



Vetenskapsrådet

EVALUATION OF SWEDISH RESEARCH IN PHILOSOPHY



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VETENSKAPSRÅDET

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INITIAL REFLECTIONS CONCERNING THE REPORT ON ASSESSMENT OF PHILOSOPHY RESEARCH IN SWEDEN

Arne Jarrick
21 April 2009

The present report resulted from an experiment using a model to assess the quality of scientific research. At its meeting in September 2007, the Scientific Council for Humanities and Social Sciences decided to test the model on the discipline of philosophy. The decision was based on a proposal from a working group under the Scientific Council that had been developing the model.¹ Later this year (2009) it will be tested on criminology research.

Background, aim, and design

In both cases, assessment is directed at research funded by the Swedish Research Council. In the case of philosophy, it covers a 10-year period. If the model works well, or shows the potential to work well with some adjustments, the aim is to continue using it – not only for all research in the humanities and social sciences in Sweden, regardless of funding source, but in all fields of science. In the initial phase, however, we decided that philosophy and criminology research funded by the Swedish Research Council were of suitable size and scope for such an experiment.

The aim of the experiment has been, and is, to investigate whether it is possible to develop an assessment model that reconciles the desire to focus directly on fundamental quality aspects of research content with the desire to do this in the most “targeted” and efficient (labour-saving) way possible. Furthermore, the idea has been to keep the assessments at a relatively high aggregation level, i.e. to address strengths and weaknesses of the relevant research field rather than strengths and weaknesses of the individual researchers. Apparently, since the report threatens to be a review of individual projects this objective cannot have been adequately clarified. Finally, we hoped that

¹ The group consisted of Fredrik Andersson, Arne Jarrick, and Susanne Lundin. Jan Bolin served as secretary.

the assessment would result in clear recommendations, presented in a way that would support their chances for implementation – or at least give those involved a sufficiently strong incentive to seriously consider implementation.

There is good reason to support the implementation of an initiative such as this. Research assessment is a steadily growing activity that demands increasingly more resources. Yet, we do not know for certain that this activity yields the desired effect. Are all these assessments worth all the work and resources expended on them? What are the opportunity costs in terms of forgone research (since, of course, researchers perform the assessments)? Do the assessments successfully distinguish the good research from the not-so-good? Do they provide added value beyond the ongoing peer review processes by certification boards, journal editors, hiring committees, etc? If so, are credible findings transformed into meaningful recommendations and later implemented in practice?

The questions are warranted, especially since indirect methods are being used more frequently to assess scientific quality. Increasingly often these methods are based on some type of supply measure (mainly scientific publication) or demand measure (mainly citations), or a combination of both. Less often are they based on direct familiarity with scientific production *per se*. Hence, we are moving towards a situation where a steadily growing corps of evaluators comment increasingly more on the quality of research, the content about which they know increasingly less – and actually do not need to know about.

In an era when both the production and the assessment of scientific publications are expanding rapidly it is understandable that assessment methods are becoming more indirect. All else being equal, the direct methods are more work-intensive. At the same time the work becomes less satisfying as the demand to become initiated in the content of the matter to be assessed is decreasing, or even disappearing. It is against this background that our experiment emerged, i.e. the objectives to have evaluators go directly to the content of published research and do this in an optimally efficient (labour-saving) way. We have designed the experiment to meet both of these objectives, mainly through the three approaches discussed below.

First, we wanted to limit the number of questions on which assessment is based. Hence, as regards quality assessment *per se*, we decided that the evaluators should limit themselves to asking the following three questions regarding the project to be studied:

1. What are the project's principal research questions?
2. What answers were extracted by the questions?
3. What new research questions have been generated?

Second, we wanted to limit the scope of the material investigated. For this purpose, we asked each of the researchers in charge to send in three publications (from the project in question) they thought would best answer the three questions listed above.

Third, we wanted to minimise the reading load on the potential users of the assessment. Hence, we limited the size of the report to around 30 pages. To further enhance the potential utility of the forthcoming report, we asked the evaluators to formulate an unrestricted number of recommendations based on their work.

Furthermore, we decided that the evaluators, in addition to performing the quality review itself, should also assess the quality of the channels that researchers used to disseminate their research findings. For instance, it is conceivable that significant research lies hidden in insignificant publications. A possible recommendation would be to ask outstanding researchers with under-developed publication practices to re-examine their practices. Also, we made it clear to the evaluators that quality assessment of the research itself should be done separately from quality assessment of the researcher's publication practices. Excellent research does not become any less excellent if its dissemination methods are deficient. An example in this context would be Svante Arrhenius' hypothesis concerning the human impact on global warming, initially published in a *Nordisk tidskrift* (*Nordic Journal*) journal in 1896 under the title, "Naturens värmehushållning" ("Nature's Way of Economising Heat").²

Introducing the experiment

Several factors were responsible for delaying the start of the experiment until 2008, which was later than originally planned. In April 2008, we sent a letter to philosophy professors Jens Erik Fenstad (University of Oslo), Simo Knuutila (University of Helsinki) and Timothy Williamson (Oxford University) presenting our assessment model and asking them to form a panel to test it in practice.³ We are grateful that our intended experts were not intimidated by the task, but agreed to participate in our experiment.

To introduce the project we invited our experts, along with all philosophy professors in Sweden, to attend a short seminar aimed at providing an

² However, his groundbreaking discovery of the association between carbon dioxide emissions and warming was published the same year in the respected journal, *London, Edinburgh & Dublin Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science*. (Oral information from Henning Rodhe.)

³ The invitation was also sent to Julia Annas, philosopher from the University of Arizona, but she declined.

overview of the dominant and emerging trends in philosophy research in Sweden. Two Swedish philosophers gave presentations: Professor Wlodek Rabinowicz (Lund University) discussed practical philosophy of the past 10 years, and Professor Sten Lindström reviewed theoretical philosophy covering the same period. (The appendices of the report include their presentations.) Another aim was to discuss our assessment model in general and its appropriateness to philosophy in particular.

Several sceptical viewpoints about the experiment emerged during the seminar. One of the first sceptical questions concerned how the assessment would be used. Perhaps there was some apprehension that the Swedish Research Council would use assessment to weed out proposals, something that we can dismiss (which we did at the seminar). Other critical viewpoints concerned the model's utility in philosophy. Some thought that citation analysis could be an adequate means for assessment, especially since international journals now publish most of the prominent philosophy research from Sweden. Also in this context some seminar participants, including some of the experts, were hesitant about the panel's qualifications to expertly judge all projects. Others argued that it was less-than-optimal for an assessment of philosophy to focus on a project's research questions and the degree to which these questions have been answered. Questions and answers of this type were not considered to be characteristic of Swedish philosophy – or philosophy research in general. This was contradicted, however, by a general observation that many applications for research grants in philosophy already include these questions and answers, and applicants often allocate project time towards presenting the evidence to back up the answers. Several of the philosophers present agreed with this characterisation. It also agrees with my own experiences from working on the Swedish Research Council's evaluation panels.

After the seminar we held discussions with members of the panel before they began their work. This report presents the results.

Results

Our appraisal of the experiment is that it was largely successful. The experts made a substantial contribution in evaluating the projects based on the three questions, and they concluded their report with well conceived, concisely formulated, and meaningful recommendations on the research area *per se*, i.e. at the aggregation level we requested.

Nevertheless, it was clear that the work was not executed completely in accordance with the original intentions. First, the report is based on fewer projects than the number originally included, even though the leaders of

the projects (some of which were concluded long ago) were very accommodating towards participating as we requested. The reason is that the quality of some of the material was not suited to an assessment based on our model. Second, except for the concluding recommendations, the report is limited to a project-by-project accounting. We had neither expected nor desired this, and to dispel any suspicion that we wanted to criticise or praise individual researchers we do not reveal the identity of any projects.⁴ Third, the report does not provide a thorough or systematic accounting of the three questions we wanted it to address. Of the 25 projects presented, *Question 1* was answered in only 16 cases, *Question 2* in 21 cases, and *Question 3* in only 2 cases. Fourth, in many cases the experts allowed their appraisal of project quality to be influenced by the channels used to disseminate the findings, despite our request to evaluate these two aspects separately. Fifth, none of the experts reported how much time they spent on their assessments. Knowledge of the time expended would have been one way to evaluate how work-intensive our assessment model was in comparison to other models.

In part, the explanation for these discrepancies is that the experts were not ready to comply fully with the work requirements given. This, in turn, could suggest that our preparations were not sufficiently detailed to achieve the objectives. The most important factor here is that we underestimated the scope of philosophy research, and hence overestimated the experts' qualifications to expertly appraise all of the projects included in the experiment. The experts themselves also expressed this uncertainty, giving it as the main reason why they felt the need to seek support from assessments by others, i.e. by reviewers engaged by prestigious scientific publications that accepted articles with the researchers' findings. Another factor is that we did not have complete information about the quality of the underlying material.

Obviously, we have much to learn. The next time we conduct an experiment using this model we must be more careful to match the experts' specific expertise with the scientific orientation of the projects they will assess and with the quality of the underlying material. If we apply the knowledge acquired, we have a greater opportunity to improve the model and thereby enable the next group of experts to adhere more strictly to the intent of the model.

We express our sincere gratitude to the experts for their dedicated effort, helpful critique, and important reflections – all of which have inspired us to continue working to improve the quality and efficiency of future scientific assessments.

⁴ This, of course, is possible only to the extent that knowledgeable readers can be kept unaware of who is involved. Nevertheless, it should be viewed as an indication of our intentions.

SUMMARY IN SWEDISH

Ämesrådet för humaniora och samhällsvetenskap har prövat en modell för utvärdering av grundläggande kvalitetsaspekter av forskningen, som dels går direkt på forskningens innehåll så som den presenterats i vetenskapliga publikationer, dels gör det på ett så arbetsbesparande sätt som möjligt. Som testområde föll valet på filosofin, som inte utvärderats på länge. Av praktiska skäl begränsades utvärderingen till projekt som finansierats av Vetenskapsrådet och föregångaren HSFR de senaste tio åren.

En panel av tre filosofiprofessorer från europeiska universitet anlätades. För att dessa granskare skulle kunna värdera projekten i deras rätta kontext inleddes granskningen med ett seminarium där landets filosofiprofessorer gick igenom det senaste decenniets utveckling inom svensk filosofiforskning.

Baserat på tre publikationer som varje projektledare själva valt ut, har utvärderarna haft till uppgift att bedöma forskningen utifrån de frågor som ställts, de svar som framkommit och de nya frågor som forskningen genererat.

Värderingen av forskningens kvalitet skulle göras utan hänsyn till var eller hur forskningen publicerats. Detta för att undersöka om de förhållandevis brokiga publiceringsmönstren inom humaniora leder till att god forskning ibland inte får den spridning som den förtjänar – något som bekräftades i rapporten.

Tanken var att utvärderingen skulle handla om styrkor och svagheter inom det relevanta forskningsfältet och inte hos enskilda forskare. Den skulle också resultera i tydliga rekommendationer som kunde omsättas i praktiken.

