepare finding aids for the new users. During the following years, professional historians found their way to the archives. In addition, many ordinary citizens entered the reading rooms to study the history of their own families or the histories of the parishes or the towns in which they were born or in which their families originated. It became necessary to arrange for larger reading rooms and to prepare different sorts of finding aids to help these visitors, who had no training in research methods.

In the Nordic countries, most of the archival institutions are visited by a very great number of researchers of all ages, both men and women. In 1980 the central archives of Helsingfors, Finland, registered more than 30,000 visitors; and the central archives in Copenhagen, Denmark, 21,369; Stockholm, Sweden, 16,193; and Oslo, Norway, 13,105. Several of the provincial archives also had considerable numbers of visitors. The provincial archives in Gothenburg, Sweden, had 15,363 visitors; and the

provincial archives in Copenhagen and Abo, Finland, had 14,594 and 10,243. The reception of so many visitors and the practical service given to them demand a considerable portion of the time of the staffs and the resources of the institutions. Once more it must be stressed that proper and adequate facilities are of the greatest importance.

The creation of the public archives of the Nordic countries dates from an early time. Sweden is said to have the oldest archival institution. An archival bureau was established in connection with the reorganization of the Swedish central administration in 1618. A secretary within the bureau was placed in charge of the old records. In 1665 the Danish king Frederik III designated his librarian the royal archivist and gave him responsibility for the old and noncurrent archives. This new institution was called the Royal Secret Archives (*Gehejmearkivet*). Since 1720 it has been housed in a building commissioned by King Frederik IV solely for the purpose of preserving the records of Denmark. This building is still used by the present central archives of Denmark, and it represents the oldest continuously used archival building in Europe. When the political union between Denmark and Norway ended in 1814, a new Norwegian central administration was established in place of the former joint Danish-Norwegian central administration located in Copenhagen. This administration was given its own central archives in 1840. Similar circumstances surround the archives of Finland. In 1809 the union between Sweden and Finland and their joint central administration, located in Stockholm, were dissolved. Finland became an independent province of Russia with its own administration, first in Abo and later in Helsingfors. In connection with the administration, a special institution was established to take care of archives

dating to before 1809 as well as the records of the new Finnish government. Iceland was granted its own archival institution in 1899. It was called the national archives, although there was still a political union between Denmark and Iceland. In 1918 the union was transformed to a personal union, with only the king and foreign policy in common. In 1944 Iceland was proclaimed an independent republic. The political connection between Finland and Russia ended in 1917 as a result of the Russian Revolution, and Finland became an independent republic the next year.

For a very long period the archival institutions in the Nordic countries, called "*Rigsarkiver*," received only the records of the government and the central institutions. The regional and local records were kept by the local authorities and, of course, were not open to the public. In 1851 Norway took a new archival initiative by establishing a special local archival institution in the town of Trondheim, in the northern part of the country. Before the end of the nineteenth century, Denmark and Sweden established similar institutions. As an independent republic, Finland has arranged for the same system with local archives active in designated geographical districts. These local archives are normally called "*landsarkiver*." They are all under the leadership of the director of the national central archives, and they share staff and budget with the central archives. The only exception is Iceland, where the national archives receive records from both central and local authorities. Today Denmark has four provincial archives, Finland eight, Norway seven, and Sweden seven. The town archives in the Swedish cities of Stockholm and Malmö act as provincial archives in their respective areas. Furthermore, in Stockholm and Helsingfors there are special archival institutions for

the records of the various military forces. They are independent institutions, but the director of the central archives must grant permission for the destruction of archival materials. A formerly private Danish archival institution called "Erhvervsarkivet" was taken over by the state in 1962. This archival institution receives records from private companies and firms—industry, banking, commerce, and trade—and from the organizations related to these activities.

The main object of the provincial archives is to receive and to keep the records of the regional and local state authorities. To a certain extent, records from the municipal administration of towns and rural districts are received as are ecclesiastical records. All Nordic countries belonged to the Roman Catholic church until the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Lutheran church became the state church. The state took over all the property of the Roman Catholic church; and since that date all officials of the church, from the bishops to the ordinary minister, have been nominated by the government. Therefore all ecclesiastical records, including the parish registers, are state records and must be delivered to the provincial archives. Registers from all private religious societies recognized by the state, such as the present Roman and Greek Catholic churches, the Jewish community, and the Reformed church, are under the same obligation. The Mormon church has not been recognized by the Danish government. Finland has no state church, but the dominant Lutheran church is a private institution. Under the terms of a special agreement with the Finnish archival authorities, the ecclesiastical records together with the parish registers normally are delivered to the provincial archives.

