

Scandinavian Internationalist Diplomacy, 1920s-1970s

Call for Papers for three workshops at the University of Copenhagen (27-29 May 2020), Södertörn University (September 2020) and the University of Oslo (January 2021)

The Scandinavian countries are often seen as being among the most consistent promoters of internationalist solutions to global challenges and can boast some of the most renowned internationalist figures of the 20th Century. Scandinavia, moreover, sees itself, and is often recognized, as a region representing and promoting a certain set of values (such as democracy, social equality and progressive ideals on rights) on the international stage. While there are truths in these stereotypes, the role and reputation of Scandinavian international politics developed in a complex symbiosis between the rise of international organizations (IOs) and professionalization of foreign services (as part of the construction of the modern state) from the turn of the last century onwards. There is a large body of literature on how the various (non-state) internationalist strands developing from the late 1800s onwards were absorbed into the corporatist structures of the Scandinavian post-war welfare state. However, very little research exists, that (a) studies Scandinavian internationalism as a transnational historical phenomenon, (b) that is intrinsically linked to the rise of IOs and (c) is rooted in expanding *diplomatic* practices.

This workshop trilogy (see descriptions of workshops below) brings these elements together in a systematic fashion, to study the emergence of Scandinavian *internationalist* diplomacy between the 1920s and the 1970s. By centring on a wider conception of diplomatic institutions, actors and practices and positioning Scandinavia within the new literature on internationalisms and international organizations, the workshop series aims to:

- 1) Critically analyse the established narrative of a distinct Scandinavian internationalism by exploring it as part of new diplomatic practices within the new ‘space’ between international organizations, national foreign services and new diplomatic actors.
- 2) Study Scandinavian internationalism as evidenced in diplomatic practices and exploring it as a distinct realization of national interests – neither *a priori* benign nor malign – in its transnational context.
- 3) By building on a broad definition of what constitutes diplomacy, the workshop series connects what is often studied separately: state-driven, traditional diplomacy and the internationalist endeavours of non-state actors (from single individuals and groups of activists via civil society organizations to key corporations).
- 4) Offer a new, comprehensive chronology of Scandinavian internationalist diplomacy, and to critically interpret this within the broader and later more dominant Nordic conceptualization of internationalism.

Guide for participants:

Prospective participants are invited to submit an abstract (400 words) to the organizers of the relevant workshop no later than 1 February 2020.

Workshop 1: Haakon A. Ikonomou: ikonomou@hum.ku.dk

Workshop 2: Andreas Hellenes: amh@cas.au.dk

Workshop 3: Sunniva Engh: sunniva.engh@iakh.uio.no

Selected participants will be expected to submit their full papers (minimum 4000 words) to the relevant workshop organizers for pre-circulation two weeks prior to the relevant workshop.

Workshop 1: Scandinavian Multilateral Diplomacy: from the League of Nations to post-war IOs

27-29 May 2020, University of Copenhagen

Organizers: Haakon A. Ikonomou and Rasmus S. Søndergaard

Over the last hundred years, diplomacy has become increasingly nested in multiple IOs, from the League of Nations, via the United Nations and several economic and security organizations after the Second World War, to the European Union. This development has profoundly shaped how states *do* foreign politics and, arguably, how they articulate their very interests. The impact has been particularly drastic for small states, such as the Scandinavian. Indeed, the bureaucratic professionalization of Scandinavian diplomacy was driven not only with the formalization of the modern state apparatus but found its shape and purpose within an expanding *international* and *regional* space. With the rise of international organizations, small states found new multilateral forums in which to articulate and pursue interests, alliances and brands. This workshop will explore how the ‘vertical’ transnational space between national foreign services and international organizations shaped Scandinavian multilateral diplomacy. Within this scope, the workshop, in particular, welcomes papers on:

- Administrative reforms, codes of conducts and recruitment patterns of Scandinavian foreign services as part of a global circulation of knowledge, expertise and imaginations of efficiency, power and modernity
- Patterns of exchange in personnel between Scandinavian foreign services and IOs
- Specific transnational spaces of multilateral diplomacy, including cooperation between Scandinavian diplomats and foreign services within IOs
- The role of the Nordic model(s) in Scandinavian multilateral diplomacy
- Critical examinations of the origin and promotion of the Scandinavian brand as global good Samaritans committed to peace, solidarity and human rights

