‘King Bottomless Empty Purse’: Taxes, Avarice and Pastoral Care in the Swedish Reign of Christian I (1457–64)

Biörn Tjällén

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mid Sweden University, Sundsvall, Sweden

ABSTRACT
Taxes were at the heart of late medieval political discourse because tax extraction was a tangible and sore point of interaction between subjects and their rulers. At no point in Swedish history was this more obvious than in the reign of Christian I (1457–64), and this article takes his reign as a moment to explore the parameters of the fiscal discourse where taxes were refuted or accepted. The first part examines the fiscal norms of law and custom, which were expressed in the pamphlets and chronicles that testify to Sweden’s burgeoning public sphere. The second part, however, focuses on the moralizing tenor of these narratives, where the tax abuse by Christian and other rulers is considered not only a crime but also a sin, and in particular avarice. The third part of the inquiry maps this moralizing tenor to its source in the penitential literature that guided the pastoral care of rulers and subjects alike. Taxes, this article contends, were not only talked about in the idioms of law and custom but also in the language of moral theology and pastoral care. Penance and politics were entwined in a way that shaped how taxes were talked about in public life.

Christian’s reign in Sweden (1457–64) was ravaged by financial difficulties. The price for his titles as duke and count of Schleswig and Holstein proved particularly high for his Swedish subjects, who faced a number of new taxes.1 Outright revolt broke out among the peasants of Uppland in 1463,2 and Swedish pamphlets such as the caustic ‘Danske kung Kristians handel’ decried the fiscal policies of the king as unlawful.3 A more subtle response to the tax burdens came from Vadstena, where the abbey had suffered its share of Christian’s exactions.4 The abbess, Ingeborg (who was also Christian’s aunt), compiled a tract of devotional advice for the king. She advised Christian to prepare for confession, with probing questions about the seven deadly sins. Most of these questions concerned sins that any man might commit: had he wished someone dead in wrath, felt envy at the success of his neighbour or acquainted with prostitutes in lust? The topic of avarice, however, raised one question that was pertinent only to a prince: had he taxed his subjects unlawfully?5

CONTACT Biörn Tjällén biorn.tjallen@miun.se
© 2020 The Authors. Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group on behalf of the Historical Associations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.
Ingeborg’s subtle reproach of her royal nephew brings into focus how spiritual concerns were a constant parameter of political discourse, in medieval Scandinavia as elsewhere. Taxes, as her devotional advice suggests, were not just a political problem contested in public, but they were considered an area of government where the prince might sin, and thereby put his soul in peril and bring his subjects to ruin. This article explores how taxes were discussed both in the public sphere of fifteenth-century Sweden and in the pastoral care of rulers and subjects. It points to similarities across the range of these two contexts and argues that penance and politics were entwined in a way that shaped how taxes were talked about in public life.

Mapping and analysing the fiscal discourse over this broad range of contexts, this article couples traditional areas of institutional history (the history of taxation) and history of political thought (theories of state finance and taxation) with an interest in the practice of pastoral care and argues for the pertinence of this practice in late medieval political life and culture. These three research areas are all tangential to the historical problem of state formation. The institutional development of taxation is, of course, a traditional concern among historians. Scholars have worked hard – often with scant sources – to outline the growth of medieval taxation, and often discussed this development within the larger frame of the state formation. Permanent taxation, the specific Scandinavian studies claim, provided not only the material foundation for the medieval Swedish state but also a means to control the peasantry and a symbolic marker of the unity of the realm under royal sovereignty. However, since taxes had to be negotiated between the tax sovereign and his subjects, either through sharing the revenue with the elites or through various forms of popular representation, taxes should not only be seen as a means to ‘state formation from above’, that is, not only as a tool of the sovereign’s dominance over society. Taxes also contributed to a thickening of the political structures that knit the various groups – rulers and subjects – of the realm together. In Swedish research, this interactive aspect of state building ‘from below’ has been explored mainly by early modern scholars, such as Mats Hallenberg and Johan Holm, who argue that studies of the organization of the growing central state must be complemented with studies of how its measures were legitimized and how the central authorities and their subjects interacted as participants in a process that involved a certain amount of mutuality. Even though the Hallenberg and Holm focus primarily on later periods than those surveyed in the present article, their perspective points to the importance of the area here explored. If legitimacy and negotiation were at the heart of the state building process, we need to understand not just the conceptual frameworks or terms by which states could be negotiated and made legitimate, but also how these frameworks and terms became common currency, shared by rulers and subjects alike.