The collections of the Nordic archives date back to the early Middle Ages, or to

the eleventh century. Most of this material is kept in the central archives, and a greater part of it is of ecclesiastical origin and was taken over by the state in connection with the Lutheran Reformation. Also included are records and documents issued by the royal administration and by private persons, most of it of judicial content. From the end of the fifteenth century, the extent of the material from the central administration increased, and collections include both correspondence and accounts. Among the correspondence are original letters sent to the government with attached documents. Letterbooks with copies of all outgoing royal letters are kept in great number. Among the numerous accounts are the growing mass of lists of royal receipts and expenditures. The complete list of customs duties from the ships sailing between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea has international significance. From the end of the fifteenth century to 1856, all ships passing the sound at Elsinore had to pay a recognition fee to the Danish state. The accounts for this long period have been collected. On an average the material kept in the provincial archives is not as old as the records kept in the national archives. The collections of regional and local material dating back to the beginning of the eighteenth century are relatively complete.

It is the existence of this rich and rather old archival material that forms the basis for the publication policies of the Nordic countries. It must be noticed, however, that the archival agencies do not have a monopoly on publishing archival documentation. In all the Nordic countries scientific societies are involved in publishing material based upon historical sources. As members or directors of these societies, many archivists, either from personal interest or as a part of their jobs, have been able to participate in this activity. All of the countries have had a special interest in publishing the

archival material from the Middle Ages. Most such records are written in Latin on parchment. These publications are generally issued under the title of "Diplomatarium." The Swedish diplomatarium is now organized by the Swedish national archives, which has created a special department with a staff of specialists whose only object is to proceed with this very important publication. The Swedish central archives also has taken over the publication of the great national biographical handbook, *Svensk Biografisk Leksikon*. The Danish diplomatarium is published by a private scientific society. It was started about 1935 with the publishing of a facsimile edition of all existing documents up to the year 1340. Since then, each new volume has been edited in two parts. One is printed in the original language with the necessary notes; the other is a translation into Danish.

Nordic archives all produce several different types of publications. The first main group consists of publications of various types intended to help visitors in their use of the existing collections of documents. To this group belong first of all surveys of all the collections kept by the archival institution in question. These guides contain descriptions of existing finding aids, indexes, and other special instruments to explore the material.

More detailed information can be drawn out from special inventories, called "registraturer" in Danish. Each inventory deals with a single department, institution, or body and gives detailed lists of all existing volumes, files, or other archival units of a particular department. In addition, more or less explicit statements concerning the administrative development of the department, institution, or body in question are often included. These help the user to find documents. In addition to a

description of the history of the administration, inventories contain lists of members of the staff of the department in question with details regarding their appointments and field of activity. Very often research has been started as a result of a letter of inquiry. A study of the existing lists of administrative personnel gives a reference to further documentation. Finally, special indexes to the different inventories are attached.

Another group of publications covers the edition of original historical source material, either in extenso or in extracts. Texts of treaties or other judicial documents, extracts of the out-going letters from a ministry or department, or reports from a political council have been published. The existing quantity of documents is inexhaustible, and selecting the best or most appropriate ones is usually necessary. Historical material coming from central agencies of administration or from councils or committees of high political importance is generally chosen for publication. Series of important accounts or particular parts of accounts of interest to a greater group of historians have sometimes been published. Sometimes only examples of certain historical materials, such as sentences passed by a court of justice, have been published. All publications of historical source material must have both name and subject indexes.

The guides, the inventories, and the editions of historical source material are the most common archival publications. Archivists from the Nordic countries sometimes discuss the possibility that the archives also publish common historical studies. Is it possible for an archival agency to issue pure scientific studies made by a member of the staff? In my opinion it will only be possible under the condition that the subject of the study in question is of special interest for the institution. The study can deal with the

historical development of both the central or the local administration, a subject of decisive interest for all archival institutions. Another important group of problems must be the publishing of the results of studies concerning the different branches of archival science in the broadest sense of the word. Examples include the study of principles of records management, photographic techniques, and means of restoration. Finally, material for education of archival science must belong to natural subjects to be put on the publication list of an archival institution.