Utvärderarna rekommenderade att publicering i internationella medier bör vara normen för projekt som Vetenskapsrådet finansierar. Idag bedrivs filosofiforskning i Sverige som står sig väl internationellt men som inte alltid når den rätta publiken. De ansåg också att projektbidraget är en stödform som passar filosofiområdet, där forskningen i regel bedrivs individuellt eller i små grupper. Något behov av att prioritera vissa forskningsinriktningar kunde utvärderarna inte se, utan menade att utvecklingen inom svensk filosofiforskning bäst främjas genom botten up-förfarande. Storskalig forskning i stora grupper rekommenderas inte heller. Däremot efterlyste de möjligheten för de sökande att rubricera sina projekt som tvärvetenskapliga – en del av de utvärderade projekten har enligt dem snarast en tvärvetenskaplig karaktär, och bör bedömas därefter.

Utvärderingar av forskning är under stadig tillväxt och tar allt större resurser i anspråk. Frågan är om de ger önskad effekt, om de är värda allt arbete och alla pengar som läggs ned på den. Allt vanligare blir det också att utvärderingarna av vetenskaplig kvalitet görs med hjälp av indirekta metoder som mäter utbud och efterfrågan – publicering och citering. Mer sällan grundas de på direkt bekantskap med den vetenskapliga produktionen som sådan. Resultatet av detta är att en ständigt växande skara utvärderare allt oftare uttalar sig om kvaliteten på forskning vars innehåll de vet allt mindre om – och egentligen inte behöver veta något om.

Att konstruera en ny modell för utvärdering som är både direkt och kostnadseffektiv är mot denna bakgrund mycket angeläget. Nästa ämnesområde som modellen ska appliceras på är kriminologi.

INTRODUCTION

Jens Erik Fenstad, Simo Knuuttila, Timothy Williamson
26 January 2009

The Swedish Research Council decided to review its system of research evaluation. As a first step in this process the council appointed an international panel to evaluate Swedish research in Philosophy (their ref. 411-2007-8921). The members of the panel were:

- Professor Jens Erik Fenstad, University of Oslo
- Professor Simo Knuuttila, University of Helsinki
- Professor Timothy Williamson, University of Oxford

The council states (in its letter of 8 April 2008 to the panel) that “the main objective of this exercise is to test a model for evaluating scientific research that, in a timesaving way, addresses quality directly rather than by means of indirect performance indicators, such as numbers of publications and citations, etc.” Philosophy was chosen as a pilot case since, as the council writes (see the letter of 11 June 2008 to the panel), “it is relatively cohesive and also comparatively limited in scale”. Specifically, the panel was asked to evaluate projects in philosophy funded by the council over the last decade.

As noted above, the evaluation panel is only a first step in a possible reform of the research evaluation system. In the letter of 8 April 2008 the council writes that “we have decided, first, that the panel should confine itself to evaluating the quality of three basic aspects of projects. The only aspects to be scrutinised will therefore be:

1. The major scientific questions asked by the project.
2. The essential answers given to the major questions.
3. Any new scientific questions that have arisen as a result of the project.

Secondly, we have asked each of the project leaders to provide us with a list of three to five publications that, in their view, most significantly highlight the aspects to be addressed by the panel. The evaluation will be based on these publications. The panel will also be asked to take into consideration the channels of dissemination chosen (monographs, articles in journals, language used, etc), without making this aspect an integral part of the panel’s quality assessments of scientific achievements as such.”

As a first step in the evaluation process the Research Council organized on 28 August 2008 a one day conference on Swedish research in philosophy, where national representatives were invited to discuss the development and current status of both theoretical and applied philosophy in Sweden over the last ten years.

In the letter of 8 April 2008, the council indicated that the evaluation would be based on “around 45 Philosophy research projects funded by the Swedish Research Council over the last ten years”. In the event the panel received just 25 projects as a basis for the evaluation. In some cases we received somewhat incomplete information: some project reports did not include the original application to the research council, others did not include any published outcome, or only part of the announced outcome. This meant that for a number of projects we could give only a partial analysis with respect to the three basic aspects specified by the council.

In assessing the success of the projects in asking major scientific questions, answering them and raising new scientific questions, the panel did not consider it appropriate to ignore external indicators, such as place of publication and citation rates. The three former aspects can be adequately evaluated only on the basis of extensive knowledge of the state of understanding already achieved in the relevant specific area, for example to determine whether the answers and questions really are new and whether they are subject to objections already well known to specialists in the area. No committee can be expected to possess the required expertise across the full range of philosophy in the way that specialized referees for international journals can, and the actual impact of a publication on scholars in the relevant field (of which citations are a rough measure) may well reflect a better informed assessment of its novelty than the impression of a non-specialist. The panel explained to representatives of the Research Council at the meeting of 28 August 2008 that it would be using such a more inclusive methodology.

The letter from the council of 11 June 2008 contained an extract from an in-council document “Working Group for Developing Research Evaluation”. It was the expressed wish of this group that the pilot evaluation should have a twofold focus: “First, there should be a survey of the research sphere to identify its characteristics in relation to international research. Second, it should include evaluation of the research within this sphere that the Research Council has supported.” The material made available to the panel is insufficient to give an analysis of Swedish philosophy and its overall standing with respect to international research. We are also in no position to conclude that the 25 project reports are in a meaningful way representative of the research supported by the council over the last ten years.

The report is divided into two parts. In the first part we give an evaluation of each of the 25 projects in relation to the three basic aspects, as far as this is possible on the basis of the submitted material. We conclude that about half of the projects had outcomes that included publications of good or, occasionally, outstanding scientific quality, even though one might sometimes have hoped for more outputs. In some cases we noticed what seemed to be an excess of modesty, or lack of ambition, in the way that projects were carried out, so that obviously able researchers did not develop promising ideas as far as they might have, or published excellent work in places with a very low international profile. In other cases the project outcomes were not research publications at all, but rather had the character of popularizations or practical manuals. Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of projects resulted in publications that met the highest international standards. Many but far from all of the latter were in the more technical part of the subject, using formal techniques from logic. We should emphasize that this level of international excellence in philosophy is by no means to be taken for granted in a country of the size and even comparative wealth of Sweden, and deserves to be carefully protected and nurtured. In the final part of the report we offer some advice, based on the individual project reviews, on possible improvements in the Research Council's approach to research evaluation. The emphasis of our recommendations is on the international nature of first-rate philosophical research, so that excellent Swedish research is always accessible to the international community in language and place of publication and is subject to international systems of refereeing. We explain how the Swedish Research Council's assessment policies can contribute to that goal.

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT EVALUATIONS

We considered research plans and results as well as publication channels. For some projects, the outcome indicates that the plan was refocused during the research period. While this as such is not a problem, we have commented on those cases in which significant parts were not realized or the publications were rather far from the original plan. However, the main objective was to assess the quality of research.

Project: Fixpoints in metamathematics

Project start: 1997.

The aim of the project is to investigate, based on several examples from the author's previous research achievements, how *local* variations in the arithmetization of the syntax of the language of arithmetic influence *global* properties of e.g. the proof-predicate. The author belongs to the well-known research group of Per Lindström at the University of Gothenburg, has published several papers and is well recognized by the international research community. We note that the application is well argued.

We have, however, received no output and are therefore not in a position to give any evaluation of the project.

Project: A foundation for pragmatic arguments

Project start: 2002

The project concerns ways of evaluating an agent's rationality in terms of the relation between their actions and their preferences. The outputs received comprise four substantial single-authored articles, one in one of the top four international journals of philosophy (*The Journal of Philosophy*), one in a leading international logic journal (*Journal of Philosophical Logic*) and two in respectable but somewhat low-profile journals (*Logic and Logical Philosophy*; *Croatian Journal of Philosophy*). They can be classified within a major tradition of research that combines the resources of logic, probability theory and decision theory. All four articles exhibit rigorous argument, clear exposition, fair-minded discussion and philosophically interesting ideas developed in new ways. At least two of them have so far been cited by other authors. They continue Cantwell's strong record of research at an international level. This is a good outcome for the project.

Project: Narration and nomology

Project start: 2000

Just one output was listed; it was not received but was independently accessed. It is a long, single-authored article about the explanatory role of narratives. The discussion is sensible and engages with relevant work in the area. The journal in which it appeared (*Croatian Journal of Philosophy*) is respectable, but does not have a high profile; no citations of the article were found. It would have been nice to see the project have more impact.

Project: Quine and Wittgenstein on the relationship of philosophy and science

Project start: 2001

Three outputs were listed, of which two were received: articles in *Inquiry* and *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* (respectable but not leading journals). Both are mainly occupied with sympathetic interpretation: in one case of Quine, in the other of Cavell as an interpreter of Wittgenstein. They do a good job of showing how the issues look from a certain point of view. They are not exercises in historical scholarship, nor do they attempt to engage seriously with criticisms of the point of view in question or with widely held alternatives to it in contemporary philosophy. This is not to say that the pieces fail to achieve what they set out to achieve, but that what they set out to achieve is slightly unambitious.

Project: General psychology from a perspective of the evolutionary theory of knowledge

Project start: 1987.

We received three book manuscripts, but no application, related to this project. It is thus unclear how this part fits the format of this evaluation. The oldest item is *Truth Strategy Simplified*, published in 1999 as vol. 24 of the Library of *Theoria*, with printing support by the Swedish Research Council of Social Sciences and the Humanities. The next item is the book *The Bewildered Animal*, also from 1999, printed by Novapress with support from The Institute of Future Studies. These two books are clearly and simply written, but largely detached from contemporary philosophical debates and unlikely to have an impact on them. The final text is the book *Från vardagsvett till statistisk beviskonst* published 2002 by Nya Doxa. This book is published with support from *Vetenskapsrådet*, and the author has also had some help in the preparation of the text from an assistant paid for by *Vetenskapsrådet*. The text on statistics is neither a research monograph, nor a traditional text-

book, but a book intended to be read by students, particularly those studying statistics as a second subject (e.g. students in the biomedical fields), giving a historical and critical introduction to how the concepts and methods of statistics evolved. The text is well written and marked by the good judgment of the author. The text is highly recommendable, but at a time where, in particular, the biomedical profession is overwhelmed by a deluge of data, there are new challenges and new fields (bioinformatics/biostatistics) that would be in need of a similar treatment.

Project: The genome as code, programme, and information

Project start: 2002

The project involves a potentially fruitful engagement between semantics and the philosophy of biology. Of the six outputs promised, only one was received: a joint critique by Häggqvist and Åsa Wikforss in a good journal (*Erkenntnis*) of a recent proposal about meaning; the article is only tangentially related to the theme of the project. The other five outputs promised are single-authored. Independent access was obtained to one of them (in *Croatian Journal of Philosophy*), which again was not closely related to the theme of the project. The other four were not seen: an article in a collection and three unpublished manuscripts presented at conferences; to judge by their titles, only the latter three were adequately related to the theme of the project. On the evidence available, it therefore seems that the project has not yet been carried through to satisfactory publication.

Project: A potential solution to the measurement problem in quantum mechanics

Project start: 1996.