The development of financial and fiscal theories can also, and have also, been considered in relation to the broader process of state formation. The arrival of new governmental techniques like taxation occurred simultaneously with the arrival of royal clerics educated at the universities on the continent, who made sure that the native fiscal discourse was influenced by the languages of the learned laws and theology. This wider phenomenon is suggested by Mia Korpila, who explores how the legal maxim of quod omnes tangit helped formulate the Swedish convention that taxes required consent.

But the rise of the modern state was not only a process of institutional or intellectual development; it was a cultural process, where subjects (in the sense of individual
conscious beings) where constituted in new roles, as modern rulers and their subjects. Scholarship on pastoral care has indeed debated a similar question: should the sacrament of penance be seen as an instrument of social control through the imposition of a ‘guilt culture’? In addition, another research area where such political aspects of pastoral care have come to the fore concerns the institution of the royal confessors and their advice to the prince.

With inspiration from these three areas of scholarship, this contribution explores the Swedish discourse on taxes to consider how penance, administered in the so-called ‘forum of conscience’, served to inculcate the political norms that developed in political thought, in subjects and rulers alike and at a time when the demands of the nascent state were increasing. The reasons for this focus on penance as a locus of governance are compelling: confession was compulsory for all medieval Christians, and it was a zone where norms were turned into individual obligation. Since some of these norms involved matters of political concern – like taxes – we should pay attention to what was happening in the forum of conscience and gauge its relevance to political life more broadly.

Scandinavian medievalists have, of course, been keenly aware of the importance of taxes as a source of both conflict and political cohesion. Nevertheless little regard has been given to how taxes were actually talked about – to the fiscal discourse where the growing taxation was criticized, legitimized and negotiated – and less regard still to pastoral care as one of the fora where this discourse took shape. As with other discourses, the fiscal discourse of this era was a field of contested meaning. Christian and other lords who imposed burdens would claim that they were legitimate, in view of certain established criteria. Subjects and political competitors, however, could interpret the same burdens differently, and contest these claims. This article does not claim that all of the norms that governed the late medieval Swedish tax discourse derived from the repository of the church, but it offers evidence to suggest that the pastoral context was important for how taxes were understood, made acceptable or renounced. To make this argument, this inquiry concentrates on the reign of Christian I – a king whose ambitions were larger than his means and a fiscal villain in the eyes of his subjects – and on texts from the era adjacent to his reign that illustrate how his taxes were discussed. Fiscal discourse appears prominently in the pamphlets that concerned Christian, and taxes are mentioned explicitly in the preserved pastoral writings addressed to him. This makes his reign suitable to examine as node for a pastoral political discursive formation that we can expect took shape well before and lasted long after. Christian’s empty purse and rapacious policies were as typical for the late medieval prince as the focus on penance was for the late medieval pastoral care.

The inquiry begins with a brief account of the fiscal norms that were expressed in the pamphlets, chroniclers and other sources that testify to the burgeoning public sphere of fifteenth-century Sweden. Apart from texts from Christian’s reign, such as Danske kung Kristians handel or the Chronica regni Gothorum, earlier vernacular chronicles like Karlskronika, and missives sent from other Swedish rulers to their subjects help us chart the field of public fiscal discourse. As examples of the normative material that help us glean how taxes were dealt with in the sacrament of penance, this inquiry examines popular fifteenth-century manuals for confession and summaries of moral theology. Secondly, the inquiry continues with a discussion of the particular moral tenor that comes to the fore in these accounts,
Public tax discourse in late-medieval Sweden: law, custom and other concerns

Christian was aware from the inception of his Swedish reign that taxes would be a sensitive issue with his subjects. A draft of the charter that conditioned his election protested that they had nothing to fear:

Further we promise that we neither wish to nor will place any unlawful burden on the Swedish inhabitants, such as taxes, duties to lodge or to fodder or other unlawful demands, but according to Sweden’s written law and age-old custom.¹⁹

In the years that followed, many of the tax payers mentioned in this charter might have felt that these were promises broken. If they had grievances in the first years of Christian’s reign, open insurrection soon followed.