In some Nordic countries there exists a tradition of issuing regular publications informing the public about the normal work of the institution. Some of these publications are printed every fifth year or more frequently. They are very useful also for the staff, who very often have to look back to the past. Of special interest for the historians are the regular lists of accessions. In my opinion, these reports must be considered as a quite normal and important part of the public relations work of an archival institution. It is necessary that these reports be edited on a fixed day as close as possible to the end of the treated period. Annual reports must respect this requirement to the utmost. An annual report published much later than the beginning of the new year has little common interest. Reports on the activity should cover at least three years or more. When editing annual reports there is often a tendency to treat many details of only temporary interest. In a report covering a number of years, many of these unimportant details can be dropped, since they no longer have real significance. For the practical user of long series of annual reports, the reading may cause a great deal of trouble and irritation when the reports are filled with trivialities.

Archival Publications of Nordic Countries

Denmark

A new period of the political history of Denmark started in 1848, and the following year Denmark got its first democratic constitution. A new period began for the archives as well. The director of the royal archives, C. F. Wegener, was asked by the government to open the archives to the public and to publish annual reports from the archives. As the result of this request, Wegener issued the publication *Arsberetninger fra det kgl. gehejmearkiv* ("Reports from the Royal Archives") in eight volumes issued between 1852 and 1883. They contain not only reports of the activity but also several publications of original historical source material primarily from older Danish history. The more modern periods were of no interest to the very conservative director.

Wegener retired in 1882, at age eighty, and was succeeded by the much younger historian A. D. Jørgensen. The new director took the initiative to reform the administration of the Danish archives. A new law was passed in 1889 and still constitutes the basis of the present archival system in Denmark. As an active historian, A. D. Jørgensen also was the promoter of a modern policy of publication; and his many new proposals and intentions were carried out by his successors. Jørgensen also succeeded in procuring the funds necessary to carry out a publishing program.

A. D. Jørgensen recognized the necessity of publishing inventories of the historical collections of old central administrative departments. He planned a series of such inventories, which was published under the title *Vejledende arkivregistraturer* ("Guiding Inventories"). The first volume was edited in

1886 and was followed by twenty volumes by 1978. Most of these inventories deal with records older than 1848. The twentieth volume, published in 1976, contains records of the central administration of the colonies from 1848 to 1918 (*Koloniernes centralbestyrelse*). The publication deals with the administration of the Virgin Islands, which were sold to the United States in 1917. Only one of these important volumes has been published in English, under the title *Danish Department of Foreign Affairs Until 1770* (Copenhagen, 1973).

Recently great difficulties in both personnel and in funding have arisen in connection with printing these special publications. This is unfortunate at a time when the need for inventories has grown considerably because of the increasing number of visitors to the archives. Therefore, in 1963 a new series of inventories was established in the central archives. The volumes in this series are reproduced in mimeograph rather than in the traditional printed form. They are published under the common title *Foreløbige arkivregistraturer* ("Temporary Inventories") and are produced in limited quantities. A special group relates to the various collections of private papers kept in the central archives. It is impossible to enumerate all the publications, but the number is great as new items are added to the collection every year.

In the series "Guiding Inventories" only the fifth volume deals with archival materials kept in the provincial archives. In 1933 a survey was issued of parish registers delivered to all the provincial archives (*Danmarks kirkebøger: En oversigt over deres væsentlige indhold indtil 1891*). Since the early 1970s all the provincial archives together have published a total of about fifty volumes of "Temporary Inventories," many of which are currently out of print. The dif-

ferent inventories deal with records received from both ecclesiastical and secular agencies. Many of them contain introductions to the administrative histories of the different agencies as well as lists of the directing officials.