The project is a continuation and further development of the author's PhD thesis from 1992. His two basic ideas, both in the thesis and the project under review, are that matter is not made up of particles but of waves, and that quantization of interaction is responsible for the corpuscular aspects of matter. The project was completed in 1999; see the so-called *Slutredogörelse*, which gives a brief report on the results obtained at that time. For this review the author has submitted his book *Interpreting Quantum Mechanics*, published in 2007. The book is a solid piece of work and clearly demonstrates the author's deep knowledge of the relevant parts of physics. The first part of the book is in a sense a methodological essay, which may or may not appeal to the reader from physics, and is not strictly necessary for the remaining part. There are many interesting aspects to the author's discussion

in the “physics” part of the book, but as he himself acknowledges he does not “solve” the measurement problem. Even granted his starting point, there are other possibilities that merit further discussion. We also note that there is much recent research, both theoretical and experimental, on decoherence and entanglement which is relevant for the author’s discussion. Much of this dates from after 1997, but should, perhaps, have been included in a book published in 2007. We note that current research in physics is not only of a theoretical/philosophical interest, but may have direct technological applications. Judging the project on the basis of the book we see that there is a good match between project goals and actual results.

Project: A human rights perspective on functional disabilities: analytical models, human interaction, and legal regulation

Project start: 2002

The application involves a detailed plan for research directed at developing a theoretical model for understanding functional disability as the basis for imposing moral requirements in a social and political context. The project is characterized as a multidisciplinary enterprise with philosophical, juridical and sociological parts. The outputs comprise a brief Swedish survey of some books on Nazi genocide and medical killing in Germany by Stig Larsson and a report by Anna Bruce on the United Nations document *Human Right and Disability: The Current Use and Future Potential of United Nations Human Rights Instruments in the Context of Disability* (2002) with a discussion of whether a UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities is required. It seems that none of the three parts of the interesting original plan has been realized so far and the existing outcome is very modest.

Project: Causal attribution in science

Project start: 1993/4

The project seems to consist of two phases, a preliminary phase starting in 1993 and a main part starting in 1994. The goal of the project is to study principles of causal attribution *orsaksutval* through examples taken from both the (biomedical) sciences and the history of science. The application states that the aims are (i) to examine the methodological validity of making causal attributions; (ii) to identify and make precise the relevant criteria and concepts for causal attribution in scientific work; and (iii) to propose improvements in current procedures. The project is intended to contribute to both theoretical philosophy/general methodology and specific scientific disciplines. We received two extensive reports, one on the preliminary

phase *årsrapport*, 1994 and one on the main part *slutredogörelsen*, 1998. Four papers were submitted for the evaluation: two concerning the interaction between mental and neural phenomena; one on the consequences of causal attribution in cause-of-death data; and one on citation data as a basis for history of science analysis. These papers are presented as “stand-alone” contributions and the general reader would not immediately be aware of the fact that they are part of a larger project. The papers are published in well recognized journals, and we shall not here make any further comments, except to note that the papers on cognitive neuroscience from 1994/97 would have been rather different if written today (2009). In the final report of 1998 *slutredogörelsen* the project leader states that he has in preparation a book length text intended to give the theoretical analysis and practical advice based on the care studies; see points (i) – (iii) above. A short abstract of the proposed monograph is included with the final report, but we would need to see the full text in order to form a well founded opinion as to the ultimate success of the project. What we can conclude is that the project has produced several interesting specific studies.

Project: Knowledge, change in knowledge, and nonmonotonic inference

Project start: 1997

The project involves the development of logics that represent formally the ways in which belief systems are revised under various operations as new information is received (dynamic doxastic logic). Sweden has been amongst the world leaders in this area for some time, partly through the work of the group associated with this application, which took the research programme forward in various respects, for example by formalization of semi-formal proposals, by bringing different ways of handling the issues together into a common framework, and by extending the framework to beliefs about beliefs (an important case for many interdisciplinary applications of the framework, but one which raises special problems). The outputs received comprise: John Cantwell’s Uppsala Ph.D. dissertation, a substantial article by Lindström and Wlodek Rabinowicz in *Erkenntnis* (a good international journal), and two substantial single-authored articles by Krister Segerberg, one in *Erkenntnis* and subsequently reprinted in a handbook on the area, the other in a *festschrift* for a logician in Britain. Another single-authored article by Segerberg in a collection was listed but not received. All the works received employed rigorous logical frameworks; some significant new results were proved but the main emphasis and most important contribution lay in the new ideas for more flexible and expressive formal treatments of belief revision. All five outputs listed have received international citations, in some cases many of them. This is an excellent outcome.

Project: Truth, paradoxes, and natural languages

Project start: 2001

This project is not a continuation of the previous one *Kunskap, kunskapförändring och icke-monoton inferens*. It concerns a different set of problems, the set-theoretic and semantic paradoxes that have provided one of the main constraints on the development of logic over the past century. The listed outputs are three single-authored articles by Lindström, of which only one was received, a thoughtful and informative piece exploring the way in which paradox arises within a logical system inspired by Frege and the options for avoiding it. None of the three outputs listed was published in a venue that facilitated attention; this is not a comment on their quality but rather a suggestion that work of this quality could be published more prominently. In any case, the research was well worth funding.

Project: The "inner" and "outer" knowledge of consciousness in a naturalistic perspective

Project start: 1997

This was a broad project in the philosophy of mind, with connections both to metaphysics and to experimental psychology. Five outputs were received, all single-authored by Malmgren: a chapter in a book on biopsychosocial medicine, an article in the yearbook of the International Rorschach Society, a brief paper apparently in a web-based *festschrift* for a colleague, and two brief electronically published conference posters. The Rorschach article and one of the posters are primarily contributions to the psychology of perception, philosophically and historically as well as experimentally informed speculative theorizing about its psychophysical basis. It is hard for a philosopher to assess the plausibility or novelty of the ideas they contain. It seems clear that the next step should be to devise new experimental tests of the hypotheses, rather than just invoking already available data, in order to have an impact on psychology, otherwise the work is in danger of being too psychological for philosophers and too philosophical for psychologists, so ignored by both. The *festschrift* contribution argues that apparent contradictions between the world of perception and the world of science can be resolved. Philosophers have debated the issue for centuries; no reference is made to the many recent and highly relevant contributions to the debate (e.g. on the metaphysics of colour), leaving it unclear whether Malmgren's promising suggestions go beyond what has already been done by others. The other poster presentation argues that philosophers have been misled by metaphors of the inner and the outer into misunderstanding and underestimating the epistemological problems raised by knowledge of one's own present mental

states; that is plausible, but it would be more satisfying to see examples of such mistakes being made by contemporary philosophers. The article ‘The Theoretical Basis of the Biopsychosocial Model’ in the book *Biopsychosocial Medicine* (2005) addresses philosophical aspects of that model; it is written for a non-philosophical audience. Overall, there is a danger of waste: clear, lively, intriguing and sometimes new suggestions insufficiently followed up; too little engagement with recent philosophy where there are pertinent connections; presentation of the results in out-of-the-way places that minimize the chances of the ideas having an impact, an impression confirmed by the lack of citations.

Project: Language and thought in ancient Greek philosophy

Project start: 2002

No application form was received. The outputs comprise two articles and an unfinished monograph manuscript on ancient Greek syntax by Eva-Carin Gerö, one article on Aristotle’s metaphysics by Charlotta Weigelt and one article by Gösta Grönroos on Aristotle’s ethics. While Gerö’s works are in accordance with the project title, the others are less so. Grönroos sheds light on Aristotle’s moral psychology by discussing the question of what Aristotle means by saying that the spirited part of the soul may follow reason’s lead. Weigelt discusses the relation between logic and ontology in the *Metaphysics*, proposing an interpretation of book VII orientated to “the phenomenological approach”, thus also touching the project topic to some extent. Both these papers are very competent and published in highly ranked journals. In two papers (published in *Glotta* 2001 and 2003), which are also included in the longer manuscript, Gerö investigates what traditional grammar describes as the distinction between “*realis*” and “*irrealis*” or “objectivity” and “subjectivity” in certain uses of past tense and the various usages of two negatives in noun phrases. She has collected interesting examples which illustrate the problem. Gerö employs contemporary linguistic tools which are influenced by the terminology of possible worlds semantics and some related theories, for example “alternative worlds”, “all possible worlds”, “quantification over worlds”, or “the necessity operator”. The theoretical orientation of her approach can be also seen in the title of the monograph draft *Worlds, Events and Individuals. The Syntax of Intensionality and Extensionality in Ancient Greek* (97 pp.). Gerö does not discuss the possible problems of modeling ancient Greek usage by means of these tools. One might wonder, for example, what to think about quantifying over possible worlds in this context because historians of logic tend to regard it as a hallmark of ancient modal logic and modal theories that these did not operate with the

idea of simultaneous alternatives or possible worlds, the elements of this semantics being introduced in late medieval logic. Problems notwithstanding, Gerö deals with interesting themes of ancient Greek usage and the history of Greek grammar in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The project, which combines independent part-projects, has as outcomes articles of good international quality.

Project: Uncertainty and vagueness in decision theory

Project start: 2002.

The aim of this project is to carry out an examination of how certain influential trends in decision theory treat concepts like uncertainty and vagueness, such as Bayesian decision theory, the Dempster-Shafer approach based on belief functions, and approaches using methods from fuzzy logic and set theory. A main point is to analyze how these different approaches assign a probability assignment, a belief function, or a fuzzy set that best represents publicly available evidence. The aim of the project is to apply this analysis to the problem of industrial nuclear waste, comparing the results with an approach previously developed by the project leader, see the reference to Malmnäs (1993) in the *Forskningsprogram* attached to the application. We find this to be an interesting application and would from the advertisement in the research proposal have expected a different and, perhaps, a more substantial output. We have received three short notes, only one published, and a report in Swedish to the National Rescue Services Agency of Sweden. The report is a partial answer to the research program, but it is neither a report to the international research community, which the topic merits, nor is it, as far as we can judge, in a form suitable for a manual for the Rescue Services.

Project: Nature and precaution: fundamental conceptual and moral-philosophical issues in the debate on environmental philosophy and politics

Project start: 2000

The aim of the project is to analyze the notions of nature, risk, and precaution in environmental ethics and politics. The main publication is the PhD dissertation *Humanity and Nature: Towards a Consistent Holistic Environmental Ethics* (Gothenburg 2007) by Petra Andersson. This work deals with holistic environmental ethics (HEE), in which moral status is ascribed to biotic wholes, such as ecosystems, species and landscapes. It is argued that all those nature-centred holistic theories are gravely incoherent in which the value bearer is found in biotic wholes that are uninfluenced by human

beings. Attempts to introduce less purist concepts of nature prove to be unsatisfactory as well. A plausible version of HEE should abandon the view of “natural nature” as morally significant in itself. This is an interesting doctoral thesis which could be further developed. Two brief Swedish papers, one by Munthe and one by Andersson, are popular summaries. Andersson’s paper *Deep Ecology and Its Critics – Why Do They Never Meet* and Munthe’s study *The Morality of Precaution: Interpreting, Justifying and Applying the Precautionary Principle* are said to be forthcoming, but it seems that they have not appeared. While the doctoral thesis discussed important theoretical questions pertaining to the conception of nature as a value in itself, the second part on the ethics of precaution has not been realized so far.