The revolt of 1463 was not, however, the first time that taxes met with violent resistance among the Swedish peasantry. Three decades earlier, in 1434, the peasants took to arms under the leadership of Engelbrekt to end the regime of King Erik. Taxes were not the only ill of the time, but contemporary sources and modern scholarship hold that they were crucial to the popular revolt.²⁰ A recent estimate of the real tax burden in these years suggests that the Swedish peasants had reason to grumble. Taxes peaked, first under Albrekt (r. 1364–1389) and his regime of German bailiffs, and then under the Kalmar Union rulers, Margareta (de facto r. 1389–1412) and Erik (r. 1396–1439). In some localities the levels could be oppressive, measuring up to as much as 162 kg of butter per individual peasant and annum. These were burdensome levels both compared to earlier Swedish standards and in international comparison – according to this estimate the peasant generations of the decades around 1400 paid heavier taxes than their forbears and heavier taxes than their English counterparts. They also paid more than what their children would come to do since Engelbrekt succeeded in bringing the high tax regime to an end; taxes were lower after the event and remained so until the sixteenth-century reign of the Vasa.²¹

Engelbrekt’s success, however, did not make fiscal matters disappear from Swedish debates. Chronicles and pamphlets indicate that the politics of the remainder of the fifteenth century played out in a climate of fiscal touchiness; rulers had to justify every attempt to extract more than the customary sums. But on what grounds might a tax be refuted or accepted as legitimate in late medieval Sweden? In this respect, the important institutional- or economic-historical accounts of Scandinavian taxation are not very helpful. Scholars like Folke Dovring worked with administrative sources, and they are scarce to begin with but also unlikely to express the type of explicit fiscal norms or motivations that are of interest here. However, the wealth of pamphlets, missives and chronicles from this
period has not been systematically explored, even though many of their accounts centre on the fiscal policies of the rulers. The fairness of these judgemental accounts is irrelevant here. What matters is that their authors expressed fiscal norms that they expected their readers to share; without this resonance with common norms, the texts could not fulfil their demagogical goal.

The Chronica of the Uppsala canon Ericus Olai provides a convenient start of this inquiry. This was not a vernacular account for the moment and the masses, but a reflection on all that had gone wrong in the Swedish realm, written to guide the Uppsala clergy. Ericus looked back from the 1470s and compiled the history of the previous decades with the help of earlier chronicles, and in doing so he summarized the tax issues that these texts contested. His description of the taxes of King Erik is particularly informative. They were, Ericus held, the brainchild of the king’s counsellor, Henrik Köningsmark, and made to ensure that the king would lose no revenue even though the tax-paying population had dwindled during the plague:

 [...] so the living should pay for the dead and those who had something always owe for those who had nothing. And the tax that was paid in his reign was not legal nor according to age-old custom but a cunning invention of the aforementioned counsellor [Köningsmark]. It was not the manner of old to pay the tax in coin, but this was the manner that suited him for emptying the realm of all that could be changed into money. And it was the way that was the most suitable means of transferring to Denmark everything that Sweden could bring to market, so that it could truly be said: ‘he robbed the Egyptians to enrich the Hebrews’. It was this and other matters that moved Engelbrekt to bring Sweden back to its ancient liberty.

Erik’s taxes were illegal and in breach of age-old custom. In practice, this meant that the Swedish tax revenue was shipped abroad, Swedish subjects were forced to pay in coin rather than in goods, and they were forced to pay according to false assessment of the tax capacity of the population. In short, King Erik’s tax policies were intended as a means of domination, not to procure for the needs of his Swedish subjects.

The same statements played out in the vernacular texts that preceded Ericus Olai, and it is worthwhile to explore them one by one to clarify how they were socially and politically situated. The political upheavals and the rivalry – for instance between Karl Knutson (r. 1448–57, 64–65, 67–70) and the monarchs of the Scandinavian union, Erik, Christopher and Christian I – had been a natural seedbed for political writings. Karlskrönika introduced the problem of unlawful taxes from the very beginning of its account and fiscal discourse is central to its narrative of rulers, good and bad. A few pages in, Karlskrönika starts its blackening account of King Erik with a paraphrase of the royal oath that he swore on his accession in accordance with the regulations of the law code. The paraphrased oath covers the king’s rights and duties as tax sovereign. The king should live off the crown’s domains, exact no unlawful taxes (olagha skat), and impose extraordinary taxes only if it came to war:

And he swore the fifth oath, that he would not impose unlawful tax, but live off the yields of the crown and collect no burden from the commoners unless it happened that war came to the realm.