As a supplement to the inventories, the central archives have edited other publications, which also must be mentioned. In 1889 a survey of the civil administration and its different departments and offices was issued covering the period 1660–1848 (*Den danske civile centraladministration embedsetat*). It contains lists of officials. New volumes of this publication dealing with the period 1848–1935 were published in 1893, 1921, and 1936. A similar description concerning the central administration of the army was published in two volumes in 1975–76 (*Den landmilitære centraladministration 1660–1763*). In addition, special catalogues of the diplomatic personnel until 1914 (*Danske gesandter og gesandtskabs personale indtil 1914*; 1952), of the members of the upper courts of justice until 1919 (*Appellinstansernes embedsetat 1660–1919*; 1928), and the provincial governors from 1660 to 1848 (*Stiftamtmaend og amtmaend i kongeriget Danmark og Island 1660–1848*; 1895) have been published.

In 1916 former professor of history Kr. Erslev took over the post of director. Among his many initiatives, the preparation of a common guide of all the holdings of the central archives must be mentioned. The publication, entitled *Rigsarkivet og hjælpenidlerne til dets benyttelse: En oversigt*, was issued in 1923. It has been out of print for many years and is also out of date. A new and modernized edition is now being prepared. The guide of the provincial archives in North Schleswig (*Landsarkivet for de sønderjyske landsdele: En oversigt*), published in 1944, is also more or

less out of date. In connection with the opening of a new and larger building in 1966, a guide was published of the holdings of the provincial archives in Copenhagen (*Landsarkivet for Sjælland, Lolland-Falster og Bornholm og hjælpepidlerne til dets benyttelse: En oversigt*). The supply was exhausted very quickly, and a new and revised edition was issued in 1977. The provincial archives on the island of Funen (Odense) issued its guide in 1970 (*Landsarkivet for Fyn og hjælpepidlerne til dets benyttelse: En oversigt*). A guide to the fourth and last provincial archives in Viborg, North Jutland, entitled *Landsarkivet for Nørrejylland og hjælpepidlerne til dets benyttelse: En oversigt*, was published in two volumes in 1981–83.

In A. D. Jørgensen's previously mentioned publication plan were included various publications of original historical source material. The first volume of extracts from the letter book of the Danish chancellery (formerly the central department of internal affairs) was issued in 1885. The edition started with the year 1551. To date, twenty-five thick volumes have been published. The twenty-fifth was issued in 1968 and covers the years 1644–45. The series is entitled *Kancelliets brevbøger vedr: Danmarks indre forhold: 1551–1645*. Another Jørgensen project was the publication of deeds of sold and acquired royal property (*Kronens skøder på afhaendet og erhvervet jordegods*), published in five volumes between 1892 and 1955 and covering the period 1535–1765. Another publication of this era deals with a special royal foundation to the benefit of artists, writers, and scientists. *Fonden ad usus publicos: Aktmaessige bidrag til belysning af dens virksomhed* was published in three volumes between 1897 and 1947 and deals with the period 1765–1842. Two more modern publications must be men-

tioned. The first deals with Danish history from 1768 to 1772, in which period all political power was centralized in the royal cabinet under the direction of the German-born doctor J. F. Struensee. All outgoing letters from the cabinet are reproduced in three volumes entitled *Kabinetssstyrelsen i Danmark 1768–72: Aktstykker og oplysninger*, published 1916–23. The other publication is the edition of the minutes of the council of ministers presided over by the king. The constitutional monarch exercised his power inside this council, and the general discussions about political problems of higher importance such as foreign policy took place in this council. The edition was published in twelve volumes covering the period 1848–1912 (*Statsrådets forhandlinger; 1954–76*). Finally, the provincial archives in Viborg has issued a two-volume publication dealing with the judgments pronounced by the upper court of justice during the period 1616–17 (*Viborg landstings dombøger: Sagsreferater og domskonklusioner; 1965–71*).

Like his predecessor, A. D. Jørgensen took the initiative to publish reports on the activities of the archives. He thought publications of this sort were necessary for both the staff and the general public; therefore he expanded considerably the coverage of his reports. His first report was issued in 1886 and covered the period 1883–86. As the provincial archives were established after 1891, Jørgensen also reported the activities of these new institutions. Over the years the directors have modified these reports on several occasions, and there have been some interruptions of the regular publication schedule. Nevertheless, the changing directors have wanted to publish details of the activities of the archives. The twelfth and latest report, *Meddelelser om rigsarkivet og landsarkiverne 1966–75*, was produced in 1978.