Project: Reasons for belief

Project start: 2000

No application form was received in connection with this project, and only one output: a single-authored article in one of the leading international journals (*The Journal of Philosophy*) that argues that David Hume’s scepticism about induction contains the resources to deal with recent objections based on non-sceptical, probabilistic accounts of induction. It combines textual interpretation with an understanding of modern theories of probability in an effective way, and the topic is adequately related at least to the overall title of the project. This is a very satisfactory outcome as far as it goes. One might perhaps have hoped for further outputs, but it is hard to make a definite assessment without more information.

Project: Phenomenological views of matter

Project start: 1995

The project is in the growing field of the philosophy of chemistry and its history. Using ideas from Aristotle, Duhem and Quine and the techniques of formal axiomatics where appropriate, Needham develops a metaphysics of the macroscopic world that is scientifically based but does not involve immediate reduction to the microscopic. Four substantial outputs were received: three articles in leading international journals for the philosophy of science (*Philosophy of Science, Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*) and one in a Swedish-language journal. A fifth output was listed but not received. All are single-authored. They draw on extensive knowledge of the relevant scientific and philosophical background, the ideas are interesting, original and developed in considerable detail, the presentation is clear and as accessible as is compatible with the nature of the material. The paper

Aristotelian Chemistry: A Prelude to Duhemian Metaphysics deals with Duhem's Aristotelian view of chemistry and also provides a systematic account of the Aristotelian theory of the mixtures of elements. A combination of historical, philosophical and logical skills with scientific knowledge is applied to the metaphysics and history of chemistry. The English-language pieces have been cited by several other authors. This is a very good outcome, as might have been predicted from the applicant's strong research record.

Project: Mixture and chemical combination: from ancient to modern times

Project start: 1998

This project is to some extent a continuation of the previous one *Phenomenological views of matter*, taking up some more specific issues. The outputs received comprised five substantial single-authored articles, four of them in good or leading international journals and one in an international collection of articles in the topic. Their themes are similar to those for the first project. Two of the articles relate issues about chemistry to more general questions in metaphysics; another two relate issues about chemistry to more general questions in the philosophy of science. Similar positive comments can be made about the methodology and quality of the papers to those made above about Needham's previous project. *Aristotle's Theory of Chemical Reaction and Chemical Substances* further develops the Aristotelian part of his earlier paper *Aristotelian Chemistry*; these and the paper *Duhem's Theory of Mixture in the Light of the Stoic Challenge to the Aristotelian Conception* have contributed to a new interest in ancient chemistry among philosophers of science too. The papers have already had a significant international impact, a more extensive one than for the previous project: all five articles have been cited by other authors, some of them many times. This is an even better outcome than for the previous project.

Project: Mathematics of the economy from a philosophical perspective

Project start: 1998.

The main purpose of the project is to study the role of mathematics in economic theory. The general aim, according to the application, is: (1) to develop a measurement theory intended for applications in economics; (2) to present an extended theory of concept formation in economics; (3) to investigate certain aspects of the modeling of complex states and processes (an example is problems related to the so-called method of isolation); and (4) to investigate the possibility of extending the traditional modeling

process in economics (based on traditional mathematical analysis) to include a perspective on rights and entitlements using theories from modern logic. The project is described in an extensive attachment on the research programme. High goals are set, and a successful outcome of the project would have been a significant contribution to the field. The output, as presented by the material submitted to the evaluation panel, does not, however, achieve the goals set. Four papers are submitted for the review; we make a few brief comments. One paper deals with the formalization of the notion of *intermediate concepts* as known e.g. from legal theory. It is written in an excessively formal style, where the symbolism used seems to complicate rather than make transparent the problem discussed. The same can be said about the two papers on normative systems. They present formal theories. The mathematics is, as far as we can judge, correct, but seen as mathematical theories these studies are not very deep in the sense that novel aspects and insights emerge from the mathematical development. It is difficult to believe that these studies in their current form will have any great impact on economic theory. The final item submitted is the book *Intresseavvägning*, a philosophical study of decision making with applications to building codes and area planning in Sweden. The aim of the book is partly to study the specific conflict of interests between the individual and the society in planning issues and to develop methodologies to resolve such conflicts, and partly to contribute to the general development of theories of philosophical and decision-theoretic nature needed to resolve such conflicts, the latter being a task which is part of the project under review. As we see the book, it is not clear that the two parts of the text go well together. The book is written in Swedish and is presumably intended for a readership from the planning communities, but the style of writing used in the theoretical parts is extremely formalistic (as in the papers mentioned above). As noted above, the goals set for the project have not been reached. A next step would be to present the theoretical parts of the book (and other related material) in a form suitable for an international peer audience.

Project: Knowledge and theory of meaning

Project start: 1998

The project covers a group of related issues in the philosophy of language. The outputs listed were five articles in international journals, of which three were received, one was accessed independently and one is forthcoming. Of the articles received, one is a major single-authored work by Pagin in *Journal of Philosophical Logic* (a leading journal in the area); it uses a recently

developed mathematical framework for the analysis of relations between the meanings of complex linguistic expressions and the meanings of their parts rigorously to establish significant new results and to apply them to natural languages. It is of interest to linguists as well as to philosophers and has had a notable international impact, with many citations. Another is a substantial joint piece by Pagin and Kathrin Glüer in *Mind and Language* (the leading interdisciplinary journal for the combination of philosophy, linguistics and psychology) that innovatively argues that autistic speakers are counterexamples to widespread views about the nature of linguistic understanding. A third piece, single-authored by Glüer, concerns epistemology and the philosophy of perception and seems less closely related (although not totally unrelated) to the theme of the project. A fourth piece, also single-authored by Glüer, was independently accessed and is well within the remit of the project; it intervenes forcefully in a current debate about the nature of definition and its consequences for meaning; it has been cited by other authors. The forthcoming piece is single-authored by Pagin and from its title appears to be located well within the area of the project. Overall, the work shows philosophical depth, interdisciplinarity and an up-to-date engagement with recent developments. Clearly, this is a very good outcome.

Project: Group ethics and individual responsibility

Project start: 2003

Three outputs were received, all single-authored articles by Petersson. One was published in *The Journal of Philosophy*, a leading international journal of philosophy. It concerns a problem of circularity in the intentions that some theorists require of agents as a condition for engagement in collective actions, argues that their attempts to solve it fail, and proposes a more basic, causal conception of collective agency instead. The paper engages in a sophisticated way with a wide range of recent discussion and suggests a promising new direction of research. In *Collective Omissions and Responsibility*, published in a Swedish *festschrift* in 2007, the notion of collective omission is studied by applying the idea that collective action requires the weak causal notion of collective activity in the content of the intentions of the parties. Overdetermination and other causal problems associated with collective action are dealt with in the article *The Second Mistake in Moral Mathematics is not about the Worth of Mere Participation*, published in *Utilitas* (2004), the leading forum for utilitarian studies. These are philosophically stimulating contributions to contemporary ethics and action theory. The outcome of this project is of very good quality.

Project: Facts and values in Swedish philosophy: Hans Larsson and Hägerström, Hedenius, and value nihilism

Project start: 1999

In the application, the project is divided into a “minor study” on Hägerström and Larsson and a “major study” on Hedenius (a PhD dissertation), both being planned to be published in English. Only the minor part is realized as a Swedish book *Värdering och faktum. Studier I Hans Larssons moralfilosofi* (Centrum för tillämpad etik, Linköpings universitet, *Studier i tillämpad etik* 9, 2004, 168 pp.) Two papers mentioned in the list of publications are included in this book, which is an interesting and well written study of the views on ethics and values of Hans Larsson (1862-1944), Professor of Theoretical Philosophy in Lund, and his criticism of the quite different position of Axel Hägerström (1868-1939), who was Professor of Practical Philosophy in Uppsala. This is a valuable contribution to the history of Swedish philosophy. Because of Larsson’s discussions of various theories of his time and the similarities of Hägerström’s theory to emotivism and his later influence in Sweden, it would have been better to publish in English. Unfortunately the major part of the project, the monograph on Hedenius, is not realized.

Project: Truth and knowability

Project start: 2002

The project concerns a much-debated question about the relation between what is true and what can be known. Four outputs were received, all single-authored: an article in *The Baltic International Yearbook of Cognition, Logic and Communication* that inconclusively discusses the possibility of solving a paradox about knowledge by denying what is usually regarded as the self-evident axiom that what is known is true; an article in a festschrift for a Swedish philosopher that tentatively sketches an original generalization of a surprising result from decision theory to epistemology; a sympathetic interpretation of a contemporary philosopher’s conception of philosophy in what appears to be the informally produced proceedings of a conference; a short book review. On the positive side, the work is thoughtful, well-informed, interesting, provocative but not rash. On the negative side, it is rather slight and non-committal, does not develop ideas very far, and is not published in places that would enable the ideas to have much impact. Given the author’s obvious ability, one might have hoped for a stronger outcome.

Project: Genetic counselling and prenatal diagnostics: survey and analysis of ethical aspects (Genome project)

Project start: 1995

The project concerns ethical issues associated with prenatal diagnosis and genetic counselling. The outputs received comprise two English monographs by Christian Munthe and one Swedish article by Munthe, Jan Wahlström and Stellan Welin. Munthe's first monograph *The Moral Roots of Prenatal Diagnosis: Ethical Aspects of the Early Introduction and Presentation of Prenatal Diagnosis in Sweden* (Studies in Research Ethics, Gothenburg 1996, 88 pp.) describes the arguments of Swedish medical specialists in support of prenatal diagnosis and other Swedish discussion of the topic in 1969-77. The main part of the work consists in the analysis of the official view of the specialists from an ethical point of view. His second study *Pure Selection. The Ethics of Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis and Choosing Children without Abortion* (Acta Philosophica Gothoburgensia 1999, 306 pp.) deals with the introduction of pre-implantation diagnosis in Sweden in the 1990's, the Swedish discussion on this procedure, and the ethical and political questions raised by this development, such as the moral status of embryos and possible future people, disability and the value of life, autonomy and genetic counselling, the economical arguments for selection, and eugenics. Following the practice in applied ethics, Munthe discussed medical facts and ethical positions in order to develop considered suggestions. Particular attention is paid to the difference between medical research and clinical application and their roles in public health policy. The Swedish joint paper by Munthe, Wahlström and Welin is largely based on Munthe's second book, a recognized contribution to international discussion of medical ethics which has been reviewed in many journals. This is a project with a good outcome.