Karlskrönika also reports the response expected from the present commoners and judges: they should swear to pay the lawful tax (laga skat) that they owed. The original rendition of the oath in the law code was somewhat more comprehensive. It held that the king
should swear to live off the revenue from the crown domains and on the annual legal
taxes, and impose extra taxes only in case of a foreign invasion, in case of rebellion, in case
of his coronation or of his royal circuit (the Eriksgata), in case of a marriage of his son or
daughter, or in the case that he needed to improve fortifications. Arbitrary taxation was
forbidden and taxation in the event of the above-mentioned extraordinary cases had to
be approved by representatives of each province.26

Karlskrönika’s repetition of the oath of accession was a convenient narrative device – it
presented the law as a normative base line from which Erik and other kings could be
shown to deviate. And there is no doubt that claims or rejections of the ‘lawfulness’ of
various taxes constitute a central strand in the fiscal discourse. But what was meant by the
claim that a tax was laga or olagha? Dovring points to a tax regulation from 1437, which
suggests that the total burden was considered to consist of two parts, ‘lagha skatten’ and
‘andra skatten’. The first, laga or lawful part of the tax, was the ordinary land tax, and the
andra or ‘other’ part were taxes that had been imposed more recently but become annual
and more or less permanent. Over time, perhaps, the main distinction between these two
categories was that the ‘other tax’ could in theory be lowered, while laga skatten was
a part of the properties of the crown that could not be waived.27 The ‘other tax’, then, was
not unlawful since the law allowed for extra taxes in extraordinary circumstances. The
adjective olagha (unlawful), however, more unequivocally signalled that there was no
legal justification for a specific tax, and sometimes olagha appeared by itself as a noun in
the sense of an illicit tax or burden.28

The scourge of ola has a recurring theme in the narratives. Karlskrönika tells how the
peasants of Rekarne run away because of the burdensome ola,29 and when the
peasants of Jutland resisted his ola skat, King Erik had them killed or mutilated.30
Three pamphlets from the 1460 s repeatedly distinguish between taxes that are lawful
and taxes that are not, between lagha och ola skattar.31 One claims that Christian had
imposed three unlawful taxes since he came to power – the third had led the Uppsala
peasants to rebel in 1463.32 But charges of oaligr skat were levelled against Karl
Knutson as well: the archbishop of Uppsala accused him before the pope of imposing
unlawful taxes and even of robbing his subjects (lade månge hande olo skatta vppå, och
giorde röfwael).33 A few decades after these events, Sturekrönika accused Christian of
exacting a new unlawful tax (en nyian olaelig skat).34 And the Swedish peasants, this
chronicle claimed, had sworn that they would die rather than pay another unlawful tax
to the king.35 In short, statements to the effect that a tax was ‘unlawful’ were
a constituent part of the discourse – they were levelled at union monarchs as well as
their Swedish counterparts, and made by the mitred high of the clergy as much as by
the peasants.

The royal oath of accession voiced general principles more than practical detail. The
lack of a more comprehensive tax law led Folke Dovring to conclude that the one fiscal
norm that really mattered in medieval Sweden was the perception of custom.36 The
existing level and practice of extraction was considered the lawful one. Indeed, law and
custom often appeared together as a phrase, indicating that they had had similar status,
as when Christian, as mentioned above, swore to respect ‘Sweriges beschreufen lagh och
therres gamble godha sidhwane’, or when Ericus Olai accused King Erik of imposing taxes
that were not just unlawful but also in breach of age-old custom (non erat legale nec ab
antiquo consuetum). However, the tax discourse in Sweden’s chronicles and pamphlets
involved statements that referred to norms that were more explicit and diverse than the accounts of law and custom. Ericus Olai, as seen above for instance, criticized the purpose for which the tax was collected, the choice of tax items required, the validity of the assessment of the size and solvency of the taxable population, and the manner in which the tax was extracted.

The vernacular pamphlets and chronicles criticize kings and their taxes – both lagha och olagha – for how the revenue was used. Christian and other rulers were accused of bringing the revenue out of the realm and thus of impoverishing its inhabitants:

Similarly consider all that Christian could amass by lawful and unlawful taxes, borrow and loan, ransom, copper, iron, led, ships and horses, which good men should use for their noble service, all of this he carried out of the realm and thereby he brought many to great poverty, with their wives and children, who were ruined by him for the sake of his avarice etc.37

This idea, that taxes should not be transferred to Danish coffers but benefit the Swedes, manifests itself in a number of ways. King Erik levied a tax to finance his Hanseatic war, but Karlskrönika points out that this levy was not used to support or ransom or compensate the Swedish men who followed him abroad.38 When taxes were brought out of the realm, Swedish castles fell into disrepair, leaving the realm defenceless.39 Another point of critique – that taxes should be paid in goods rather than coin – was indicative of the same fear that the country would be impoverished. Erik Lönnroth observed that the Swedish council, throughout the fifteenth century and by various means, attempted to regulate taxes and trade so that the good coin was kept in the country.40