Other publications should be mentioned briefly. A long series of handsome and instructive exhibit catalogues have been published from time to time. Special events in the history of the archives have been emphasized by special books. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the archival law of 1889 (*Afhandlinger om arkiver ved rigsarkivets 75 års jubilæum*; 1964) and the illustrated book *The New Danish Archives* (1970) are two notable examples. In 1966, on the initiative of the younger staff, a special periodical under the title *Arkiv* ("Archives") was started, containing original studies on historical, administrative, and technical archival problems. Eight volumes had been published by 1982. Other scientific presentations worthy of mention include a survey of the history of the Danish archives (*Udsigt over de danske rigsarkivers historie*; 1884), a special study of a famous medieval land register (*Kong Valdemars jordebog*; 1936), and a recently begun series of studies on administrative history (*Administrations historiske studier, udgivet af rigsarkivet*). Extensive volumes in this series were published in 1980 and 1981, and more are expected in the near future. A complete list of publications from the central archives and from the four provincial archives was issued in mimeograph form in 1977 (*Skrifter udgivet af rigsarkivet og landsarkiverne 1852-1976*).

Finland

Although Finland is a young state with a rather short archival history, its archival publications policy is as old as the Danish one. The earliest Finnish archivists concentrated on publishing historical source material. The great name in early Finnish archival history was Reinhold Hausen, director of the archives from 1883 to 1916, who remained active as an editor until the age of

eighty-five. He died in 1942 at the age of ninety-two. In recent years the Finnish archival direction has emphasized the necessity of publishing guides and inventories, and it has also succeeded in raising the necessary financial support. Finland has two official languages, Swedish and Finnish. Publications are normally issued in both languages.

A short English introduction to Finnish archives was published in Helsinki in 1980 under the title *Guide to the Public Archives of Finland*. The purpose of this publication was to provide foreign scholars with an introduction to the public archives in Finland and to give practical advice about their use. More detailed information is given in special publications in Swedish and Finnish for the national archives (*Riksarkivet: En handledning*; 1973), for the provincial archives (*Maakuntaarkistojen opas*; 1972), and for the military archives (*Krigsarkivet: En handledning*). These practical handbooks have been issued in several editions.

In addition to these short guides, the national archives has published a special four-volume catalogue containing detailed information about the collections kept by the central archives. The first three volumes were published in both official languages under the title of *Översiktskatalog för Riksarkivet*, but the fourth volume, entitled *Valtiomarkiston yleisluettelo*, was published only in Finnish. These catalogues are not as detailed as are the corresponding Danish publications. Still they give very useful introductions to the administrative development of the archival agencies and the competence of the various departments. A catalogue dealing with the collections of the provincial archives was published in Helsinki in mimeograph form in 1971 with the title *Maakunta-arkistojen yleisluettelo*. The central archives possesses rather large

collections of microfilm from both Swedish and Russian archives as well as copies of the microfilm produced by the Genealogical Society of Utah. Lists of these microfilms are available as well; the lists are mostly in Finnish.

The central archives started its publishing activities in 1874 by editing a volume of historical documents concerning Finland that had been copied from the Swedish archives. A second volume was published in 1878, and both had reference to the reign of King Gustav Adolf, 1615-18. They are entitled *Samling af urkunder rörande Finlands historia*.

A few years later the young archivist, Reinhold Hausen, began collecting documents in Sweden and other foreign countries for publication. The first collection was published in five volumes between 1881 and 1917 under the title "Contribution to Finnish History"; and a new collection called "Finnish Documents from the Middle Ages" in eight volumes was issued from 1910 to 1935. This extensive publication covered the period 1400-1530. Besides those publications, Hausen edited several single volumes of special historical sources, such as a volume on Finnish seals from the Middle Ages, issued in 1900 under the title *Finlands medeltids-sigill*.

In recent years Finnish archivists have been occupied by tasks other than publishing historical source material; it should be mentioned, however, that several old land registers and protocols from courts of justice dating from the beginning of the 16th century have been issued.