Project: Semantic ambiguity

Project start: 2002

The aim of this project is to study the occurrence of semantic ambiguity from the several perspectives of logic, linguistics and philosophy and to examine the interaction of ambiguity with other linguistic phenomena such as compositionality. With the application is included a well thought out research programme with information on earlier relevant publications by the project participants and a list of ongoing international cooperation. Westerståhl is well known for his work on the borderline between logic and linguistics; in addition to the work referred to in the application he is known as the coauthor of a major text on *Quantifiers in Language and Logic* (2007). The project has submitted three works for the evaluation panel. Two

of them are papers by the project leader, one on scope ambiguity and a second on compositionality and ambiguity. They are both contributions of good scientific quality to the logic/linguistic interface. The third submitted work is the book *Naturalizing Intentionality*, which is the thesis of one of the project participants, A. Almér. The perspective here comes from philosophy and to some extent the cognitive sciences, and the aim is, to quote the author, to investigate certain problems “pertaining to attempts at naturalizing mental absoluteness and related concepts like reference and truth”. The literature on language, mind and brain is vast, and it is possible to point to other sources than those used by the author. But within the limits he sets for himself he has produced a solid piece of work. The thesis is published in a local series at the University of Gothenburg. We have not seen any publications from the other two participants in the project, but our overall impression is that the project, while not yet brought to a successful end, is a useful contribution to the field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The appropriate audience for excellent research in philosophy is an international one, and standards of excellence in such research are set by the international community. Many but by no means all of the projects that the panel surveyed achieved such standards. This has several consequences for SRC-supported projects in philosophy:
 - (a) Any SRC-supported research project should result in some publications that are accessible to the international research community. They should be in an international language for research: in practice, normally English, although French and German are also possible. They should be in journals or books with a genuinely international circulation. The international credibility of such publications is normally maintained by an international system of refereeing.
 - (b) To demonstrate a suitable track record of excellent research in philosophy, applicants should show a record of refereed publications as in (a), at least some of them recent. The best single indicator is a number of articles published in first-rate international journals. In some areas, such as the history of philosophy, book series also constitute an important channel.
 - (c) The assessment process for applications should involve an international element, either directly or indirectly. The direct way is for the assessment to be carried out by international specialists in the area of the project, which would require applications to be in English or another international research language. The indirect way is for the assessment to give weight to the applicant's record of internationally refereed publications or to measures of the international impact of the applicant's work. It is not appropriate for a national committee to attempt a purely intrinsic assessment of applications.
 - (d) Similar comments to those in (c) apply to the retrospective assessment of the outputs of funded projects.
 - (e) As far as possible, applicants should be made aware of points (a)–(d).
2. Most cutting edge research in philosophy internationally is carried out by individuals or very small groups of individuals (who are of course in contact with the wider research community). It is therefore appropriate for the SRC to channel the bulk of its research funding in philosophy to comparatively small-scale projects of the type that the panel examined.

3. It would not be helpful to attempt to impose a central direction on philosophical research in Sweden, or to prioritize certain areas. Point 2 above lessens the need for such top-down attempts in philosophy; the latter also tend to produce distortions, by imposing preconceived ideas that are typically less up-to-date and more fashion-driven than are the judgments of first-rate individual researchers. In practice over recent decades, a striking proportion (although not all) of internationally excellent Swedish philosophical research has been in the more technical part of the subject, using techniques from formal logic, but strong research traditions in philosophy should be able to renew themselves under a regime of strict and fair evaluation, rather than needing to be institutionally prioritized.
4. Clarification is needed of the procedures for handling interdisciplinary applications. Some of the projects funded seemed to result in primarily non-philosophical outputs, sometimes of a popular kind. Of course, philosophy has many interdisciplinary connections, with the natural and social sciences as well as with the humanities, but it also has a distinctive disciplinary identity.
 - (a) Applicants should be able to flag their applications for interdisciplinary assessment.
 - (b) Where an application is not flagged by the applicant for interdisciplinary assessment, it should be assessed strictly as philosophy. This assessment should be carried out by philosophers. For example, a general panel for the humanities or the social sciences is not in a position to make an independent assessment of the excellence of an application in philosophy.
5. Popularizations, practical manuals and the like do not constitute cutting edge research in philosophy. If they are funded, it should be under a different programme. Different criteria would apply; for example, in some cases Swedish would be the most appropriate language of publication.
6. The documentation of project applications and outputs by the SRC should be more systematic and complete than it was in the period that the panel surveyed. In this respect matters already seem to be improving.

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH IN PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY IN SWEDEN: 1998–2008

Wlodek Rabinowicz

In this short summary, which is aimed to give a rough picture of the main lines of research in practical philosophy in Sweden during the last decade, I have decided to organize the presentation by universities rather than by particular research subjects. It is to be hoped that this will give the reader a better grasp of what is going on at various departments. The summary is to a large extent a collective work: It is based on the reports prepared by professors Erik Carlson, Uppsala University, Sven-Ove Hansson, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Christian Munthe, University of Gothenburg, Bo Petersson, Linköping University, Hans Ruin, Södertörn University College, Torbjörn Tännsjö, Stockholm University, and on my own report for Lund University.

Gothenburg

The arrival in 1995 of Torbjörn Tännsjö as chaired professor in practical philosophy initiated a demanding process of giving the subject solidity, direction and international connection. Tännsjö's fields of interest at the time (normative ethics and bioethics) therefore dominated for some time. The arrival of postdoctoral fellow *forskarassistent* Claudio Tamburrini and lecturer Christian Munthe initially served to underline this trend, although both brought interests of their own, in the philosophy of law, sport, and applied ethics with a broader scope and a more empirically informed touch. The research at the department has then gradually broadened its focus, emphasised by Ingmar Persson taking over the chair in 2004, Gunnar Björnsson starting as a postdoctoral fellow, Bengt Brülde being employed as a lecturer, and Daniela Cutas taking up the position as a postdoctoral fellow. Parallel to this, practical philosophy has come to interact more closely both with theoretical philosophy and with other subjects, such as the history of ideas, cognitive science, linguistics, political science, medicine, economics, etc. In sum, the focus of the research nowadays can be described as a mix of applied philosophy and metaethics, with a strong focus on combining interdisciplinarity with solid basic research.

In the period up to his departure in 2002, Tännsjö published two international books (*Hedonistic Utilitarianism*, Edinburgh University Press, 1998; and *Cercive Care: The Ethics of Choice in Health and Medicine*, Routledge, 1999) and four books in Swedish, besides a number of papers in peer-reviewed journals.

In 1998, the department hosted an international research conference on Sports and Values, resulting in the seminal volume *Values in Sport* (E & FN SPON, 2000), edited by Tamburrini and Tännsjö (who also contributed chapters), and also containing a chapter by Munthe, besides contributions by other leading international scholars in the field.

Munthe (who was promoted to a full professor in 2004) secured two separate research grants in 1999–2000, for research in the fields of environmental ethics and the ethics of risk, and the ethics of genetic testing, respectively. The latter project, which is still running, involves interdisciplinary cooperation with genetics, nursing, oncology and theology, and has produced peer-reviewed papers, books (one at CUP) and book chapters, including contributions to leading scientific encyclopaedias. The former project has produced one PhD dissertation (Petra Andersson: *Humanity and Nature*), and a book manuscript in English on the ethical basis of the precautionary principle, currently undergoing review by academic publishers.

In 2002–2005, several researchers and PhD candidates in practical philosophy partook in the project on Relativism (supported by the Bank of Sweden and including collaboration with Theoretical Philosophy and History of Ideas), which arranged an international research conference on this subject in 2004. Several contributions to this conference can be found in the volume *Lectures on Relativism*, published by the department. So far, one PhD dissertation (Ragnar Francén: *Metaethical Relativism*) has been produced within this project.

In 2003–2006, Munthe was a national partner in the project European public health ethics network, funded by the European Commission within FP5, and contributed heavily to its final report, as well as to a theory of the goals of public health, due to be published.

Brülde, who has been connected to the department for a long time, presented his PhD dissertation in 1998 (*The Human Good*), partook in the Relativism project, and has then pursued research in the field of the philosophy of health, health policy, happiness and quality of life, resulting in a standing as a world-leading expert in the intersection of these fields. He has published many peer-reviewed papers and several books within his area of research.

Ingmar Persson's main achievement is the book *The Retreat of Reason* (OUP, 2005), which covers issues in philosophical psychology, such as the nature of desire, sensation and emotion, practical reasons and rationality,

personal identity, and responsibility and free will. He has also done research in applied ethics, in particular in a three-year research programme on stem cells and genetic ethics, issuing in a book, *Jämlikhet från början* [Equality from the beginning] (2004). He has published papers on equality, population problems, animal welfare and environmental issues. Currently, he is working on a book on the difference between consequentialist and deontological conceptions of responsibility and the connection between responsibility and practical reasons. He is in charge of a research project, supported by the Bank of Sweden, on morality and agent-relativity, which employs his former graduate student Caj Strandberg.

Gunnar Björnsson joined the department in 2005 as a postdoctoral fellow. His overall research interest is naturalistic analyses of modal and deontic judgments, and he has published in both peer-review journals and anthologies on various forms of modal judgments, emotivist or noncognitivist analysis of moral judgments, neo-kantian analysis of moral judgments, causal judgments and conditionals. His present focus is on moral disagreement and moral objectivity and relativity, with some forays into the analysis of judgments of moral responsibility. Some of his present work on moral relativity is in collaboration with Professor Stephen Finlay from USC Los Angeles, as well as with his former graduate student Ragnar Francén, who recently defended his dissertation on metaethical relativism, and with people in Theoretical Philosophy at University of Gothenburg.

Daniela Cutas joined the department in 2007 as a postdoctoral fellow. Her main research subject is reproductive ethics, but she has also published in other areas of practical philosophy (e.g. the ethics of immortality). Since her association with the department, she published a book on the ethics and policy of the technologies of assisted reproduction and genetic engineering, as well as several peer-reviewed papers in international journals. Currently, she is co-authoring articles with researchers from the University of Birmingham and the University of Manchester, as well as writing independently. She is also developing a new book proposal for publication, on the ethics of parenting.

Linköping

Research within the field of practical philosophy is carried out at three departments of the university, even if it is only in the philosophy department that the denomination “practical philosophy” is explicitly used. They are (1) the Department of Philosophy, (2) the Center for Applied Ethics and (3) the Department of Health and Society. There is a developed cooperation between these three departments in courses as well as research.

- 1) The **philosophy department** is quite small. It was established in 1990. There is one professor of practical philosophy, Bo Petersson. His research deals with research ethics, moral theory and the history of modern Swedish philosophy. Most of his publications are written in Swedish, some are in English. He is now working on a study of the conceptual analysis of the Uppsala school (1900-1940). There is one PhD-student working on a treatise on Michael Walzer's theory of justice. - The department arranged *Filosofidagarna 2003* (a bi-annual meeting for philosophers in Sweden).
- 2) In the **Center for Applied Ethics (CTE)** there are two professors of ethics: Göran Collste, Applied Ethics, and Anders Nordgren, Bio-ethics. CTE was established in 1995. Collste's research deals with the ethics of information technology, global justice and human dignity. Nordgren focuses on four fields: the impact of evolutionary theory and genetics on the conceptions of human nature, the ethics of medical genetics, ethical issues raised by assisted reproductive technologies and animal ethics. Nordgren writes mainly in English, while Collste uses both Swedish and English. CTE has two PhD-students, one writing a thesis on *Judging in the Public Sphere* (supervisor: Anders Nordgren), and one working with issues on the borderline between ethics and economics (supervisor: Bo Petersson). CTE has arranged international conferences on e.g. reflective equilibrium, the ethics of nanotechnology, and the ethics of IT (within ETHICOMP).
- 3) The **Department of Health and Society** is committed to thematic studies. It is the biggest department of the three here mentioned. Within the philosophy part of the department, there are three professors: Lennart Nordenfelt and Ingemar Nordin, professors of Health and Society, and Stellan Welin, professor of Gene-ethics (a relatively recent appointment). There are also post-docs working on ethical matters (Kristin Zeiler). The department was established in the beginning of the 1980s. Lennart Nordenfelt has long been an internationally recognized authority in the philosophy of medicine. His work in that area includes studies on health, illness, disability, welfare and quality of life. Most of his writings are in English. So far, he has guided 10 students to their PhD-degree. He is now working with questions dealing with animal ethics and the notion of dignity, involving a PhD-student in each subject. Within the field of practical philosophy, Ingemar Nordin (who also works on philosophy of science) deals with political philosophy and with questions of animal rights. His works are mainly published in Swedish. Stellan Welin has two PhD-students working on gene-ethical subjects. The Department of Health and Society has well established international contacts within the philosophy of medicine.