Workshop 2: Scandinavian Public Diplomacies Beyond State Actors

September 2020, Södertörn University (exact dates to TBD)

Organizers: Carl Marklund and Andreas Hellenes

The first post-war decade saw the earliest institutionalisation of Scandinavian public diplomacy, although roots stretch back to the interwar years. The new institutions relied on the assistance of other actors representing the mainstream internationalism of cultural relations and international trade, as well as the Scandinavian popular movements. These internationalisms not only co-existed with the state-administered public diplomacy but were co-constitutive on an organisational level and entangled in the activities pursued by the states abroad. The interface and exchange between different forms of diplomacy – traditional, public, economic, military, social and citizen diplomacy – are understudied at present. We wish to address the spectrum of divergent diplomatic practices in the plural – public diplomacies – by specifically investigating the state-civil society nexus in Scandinavia and beyond. This nexus was not least

a result of the small size of the national elites; personal contacts and networks were easily transplanted from the national to the international level. This workshop will explore how the emergence of the international field allowed for a variety of methods and multi-positionalities for Scandinavian diplomatic entrepreneurs, sometimes acting in their own name, sometimes in the name of the state, and often in interplay between the two. The workshop sets out to go beyond the study of statist public diplomatic action and expand the notion of the public diplomat to involve non-governmental actors, movements and corporations. We therefore welcome papers that study for example:

- The organisation and institutionalisation of Scandinavian public diplomacies as contested fields between political, economic and cultural national interests and internationalist ideas of cooperation and exchange
- Scandinavian cooperation in joint public diplomacy efforts in international sites – agendas, arenas, events and organisations
- The role of the Scandinavian popular movements in spearheading internationalist initiatives at home and abroad
- Alternative Scandinavian internationalisms within transnational networks independently or in coordination with the publicly sponsored varieties

Workshop 3: Scandinavian Internationalists: Transnational Biographical Entry Points

January 2021, University of Oslo (exact dates to TBD)

Organizers: Sunniva Engh and Niels Brimnes

As an approach, the biography has the strength that it can link the individual to broader structural developments. The protagonist both provides “valuable sensors for general trends and changes in society” and serves a privileged, specific and manageable point of entry to large and complex processes. For the biography to work as a sensory tool for the genealogy of Scandinavian internationalist diplomacy, it needs to be fundamentally transnational in scope. A transnational gaze allows us to explore their productive role at the nexus of new modes of global governance, rapidly professionalizing foreign service, and increasingly internationally organized non-state actors. In particular, the workshop takes interest in individuals that operated across the traditional state/non-state division and seeks to understand how they negotiated and were shaped by tensions between the agendas of state and non-state actors. Another strength of the biographical approach is that by tracing specific lives and careers the historian often transcends, bridges and challenges taken for granted historical periodisations. Thus, a concrete aim of the workshop is to compare and connect narratives of various prominent Scandinavian protagonists that had their formative experiences in the interwar period and would continue their internationalist endeavours into the post-war years. By tying together these biographies, we are able to get at the role played by the first generations of 20th century internationalist diplomats, and how the ‘capital’ accumulated in the interwar years translated into post-war currency. The workshop welcomes papers on issues such as:

- How Scandinavian internationalist figures contributed to and / or capitalized on specific visions of Scandinavia as societies that were socially just and peaceful
- How Scandinavian internationalists negotiated tensions between the agendas of state and non-state actors

- ‘Forgotten’ Scandinavian internationalist from non-State actors such as activist NGOs
- Papers that address methodological issues in writing biographies on internationalist protagonists
- Paper that address the role of professional networks in furthering international engagement

Important dates:

Deadline for abstracts: 1 February 2020.

Notification of acceptance: 15 February 2020.

Deadline for full papers: two weeks prior to the relevant workshop.

Practical information:

The organisers will cover travel expenses, meals and accommodation during the workshops.

For general enquiries, please contact Haakon A. Ikonomou: ikonomou@hum.ku.dk