Like other central archives, the Finnish institution has been interested in organizing historical exhibits in its new and very attractive exhibit hall. Hand-some printed catalogues have been published in connection with these arrangements. Finally, in 1978 the central

archives published a handbook in Finnish entitled *Arkistinhoidon opas*, which deals with the tasks performed by a modern archival institution.

Iceland

The central administration of Iceland was located in Copenhagen until 1904, when the ministry of Iceland was moved to the Icelandic capital of Reykjavik. Since 1918 the central administration of Iceland has been enlarged by the addition of several new departments. According to an agreement between Denmark and Iceland, most Icelandic records hitherto kept in the Danish central archives were delivered to Reykjavik. Local records have never been held outside Iceland.

The Icelandic national archives is a rather small institution. It has received very few records from the modern central administration. On the other hand, the institution has some documents dating back to the Middle Ages. The archives is housed in the same building as the national library.

Early in the history of the archival institution, the director published several small catalogues dealing with records of local authorities such as the Icelandic governor, the ecclesiastical authorities, and the upper and lower courts of justice. These series of catalogues were published under the common title *Skrár um skjöl og bókur i Landsskjalasafninu i Reykjavik* (three volumes). Since 1952 revised editions of these catalogues have been issued, together with new items under the title *Skrár Tjodskjalasafns* (three volumes). The archives has also planned a publication of Bishop Thorlakur Skulason's letterbook from 1628-56, to be titled *Brefabok Thorláks biskups Skulasonar*.

Norway

Some of the directors of the Norwegian archives have been personal-

ly interested in publishing activities, but circumstances have complicated a regular accomplishment of their goals. The staff has always been rather small, and it has been difficult to get the financial support necessary to carry out a publications program. When funds have been given, the amount has been rather modest. Among the older directors interested in publishing, Michael Birkeland (1893–96) is the best known; and from a more recent time, Asgaut Steinnes can be mentioned (1933–59). Steinnes was a historian by training and was active in publishing.

The greater part of Norwegian archival publications are editions of historical source material. A publication containing a collection of documents from a long period of Norwegian history (*Meddelelser fra det norske rigsarkiv*) was issued in Christiania between 1865 and 1870. In an official declaration to the government dated November 1877, Birkeland proclaimed that, in his opinion, it was a duty of an archival institution to publish historical documents. The government did not respond immediately, but Birkeland received a small amount of 600 kroner for publishing purposes in 1890.

Plans were made and the work proceeded rather slowly. It was decided to publish extracts of petitions and resolutions from the governor's office during the periods 1642–50 and 1662–69, and a publication in four volumes was issued in 1910–35. At one point an attempt was made to publish extensive annual reports, similar to the Danish ones, on the activity of the archives, but only the years 1896–1902 were treated. When Steinnes came into office in 1933, new initiatives were taken. During the period 1937–43 six volumes of account books from the old local administrative districts—the so-called “len”—covering the years 1548–67 were edited. From

time to time special publications of smaller size have been issued.

To date, general guides have not been prepared. A newly edited small guide of the holdings in the provincial archives of Kristiansand, entitled *Statsarkivet i Kristiansand*, published in 1980, should be mentioned, however. Also, the number of special catalogues is limited. A catalogue of parish registers received from the three southern dioceses of Norway was issued in 1915 under the title *Norske arkivregistraturer I*; a catalogue of records belonging to the very important archives of the royal vice-regent in Norway covering the period 1572–1771, entitled *Statholder-arkivet 1572–1771 med Slottsslov-arkivet 1704–22*, was published in 1963. The list of all private archives kept in the Norwegian central archives, entitled *Hovedkatalog*, published in 1973, is also a very useful publication.

After years of fruitless debates the former director, Dagfinn Mansåker, succeeded in getting a new building for the central archives. The staff will be occupied for a long time receiving and arranging material delivered from the central administration. There will not be much time for preparing publications. In provincial archives the situation is less urgent. Some of these institutions are able to concentrate more on publishing. For instance, the provincial archives in Stavanger has edited in mimeographs a rather long series of protocols from the local courts of justice and also recently published an interesting report on the local and communal archival work in the district of Rogaland (*Statsarkivet i Stavanger 1970–80: Rapport om arkivarbejdet i Rogaland*; Stavanger, 1980).