Norms about what a particular tax should be used for of course come to the fore not just when taxes are criticized, but also when rulers argue for their legitimacy. Writing to peasants in 1452, Karl Knutson described his rivalry with Christian as a response to Danish aggression: Christian had aimed to enslave the Swedish realm and its inhabitants.41 Karl’s point, of course, was that he needed the revenue to defend the realm from a foreign invasion, an argument familiar from the law code. But sometimes arguments about the purpose of a particular extra tax appear to have no such apparent legal basis. One pamphlet claimed that Christian required a tax to fight the pagan Russians. Interestingly, the author apparently found this claim in itself acceptable, but since Christian’s campaign never materialized he suggested that the crusading story was a ruse, made up to get to the money.42 Another example where tax payers accepted a levy that could not be argued on legal grounds appears when Margareta taxed her Swedish subjects to finance the acquisition of Gotland (which was at the time in the hands of the Teutonic knights):

The commoners were not pleased, but nevertheless submitted to the tax. And they did it willingly, so that they would have Gotland back with Sweden. It pertains by right to the Swedish crown, and the Swedes did not want to do without it.43

The commoners may have grumbled, but they accepted the purpose of Margareta’s tax as legitimate and paid.

The chronicles and pamphlets often present a broader palette of tax abuse, where both the legality, the legitimacy of the purpose and several other grounds for critique coalesce to reinforce the gravity of the offence. As mentioned above, the peasants of Rekarne run
away because of the olaga that Erik’s bailiff imposed, but this notorious royal servant also taxed them beyond their means: he requested pots, pans, clothing and foodstuffs, and at tariffs set according to fake assessments of the properties.\textsuperscript{44} Karlskrönikan also criticized King Erik because he required the tax in coin rather than goods,\textsuperscript{45} and at rates that were set for the larger pre-plague population.\textsuperscript{46}

The villains of these stories are known by the abuse of their power to tax. The heroes, in contrast, tax with care. Ericus Olai ended his summary of King Erik’s fiscal policies with the suggestion that his tax abuse sparked the rising headed by Engelbrekt. In Karlskrönikan, Engelbrekt’s first act as Captain of the Realm was to lower the tax in Uppland.\textsuperscript{47} And the other hero of this story, Karl Knutson himself abstained from raising an extra tax for his coronation even though the law entitled him to do so – Karl footed the bill for the lavish banquets with money of his own, so that no peasants were forced to pay.\textsuperscript{48}

**Tax power and avarice**

The tone of voice of the fifteenth-century chronicles and pamphlets is often caustic, apt to the demagogic errand ascribed to them.\textsuperscript{49} To this end, they accused the tax sovereign of moral flaws, and of avarice in particular. The pamphlet Danske kung Christians handel did not simply denounce Cristian’s unlawful taxes (olagha skatt), but claimed that they were the result of his avarice (för hans giri skuld). The text portrays the king as a veritable caricature of this sin, with accounts of how he engaged in anything from witchcraft to dismantling the gilded weathervane of Stockholm castle to satisfy his insatiable greed, exhibiting the hallmark vice that earned him his sobriquet: konung botnalös toma taska (‘King bottomless empty purse’).\textsuperscript{50}

The charge of avarice was frequent in fiscal discourse. It linked the particular instance of alleged tax abuse – Christian’s tax crimes – with the moral universe of the later Middle Ages. This moral view on taxes was not reserved for the propaganda but found support in the political-theoretical literature of the time: princely ‘mirrors’, written to advise medieval rulers, acknowledged the danger that avarice could lead to arbitrary taxation. For instance, the mid-fourteenth-century Swedish Konungastyrelsen – one of many vernacular adaptations of the famous work of Giles of Rome – cautioned the king against this vice: avarice might lead to heavy burdens for his subjects and to the ruin of his realm.\textsuperscript{51}