Lund

The faculty of the practical philosophy unit consists of three full professors, Dan Egonsson, Wlodek Rabinowicz, Toni Rønnow-Rasmussen, an associate professor, Björn Petersson, two researchers, Johan Brännmark, David Alm, and one *adjunkt*, Jonas Josefsson.

The Swedish Research Council (VR) provides external funding for one faculty member (Alm), a long-term grant for a leading researcher (Rabinowicz), and has recently awarded a third member (Brännmark) a full-time four-year grant. During 1999 – 2002 and 2003 – 2006, respectively, the Tercentenary Foundation of the Bank of Sweden (RJ) financed two large four-year Lund-Uppsala projects: the first one on *acting over time* and the second on *philosophical theories of value*, both coordinated from Lund.

Much of the unit's research in recent four or five years has revolved around value theory and especially on *formal axiology*. It is an area of study that focuses on the structural features of our value notions: on the logic of value, its measurement, distinctions between different value types, general taxonomy of value relations, conceptual connections between value and other normative notions, etc.

Other areas in which the unit conducts or has conducted research are practical rationality (Egonsson, Petersson, Rabinowicz), decision theory (Rabinowicz), quality of life (Egonsson), the concepts of desert, rights, and equality (Alm), group action and shared responsibility (Petersson), neo-Kantian ethics and virtue ethics (Brännmark). Graduate students have done work in formal axiology, political philosophy, moral realism, moral psychology, practical rationality, social ontology, Kantian ethics. Current PhD-projects focus on value analysis, hedonism, and the 'practicality' of moral theories.

Completed doctoral dissertations:

- Sven-Ove Hansson, *Structures of Value*, 1999, revised version published by Cambridge UP in 2001.
- Magnus Jiborn, *Voluntary Coercion: Collective action and the Social Contract*, 1999.
- Björn Petersson, *Belief & Desire : The standard model of intentional action - critique and defense*, 2000.
- Lena Halldenius, *Liberty Revisited: A Historical and Systematic Account of an Egalitarian Conception of Liberty and Legitimacy*, 2001.
- Johan Brännmark, *Morality and the pursuit of happiness: A study in Kantian ethics*, 2002.
- Kutte Jönsson, *Det förbjudna mödrskapet. En moralfilosofisk undersökning av surrogatmödrskap* [The forbidden motherhood: An ethical study of surrogate motherhood], 2003.

- Caj Strandberg, *Moral Reality - A Defence of Moral Realism*, 2004.
- Mats Johansson, *Empatisk förståelse – från inlevelse till osjälviskhet* [Empathic understanding – from Einfühlung to unselfishness], 2004.
- Åsa Andersson, *Power and Social Ontology*, 2007.

Practical philosophy in Lund has close ties to theoretical philosophy and cognitive science, which leads to a fair amount of research cooperation within the department. The links with other philosophical departments in Sweden, especially in Uppsala and to some extent in Stockholm and Gothenburg, are well-developed and there is a thriving cooperation with philosophers in other countries, especially in UK (Oxford, LSE, Reading), but also in US and Australia (Research School for Social Science at the Australian National University in Canberra).

The international standing of the unit is strong: Lund is considered to be one of the world centres for the research on value theory. Research in other areas has also been internationally visible.

The RJ-supported project on acting over time covered (i) dynamic inconsistency and backward induction, (ii) resolute choice in cooperation and conflict, (iii) time-related issues in moral philosophy: time-bias, consequentialism, the normative relevance of one's future actions. An important aspect of the project was cooperation with decision theorists working on related issues. This was facilitated by the fact that the coordinator (Rabinowicz) was at the same time an editor of the cross-disciplinary CUP journal *Economics and Philosophy*.

As mentioned before, the unit's most successful research area in recent years has been value theory. Here follows a short overview of some of the research issues in this area:

- 1) *Analysis of value*. The so-called "buck-passing account" takes the value of x to consist in the existence of normative reasons for pro-attitudes towards x . While attractive, this analysis confronts a number of difficulties. (i) If pro-attitudes essentially involve evaluations of some sort, the account is in danger of being circular. (ii) Some reasons for pro-attitudes are of the wrong kind, so to speak, from the point of view of the analysis: There might be considerations that make the pro-attitude valuable, but not its object.
- 2) *Typology of value*. Here, the focus is on distinctions between different value types: intrinsic versus extrinsic value, basic versus derived value, value for a person (or a group) versus value period, etc. Another set of problems within this sub-area concerns the taxonomy of value relations and in particular such issues as evaluative incommensurability.
- 3) *Value bearers*. What kinds of objects can be value bearers? Among candidates there are both concrete and abstract entities. However, the theoretic-

tical goal of simplification has given rise to attempts to reduce all value to the value of states of affairs. Aggregating value is much easier if all value bearers are of the same ontological type. While attractive, it is questionable whether such a reduction is possible to accomplish.

- 4) *Value measurement*. Can all values be weighed against each other? Aren't radically different values incomparable? And aren't some values infinitely greater than some other values? Furthermore: How does the value of the whole relate to the values of its parts? If the former need not be a function of the latter, then it is difficult to formulate general principles for value aggregation.

The unit's research, which has been presented at many international conferences and published in prestigious philosophical journals, is widely known nowadays. The coordinator of the value project, Rabinowicz, is preparing a collection of his papers on the subject for Oxford University Press. Another member of the project, Rønnow-Rasmussen, works on a book on personal value. In 1995, he edited an anthology *Recent Work on Intrinsic Value* (Ashgate) together with an American colleague, professor Michael J. Zimmerman. One should also mention the contributions to the project by Johan Brännmark, several of which were published in international peer-reviewed journals.

Stockholm University

Research group

The group consists of Torgny Segerstedt Pro Futura Fellow Gustaf Arrhenius, professor emeritus Lars Bergström, FD Åsa Carlson, universitetslektor Björn Eriksson, docent Lars O. Ericsson, FD Jens Johansson, FD Ulrik Kihlbom (affiliated to Stockholm Bioethics Centre), FK Hans Mathlein, professor Ragnar Ohlsson, FD Håkan Salwén, FD Claudio M. Tamburrini, professor Folke Tersman (until 1 January 2008 then professor of Practical Philosophy at Uppsala University) Uppsala) and Kristian-Claëson Professor of Practical Philosophy, Torbjörn Tännsjö. Two guest researchers are affiliated to the department as post-docs, FD Ann Heberlein and FD Attila Tanyi, both supported by the Swedish Research Council.

A wide area of subjects has been covered by the researches at the department. Here are only some examples:

Normative ethics

Tännsjö has defended hedonistic utilitarianism in a book under the same title. In his dissertation, Kihlbom has defended moral particularism: a view according to which morality cannot be summarised in a set of general prin-

ciples, however complicated they might be. Arrhenius has been working on issues in population ethics – his work in that area has been recognized worldwide. He has also published several papers, in leading international journals, on issues lying at the borderline between economics and philosophy (social choice, game theory, formal axiology).

Metaethics

Folke Tersman, Gunnar Björnsson and Torbjörn Tännsjö have extensively published in metaethics. In *Moral Realism* Tännsjö defended the idea of a mind-independent objective and knowable moral reality. In his recent book, *Moral Disagreement*, Tersman questions this realistic view. Håkan Salwén has in his dissertation defended Hume's claim that normative conclusions cannot be derived from the description of empirical reality. Tännsjö, Bergström and Arrhenius have published several papers on the structure of normative and axiological theories. Tännsjö works on a book manuscript on practical reasons. Bergström, Tersman and Tännsjö have been involved in a research project on Relativism, supported by the Tercentenary Foundation of the Bank of Sweden, and they have all published within this project. Tännsjö was one of the project's coordinators, together with colleagues from Gothenburg.

Moral metaphysics

Jens Johansson has published extensively on problems in moral metaphysics, in particular on death and personal identity.

Political philosophy

Folke Tersman has lead an inter-disciplinary research project, Democracy Unbound, supported by the Swedish Research Council. Gustaf Arrhenius, Lars Bergström, Folke Tersman, Anna Petrén and Torbjörn Tännsjö have all published papers in the project, and Tännsjö has published a book on *Global Democracy: The Case for a World Government* (2008).

Gustaf Arrhenius has lead a joint Swedish and South-African project on Ideology, Oppression, and Democracy, supported by SIDA and the Swedish Research Council. Arrhenius and Tännsjö have published extensively within this project.

Bioethics

Stockholm Centre of Bioethics (SCB), led by Torbjörn Tännsjö, has been involved in two EU-projects, one on human enhancement, and one on tissue banking. The latter has just been initiated and the former (a joint cooperation between the universities in

Stockholm, Oxford, Bristol, Milano and Maastricht, supported by EU's Sixth Framework Programme) has just been finalised. Arrhenius, Tamburrini and Tännsjö have published extensively on human enhancement within the former project. Tamburrini and Tännsjö have jointly edited a book on genetic enhancement in sport. SCB has also been involved in a research project on IVF and social justice. Tännsjö has published several articles within the project.

Stockholm, Royal Institute of Technology

Division of Philosophy at the Royal Institute of Technology was created in the year 2000. Its postgraduate education in philosophy is not divided into practical and theoretical philosophy as in most other Swedish universities. The division has a yearly output of about 40 articles in international journals. All licentiate and PhD theses are collections of papers for international journals.

Much of the division's work in ethics and decision theory is devoted to issues related to risk and uncertainty. Traditionally, moral philosophy has focused primarily on problems that can be staged in a deterministic setting, and it is largely left to decision theory to deal with the additional complications that follow when the consequences of alternative actions are not knowable beforehand. This has led to the neglect of the ethical aspects of risk taking *per se*. Researchers at this institute have investigated the difficulties that traditional moral theories have in treating problems of risk and uncertainty, and proposed ways to amend moral theory to account better for these problems. (cf. Sven Ove Hansson's papers on risk acceptance in *Erkenntnis* 2003 and on risk analysis in *Economics and Philosophy* 2006, and Hélène Hermansson's PhD thesis on *Rights at risk: ethical issues in risk management*, 2007.)

The traditional approach in risk analysis and risk-benefit analysis is straightforwardly utilitarian: Risks are weighed against benefits without regard to whom these risks and benefits accrue. In the works mentioned above, this approach is rejected, and the crucial research question is "Under what conditions can an act that exposes A to a risk be justified by the fact that it also gives rise to a larger benefit to B?" One major class of solutions that have been investigated are those that are based on mutual "risk exchanges" that are to everyone's advantage. With this method many risk exposures can be justified, but contrary to the traditional approach this approach will block exploitative arrangements in which some parts of the population are exposed to risks and others gain all the benefits.