Sweden

The founders of the Swedish archival publishing policy were the directors J. J. Nordstrom, a former professor in law in

Helsinki, and his successor, R. M. Bowallius. They were in office from 1846 to 1874 and from 1874 to 1882, respectively. Bowallius succeeded in getting the first fixed appropriation for publishing purposes. Most of the Swedish directors have been former professors in history, and consequently they have been very interested in publishing. In Sweden the archives have concentrated on publishing historical source material rather than guides or inventories. Furthermore, reports on the activities of the archival institutions have been issued since 1876. Many Swedish archivists have devoted long periods of time to preparing and editing long series of volumes of source material, which have not been published formally by the archives.

It will not be possible to mention all publications, but the most outstanding ones deserve to be recognized. During the years 1861–1916, twenty-nine volumes containing extracts from the letter-books of the central administration of King Gustaf I, covering the period 1521–60, were published under the title *Gustav I:s registratur*. Several generations of Swedish archivists cooperated in finishing this immense task. Another great publication deals with the minutes of the royal council from 1621 to 1658. This publication, entitled *Svenska Riksrådets protokoll*, consists of eighteen volumes, the last of which was issued in 1959. Finally, the edition of the *Kammarkollegiets protokoll 1620–42* (1934–41) must be mentioned. Kammarkollegiet was a central department dealing with royal property and incomes.

Until 1868, Sweden had a parliamentary body, called the Riksdagen, consisting of representatives from the nobility, the clergy, the citizens of the towns, and the peasantry. A publication concerning the holdings of this body is

entitled *Svenska riksdagsakter jämte andra handlingar som höna till statsförfatningens historia*. Originally the publication was planned to cover the whole period 1521–1718, but this very ambitious plan was never completed. Only the periods 1521–98, 1611–17, and 1719–34 were completed. A great number of protocols from the four different chambers of the Riksdag are kept in the national archives. A great part of this material has also been issued in special publications financed by private and public funds, but the national archives has not been the formal editor. As already mentioned, the practical work has been performed mostly by archivists.

The preparation of several historical studies has also been launched by the archives. The history of the central archives has been written in two volumes under the title *Svenska Riksarkivet*. The first deals with the oldest period, 1618–1837, and was published in 1916; and a continuation dealing with the years 1837–46 was issued in 1922. A former archivist recently has begun a history of the archives since 1846. Special studies have also been published concerning the history of both the central and the local administration, especially in the field of financial administration. A learned and profound study on the royal administration in the Middle Ages was produced in 1976.

Since 1876 the national archives have issued regular reports on the activity of the archives under the title *Meddelanden från Svenska Riksarkivet*. The form and contents have changed from time to time. Originally, the reports were published annually. Later, the publications treated periods of up to three years. The last issue was published in 1980, covering the years 1976–77. Brief articles dealing with current events and technical subjects were added to the reports.

In 1952 a professional union of archivists was instituted under the name Svenska Arkivsamfundet. Since 1953 this society has published a special periodical called *Arkiv, Samhälle och forskning* ("Archives, Community and Science"), in which many Swedish archivists, most of them belonging to the staff of the central archives, have published scientific studies covering a vast field of archival science.

To celebrate certain events, the central archives has taken the initiative to publish special books, many of which are illustrated. An example is the publication prepared in connection with the International Congress on Archives in Stockholm in 1960, entitled *Sweden and the World*. Another publication, called *Riksarkivet 1618-1968*, was edited on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the foundation of the Swedish national archives and the concurrent dedication of the new archives building in 1968.

Because of the great rush of visitors to the provincial archives in recent years,

some of the archives have found it necessary to publish special surveys of archival material of interest to genealogists and other users. In 1976 the provincial archives of Gothenburg issued a volume of more than 600 pages entitled *Katalog för genealogisk forskning*. It contains lists of archival material arranged by parishes. A similar three-volume publication was issued in 1976-78 by the provincial archives in Lund and is entitled *Vägledande förteckning över genealogisk källmaterial i landsarkivet i Lund*.

The object of this article has been to give readers a comprehensive idea of the vast area of Nordic archival publications. The article does not give a complete list of publications, but I hope it gives a clear impression of both the interest and the zeal of the persons engaged in this important branch of archival work. Archivists from the Nordic countries have considered publishing to be a serious obligation.