The department also conducts research on other issues in ethics and decision theory such as:

- Preference logic and preference change (Till Grüne and Sven Ove Hansson, anthology on preference change, to be published by Springer)
- Axiomatic arguments for expected utility maximization (PhD Thesis by Martin Peterson)
- Measurement of uncertainty (Licentiate thesis and coming PhD thesis by Jonas Clausen)
- Bias in scientific judgment (Licentiate thesis and coming PhD thesis by Birgitte Wandall)
- Rationality in goal-setting (Licentiate theses and coming PhD theses by Karin Edvardsson and Holger Rosencrantz)
- Incomparability (Licentiate thesis by Nicolas Espinoza)
- Ethics of traffic safety and risks in road traffic (PhD thesis by Jessica Nihl'ne Fahlquist, coming PhD theses by Holger Rosencrantz and Sara Svensson.)
- Ethics of radiation protection (Licentiate thesis and coming thesis by Per Wikman Svahn)
- The concept of safety (Licentiate thesis and coming thesis by Niklas Möller)
- The precautionary principle (PhD Thesis by Per Sandin, journal articles by Sven Ove Hansson and Christina Rudén)
- Ethics of crisis management (Postdoc work by Per Sandin)
- Workplace ethics, implications of the work contract (PhD Thesis by Anders Persson)
- Ethics of surveillance (PhD Thesis and postdoc research by Elin Palm)
- Ethical aspects of the ownership of biological material (Licentiate thesis and coming PhD thesis by Barbro Björkman)
- Trust (PhD thesis by Madeleine Hayenhjelm)
- Paternalism and public health (Licentiate thesis and coming PhD thesis by Kalle Grill)
- Philosophical issues in social insurance (Licentiate thesis and coming PhD thesis by Mikael Dubois)

Södertörn University College

This is a research environment of a recent origin: It was created less than ten years ago. It is special in two respects: (i) there is a strong focus on continental philosophy and history of philosophy; (ii) as a matter of principle, there is no division between practical and theoretical philosophy.

Apart from professor Hans Ruin, the group of researchers consists of Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Fredrika Spindler, Lisa Käll, Hans-Roland Johansson, Niklas Forsberg, Marcel Quarfood and Sven-Olov Vallenstein.

Four large research projects should be especially mentioned. Projects (i), (iii) and (iv) are financed by grants from the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies, while project (ii) has financing from the Swedish Research Council:

- (i) *Tradition as a Utopia*: on transformations in continental philosophy powered by the attempts to give new interpretations of the Greeks.
- (ii) *The notion of liberal education* (bildning) – its transformations from Romanticism to the present time.
Output: a collection of essays entitled *Bildning och person* [Liberal education and Person].
- (iii) *Aesthetics and Politics* - focus on Nietzsche's and Hannah Arendt's views on the relationship between the aesthetical and the political.
- (iv) *Technology and Life-World* (ongoing) – phenomenological perspectives on the philosophy of technology.

Uppsala

Senior researchers:

The senior researchers at the department that have been active during the period 1998–2008 include the following philosophers:

Professor Emeritus. Sven Danielsson (b. 1939); held the chair in practical philosophy until 2008, when he was succeeded by Folke Tersman. Danielsson began his philosophical career as a deontic logician and decision-theorist. Later, he published on a wide range of issues, including social choice theory, philosophy of language, formal axiology, normative ethics, and meta-ethics.

Professor Jan Österberg (b. 1941); the author of a distinguished work on ethical egoism (*Self and Others*, Reidel 1986). He later published articles on, i.a., consequentialism and common-sense morality, morality and action-guidance, Sidgwick's ethics, population ethics, and aesthetics. He is a co-author (with Wlodek Rabinowicz) of a well-known paper on preferentialism, "Value Based on Preferences" (*Economics and Philosophy*, 1996).

Professor Erik Carlson (b. 1961). Carlson's peer-reviewed publications to date include one monograph, *Consequentialism Reconsidered* (Kluwer, 1995),

and about twenty-five papers, in journals such as *Noûs*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Analysis*, *Philosophical Studies*, and *Economics and Philosophy*. His areas of research include consequentialist ethics, axiology, the problems of free will and moral responsibility, and decision theory. He has also published in metaphysics and philosophy of religion.

Docent Thomas Anderberg (b. 1956); works in environmental and applied ethics, aesthetics, and philosophy of religion. He has published several monographs (in Swedish), attracting attention outside the professional philosophical community. His book *Guds moral* [God's Morality], 1997, on the problem of evil, met with strong acclaim and has been widely discussed. Anderberg regularly writes on philosophical topics in the daily press, and is a sought-after public lecturer and debater.

PhD dissertations:

Seven PhD-students have successfully defended their dissertations at the department between 1998 and 2008: Gustaf Arrhenius (2000), Krister Bykvist (1999), John Eriksson (2006), Gert Helgesson (2002), Jonas Olson (2005), Tomasz Pol (2001), and Frans Svensson (2006). Bykvist got a permanent position as a tutorial fellow at Oxford less than two years after completing his dissertation (on preferentialism). Arrhenius' thesis in population ethics has rendered him a position as an internationally recognised expert in this field. Olson's thesis in formal axiology is according to the faculty opponent, Prof. Brad Hooker (Reading), "by a large margin" the best of the more than 20 dissertations he has to date examined, among them a number from Oxford and Cambridge. Immediately after receiving his Ph. D. in May 2005, Olson was offered a three-year tutorial fellowship at Oxford, as well as a three-year research position at Reading.

Research topics:

Two strong areas of research are formal axiology and normative ethics. The former subject investigates the structural properties of the concept of value, and value bearers. Examples of central questions are: What kinds of entities can be bearers of value? Does intrinsic value ("value for its own sake") coincide with final value ("value as an end")? Do bearers of intrinsic or final value possess their value by necessity, or may it vary with the context? Are there organic unities? Are there incomparable bearers of value? Is intrinsic or final value measurable, and if so, on what type of scale? Is the relation "better than" generally transitive? Danielsson, Carlson, Olson and Österberg all do research in this area, and have published a significant number of articles in leading journals. Within the field of substantial axiology, Daniels-

son and Österberg have discussed hedonism and preferentialism. The latter theory was also the subject of Krister Bykvist's Ph. D. thesis (1999).

In normative ethics, the lively debate on consequentialism and utilitarianism has had a prominent place in the Department's research profile. Danielsson has argued that the structural difference between consequentialist and deontological moral theories is only apparent; a claim that has been disputed by Carlson. Danielsson, Carlson, and Österberg have all suggested solutions to some much-discussed coordination problems for consequence-sensitive moral theories. Österberg has, in a series of papers, investigated the relationship between consequentialism and common-sense morality. Further, he and Carlson have discussed whether consequentialist theories can be action-guiding. In the internationally well-received book *Consequentialism Reconsidered*, and some later articles, Carlson has investigated how central concepts like "alternative" and "outcome" should be understood within the framework of a consequentialist theory. Österberg and Carlson have published papers in population ethics. This is also the subject of Gustaf Arrhenius Ph. D. thesis, *Future Generations* (2000), which has attracted international attention. Österberg and Svensson have published papers in virtue ethics, which is also the subject of Svensson's forthcoming Ph. D. thesis.

Another research area is philosophy of religion. Apart from Anderberg's above-mentioned work, Carlson has published two papers (in collaboration with Erik Olsson) on contemporary versions of the teleological proof of God's existence. Further, Danielsson has published some discussion papers in the area.

Carlson has written a number of papers on the problems of free will and (in)determinism, five of which are published in peer-reviewed journals. This is also the subject of the forthcoming dissertation of one of the present PhD-students (Peter Ryman).

Meta-ethical questions, concerning the semantics of moral judgements, as well as the ontological status of value properties, have been discussed by Danielsson, e.g., in a series of papers on the moral supervenience thesis. Olsson and Eriksson have written on topics in moral psychology, such as motive internalism and externalism.

Anderberg has published extensively in applied and environmental ethics, and Danielsson, Österberg and Carlson have all made contributions to decision theory.

National and international collaboration:

From 2003 until the end of 2006 Carlson, Danielsson and Olsson were involved in a four-year research project in axiology, in collaboration with a

group of practical philosophers at Lund University, headed by Wlodek Rabinowicz. The project was funded by The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation. The project has resulted in a large number of papers (compiled in volumes of preprints), several of which have been accepted, in revised version, for publication in international journals.

The Department is frequently visited by philosophers from Europe, North America, and Australasia. Practical philosophy has particularly close contacts with Oxford University, whose Philosophy Department ranks among the top three in the world. John Broome, White's Professor in Moral Philosophy, has spent several sabbatical terms in Uppsala, and Danielsson and Carlson have both been invited to present papers at the Moral Philosophy seminar in Oxford. The fact that Bykvist and Olson presently hold positions there is likely to further enhance this collaboration.

Other frequent visitors to Uppsala include Howard Sobel, a distinguished decision-theorist and philosopher of religion from Toronto, who regularly spends part of the academic year at the department, and was recently awarded an honorary Ph.D, and Prof. Michael J. Zimmerman (Univ. of North Carolina) and Prof. Fred Feldman (Univ. of Massachusetts), who are leading experts on formal and substantial axiology. Within the other Nordic countries, there is collaboration with, in particular, Copenhagen (Prof. Peter Sandøe, Prof. Nils Holtug, Dr. Karsten Klint-Jensen, and others), and Roskilde (Prof. Jesper Ryberg).

APPENDIX 2: THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY IN SWEDEN DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS — SOME REFLECTIONS

Sten Lindström

1. Background

Let me start by briefly describing the background to the last ten years of theoretical philosophy in Sweden.

There is a widespread view of Swedish philosophy during the last half of the 20th century that it was then dominated by one monolithic branch of analytic philosophy having a very narrow conception of what philosophy is, or ought to be. It was the aim of this school, it is often said, to make philosophy scientific by concentrating on those philosophical problems that admit of precise formulation within an exact logical formalism. The analysis of language by means of logic and the construction of formalized logical languages became a central occupation of this school. Hence, philosophical logic and formal methods came to replace traditional epistemology and metaphysics. Moreover, this school viewed philosophy as an ahistorical enterprise: the study of the history of philosophy was considered important only insofar as it could throw new light on (current) philosophical problems. Analytic philosophy in Sweden, as it is here described, did not conceive of itself as one school or tradition among others. Instead it viewed itself as "scientific philosophy", i.e., the kind of enterprise that would replace traditional philosophy when philosophy would become scientific. Ordinary "schools" or "traditions" like phenomenology, existentialism, Marxism, and various kinds of "continental philosophy" were frowned upon.

If we have this picture of the state of theoretical philosophy in Sweden from say 1960–1995, then it is easy (and tempting) to paint an opposite picture of the situation as it has developed since then. However, the common picture of Swedish analytical philosophy although containing a grain of truth is greatly exaggerated. If we consider the leading philosophers in Sweden during the last fifty years or so, we see that they represent very diverse philosophical views and methodologies. Consider the following group of leading theoretical philosopher during this period:

- 1) Konrad Marc-Wogau, Anders Wedberg, Gunnar Aspelin, Ivar Segelberg
- 2) Stig Kanger, Sören Halidén, Håkan Tömebohm
- 3) Krister Segerberg, Dag Prawitz, Mats Furberg, Dick Haglund, Per Lindström
- 4) Sören Stenlund, Bengt Hansson, Ingvar Johansson

This is a monolithic group in one aspect—they are all men—but their views about philosophy differ greatly. In this group there are some outstanding logicians, but also some excellent historians of philosophy, and some original thinkers that are neither analytical philosophers nor historians of philosophy. Here are phenomenologists, ontologists, linguistic philosophers and Wittgensteinians. Some despise Heidegger; others view him as one of the truly great 20th-century philosophers (it is of course, possible to do both), etc.

Conclusion: The received view of Swedish theoretical philosophy during the period from 1960 to 1995 as being dominated by one uniform school of analytic philosophy mainly concerned with logic and logical analysis is superficial and greatly exaggerated.

2. A grain of truth

The received picture, however, contains a grain of truth. Wedberg and Marc-Wogau, although not logicians themselves, encouraged logic and viewed it as a central and indispensable part of philosophy. The Swedish logicians and philosophers Stig Kanger, Dag Prawitz, Lars Svenonius, Per Lindström and Krister Segerberg did excellent and internationally influential work in mathematical and philosophical logic. In many philosophy departments, logic and formal philosophy enjoyed great prestige, and it was encouraged.

Even if most philosophers in their practice did not live up to the official picture of philosophy as being mainly concerned with logic and logical analysis — or interpreted this doctrine in a variety of ways — it fits rather well as a description of the prevailing ideology. It was also part of the official ideology that "systematic" philosophy was valued higher than the analysis of historically given views. Kanger even viewed it as the philosopher's main task to provide definite results or theorems. According to this view, the truly great (theoretical) philosophers of the 20th century were Gödel, Tarski, Church, Turing and Montague rather than Moore, Wittgenstein, Quine and Davidson. However, Kanger's view—sometimes expressed, perhaps jokingly, as the doctrine that there is formal philosophy and there is "bullshit", or in Swedish "*skitsnack*" — was always considered somewhat extreme.

3. The last 10 years

During the last twenty years, and in particular, during the last ten years, there has been a great expansion of the number of teaching positions in philosophy at the Swedish universities. (However, during the last couple of years, we have also seen some tendencies in the opposite direction due to a diminishing undergraduate enrollment in philosophy.) The available research time for the faculty has not increased at the same pace.

During the last 10 years there has been a broadening of the research areas covered by Swedish philosophers and an increased internationalization. Due to the emergence of the Internet and increased participation in international conferences and workshops, Swedish Philosophers – including graduate students – have to an increasing degree built up international networks and cooperation. Compared to most other humanistic disciplines the rate of international publication in philosophy is high and has increased from earlier decades. The search for external funding is intense and has been increasing.

Although Swedish philosophical research is largely influenced by the Anglo-American analytic tradition, there is a growing interest in various non-analytic traditions like phenomenology, hermeneutics, and post-structuralism, especially in Uppsala and at the University College of Södertörn. The interest in feminist philosophy has also been growing during the last 10 years (Gothenburg, Stockholm, Södertörn, Umeå, Uppsala).

Within the analytic tradition, Stockholm and Gothenburg have remained strong and internationally recognized centers for research in philosophy of language and in logic. In Uppsala there is an active group in the philosophy of language with a Wittgensteinian orientation. At the same time, the interest in ontology (especially Lund), philosophy of mind (Gothenburg, Lund, Stockholm, Umeå) and epistemology (Gothenburg, Lund, Stockholm) has been growing. Lund, Uppsala and Stockholm have strong research groups in the Philosophy of Science.

Let me now point to some special developments during the last 10 years.

(1) In 1998, Lilli Alanen was appointed to a chair in the History of Philosophy at Uppsala University. With the help of external funding, a lively and internationally influential group of researchers in the History of Philosophy has developed around Alanen. The research directed by Alanen at Uppsala has revolved broadly around the history of philosophical psychology, theories of cognition and metaphysics in ancient, medieval and early modern philosophy.

Much of the history of philosophy research activities are currently organized within the research program Understanding Agency; Conceptions of Action, Human Nature, and Value in the Western Tradition, which has

recently been awarded a research grant by The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation for 2008–2012. This program also involves researchers at Stockholm University.

(2) Starting in 1999 a new philosophy unit has developed at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) led by professor Sven Ove Hansson. At the present, the Division of Philosophy at KTH teaches and performs research and postgraduate education on philosophical aspects of technology and its social applications. The three most important research areas are philosophy of risk, ethics of technology, and logic and decision theory. Both (1) and (2) are strong research groups with excellent records of international publications.

(3) Traditionally, logical research in Sweden has been pursued within philosophy departments. Since the 1980's this has changed gradually. A natural division of labor has begun. Mathematical logic is now mainly practiced within departments of mathematics. Gothenburg is an exception, where Logic is a special subject within the philosophy department. Logical research is also pursued within departments of Computer Science.

Research in Philosophical Logic is pursued within theoretical philosophy in Gothenburg, Lund, Stockholm, KTH, Uppsala and Umeå, More specifically, modal logic, belief revision, logic of conditionals, deontic logic, preference logic, as well as formal semantics for natural languages are active areas of logical research with strong publication records. Research in the philosophy and foundations of mathematics is pursued within theoretical philosophy in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Umeå and Uppsala. Logical research is often pursued in cooperation between philosophers, computer scientists, cognitive scientists, linguists, and mathematicians.

It is clear that the relative position of logic and technical philosophy has weakened within Swedish philosophy departments during the past 10 years. Partly this is due to the strengthening of other philosophical disciplines, but probably also to a natural relocation of logical research from philosophy to mathematics and computer science.

(4) Swedish philosophical research is still dominated by men. The first woman professor in Sweden was Lilli Alanen, who was appointed in 1998. In August 2007, Kathrin Glüer and Åsa Wikforss were appointed professors of theoretical philosophy at Stockholm University. Although increasing slowly, the number of women teachers and researchers in philosophy at Swedish universities is still extremely small.

4. Conclusions

During the last 10 years there has been a great increase in the number of researchers and research publications in theoretical philosophy. There has also been a broadening of research areas and an internationalization of the field. The preponderance of publications is still within the analytic tradition, but following the international trend the range of topics is much more varied than before. There is a remarkable new interest in the history of philosophy especially in Uppsala and Stockholm that has led to substantial international publications. There is also a new interest in various non-analytic traditions and in feminist philosophy. But these trends have so far led to comparatively fewer international publications.

LETTER FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE PANEL ABOUT THE 'INITIAL REFLECTIONS'

To:
Professor Arne Jarrick
Secretary General,
Swedish Research Council

19 August 2009

Dear Professor Jarrick,

We write as the three members of the International Panel for the Evaluation of Swedish Research in Philosophy, appointed by the Swedish Research Council, to express our concern about some of the comments in your 'Initial Reflections Concerning the Report on Assessment of Philosophy Research in Sweden', which introduces our report as it is being published by the Swedish Research Council.

At several points the 'Initial Reflections' present the panel as having failed to understand its instructions, when in fact our report clearly stated our reasons for having diverged from the letter of those instructions. Those reasons involved our unwillingness to make judgments for which adequate evidence was not available.

1) The 'Initial Reflections' state 'the idea has been to keep the assessments at a relatively high aggregation level, i.e. to address strengths and weaknesses of the relevant research field rather than strengths and weaknesses of the individual researchers. Apparently, since the report threatens to be a review of individual projects this objective cannot have been adequately clarified' (p. 2) and 'except for the concluding recommendations, the report is limited to a project-by-project accounting. We had neither expected nor desired this' (p. 5). There is no mention of the fact that in our report we explicitly justified our procedure in this respect, saying 'The material made available to the panel is insufficient to give an analysis of

Swedish philosophy and its overall standing with respect to international research. We are also in no position to conclude that the 25 project reports are in a meaningful way representative of the research supported by the council over the last ten years' (p. 10).

2) The panel used external indicators as inputs to its evaluations of quality, in addition to reading the submitted publications; we explained why we took such inputs to improve the reliability of evaluation. The 'Initial Reflections' state 'we underestimated the scope of philosophy research, and hence overestimated the experts' qualifications to expertly appraise all of the projects included in the experiment. [...] The next time we conduct an experiment using this model we must be more careful to match the experts' specific expertise with the scientific orientation of the projects they will assess' (p. 5). This does not address our point that 'No committee can be expected to possess the required expertise across the full range of philosophy in the way that specialized referees for international journals can, and the actual impact of a publication on scholars in the relevant field (of which citations are a rough measure) may well reflect a better informed assessment of its novelty than the impression of a non-specialist' (p. 10, italics added). Our comments reflected the increasing specialization of philosophy, not any accidental mismatch in the council's choice of panel members. For example, a branch of philosophy such as logic or the history of philosophy is divided into dozens of sub-branches, of which one cannot expect to specialize in more than a few. One may have a respectable knowledge of others without the deep acquaintance with recent developments needed to evaluate how much that is new and sound an article adds to them.

3) The 'Initial Reflections' note that in many cases our report does not answer the council's proposed three questions about research (p. 5). It does not make clear that we were quite explicit about the limit on our ability to do so imposed by the nature of the submitted material (p. 10).

These impressions given by the 'Initial Reflections' are significant for at least two reasons. First, they reflect badly on the reputations of the panel members, despite the kind remarks made about us in other respects. Second, but more important, they give an unbalanced picture of the outcome, encapsulated in the statement 'Our appraisal of the experiment is that it was largely successful' (p. 5). This obscures the fact that our report raises problems of principle about the methodology we were asked to use. In both cases, the tendency is to undermine our report.

We hope that it will be possible to clarify the 'Initial Reflections' to avoid inadvertently misleading impressions. If it is too late to do that in the printed version, there should at least be no difficulty in adding a clarification to the version on the web. We trust that the matter can be resolved in the spirit of courtesy and cooperation that you showed us in our work as a panel.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Jens Erik Fenstad, University of Oslo

Professor Simo Knuuttila, University of Helsinki

Professor Timothy Williamson, University of Oxford

Utvärderingar av forskning görs allt oftare med hjälp av indirekta metoder som mäter utbud och efterfrågan – publicering och citering. Mot bakgrund av det har Vetenskapsrådets ämesråd för humaniora och samhällsvetenskap prövat en modell för utvärdering som på ett så arbetsbesparande sätt som möjligt går direkt på forskningens innehåll så som detta presenterats i vetenskapliga publikationer. Som testområde valdes filosofi.

Utvärderarna rekommenderade att publicering i internationella medier bör vara normen för projekt som Vetenskapsrådet finansierar – idag bedrivs filosofiforskning i Sverige som står sig väl internationellt men som inte alltid når den rätta publiken. De ansåg att projektbidraget är en stödform som passar filosofiområdet, efterlyste möjligheten för de sökande att rubricera sina projekt som tvärvetenskapliga och menade att utvecklingen inom området bäst främjas genom bottom up-förfarande, inte genom att vissa forskningsinriktningar prioriteras.



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