Fiscal ideals, in contrast, could be presented in the shape of an idealized monarch who steered clear from the tax temptation. In the Swedish 1400 s, this ideal monarch was St Erik, the twelfth-century king who was venerated as one of Sweden’s saintly patrons. As mentioned above, historians hold that tax pressure was one of the main reasons that the Swedish peasants rebelled with Engelbrekt. Only one source, however, tells us what the peasants actually hoped for. When Engelbrekt’s peasant troops besieged Stockholm, a merchant of Danzig who was holed up in the town wrote home. The peasants, he claimed, wanted to restore the burdens to what they had been in St Erik’s reign. At that time, he wrote, ‘there were no burdensome tolls, taxes, or duties as of today’.\textsuperscript{52} This fiscal utopia was not the product of some naïve popular imagination but a notion enshrined in the texts of St Erik’s liturgy. In the story of the vita, Erik rejects the offer of a third of all fines (normally an income for the king), a show of generosity that the author applauded as rare among rulers:
O what a just ruler, rare to find on the throne, who is satisfied with his own and not coveting in avarice the belongings of his subjects.\(^{53}\)

The peasants outside Stockholm in the 1430s and in Uppland in 1463 rebelled against kings of the Scandinavian union. But allegations of avarice were not specific to the union context, nor isolated to the fifteenth century. In 1346, King Magnus Eriksson wrote to Uppland to apologize for the tax burden and promise relief. He took none of the blame for the heavy burdens; however, he had acted out of ‘evident necessity’ in the ‘great difficulties’ of debts that he had inherited at his election. Magnus explicitly denied the notion that he should have taxed out of avarice: ‘almighty God knows that we were not compelled neither by avarice nor by pride \(\text{neque auiditate neque [...]} \text{vanitate})\).\(^{54}\) The reason that he felt compelled to reject this notion, of course, was that it was common to think that rulers sometimes fell prey to the temptation to tax.

Instances like these, where avarice comes to the fore in the public fiscal discourse, can be multiplied. The notion that taxes and other demands were low in the reign of St Erik, for instance, was not embraced by the peasantry alone. In 1403, Margareta \(\text{(de facto ruler of Denmark, Norway and Sweden)}\) addressed the inhabitants of Uppsala to repeal a steep extraordinary tax, \text{femtonmarkshjälpen}. Tax levels, she claimed, should now return to what they had been in the reign of St Erik.\(^{55}\) Margareta’s letter is a controversial document among historians of taxation. Erik Lönnroth and Folke Dovring disagreed about how much it meant that the tax was actually lowered. Both of them, however, took note of its astonishing tone.\(^{56}\) Margareta’s letter is frank, humble, and outright contrite. She admits that the tax has been heavy in her reign, and that this has caused hardship. Some of the tax burdens she could and did defend: there had been great costs for the wars that she had led to oust the previous regime of the Mecklenburg.\(^{57}\) an argument (defence of the realm!) that we recognize from the law code. But for the rest, Margareta admits that the burdens were the result of avarice, arbitrariness and pride – vices that she acknowledges as her own, as much as her bailiffs’ and other officials’.\(^{58}\) She admits that she should have remedied these ills but that she has not, and she is sorry.\(^{59}\) Now, she wants to improve and give restitution, while there is time still for her to preserve God’s grace.\(^{60}\) In Margareta’s own telling of these events, it was conscience and concerns for salvation that spurred her to abolish the tax.

What should we make of Margareta’s contrite reference to avarice, and of her prayer for grace, expressed as they are in the context of tax tariffs? Dovring held that her humble words were meant to hide the fact that the total burden placed on her subjects did not decrease at all; a simultaneous increase in the number of required day-works would have cancelled out the effects of abolishing the tax.\(^{51}\) While this is plausible in view of Margareta’s political astuteness and rare talent for state finance,\(^{62}\) it does not engage with her particular language – her extraordinary reference to her own avarice, her apparent need to improve herself and give restitution, and her alleged anxiety to preserve God’s grace. Margareta addressed her subjects in the mode of a penitent sinner, and she expected them to appreciate her spiritual concerns as relevant to the fiscal matter at hand. Irrespective of whether they admitted to avarice, rejected such accusations or accused someone else, Margareta, Magnus and the authors of the caustic pamphlets assumed the existence of a shared context – familiar to prince and subject alike – where taxation carried the risk of sin.
Tax discourse in pastoral care

When Abbess Ingeborg wrote to King Christian in the 1460s and warned him that taxes could be a gateway for sin, she was not the first who gave this advice to a Scandinavian ruler. Six decades earlier, Margareta’s letter to Uppland echoed the fact that taxes were addressed in the pastoral care of late medieval rulers and subjects. Margareta voiced what she had learned, either from her confessor or from the literature of penance directly. We can infer this from the language of her fiscal/penitential epistle because it is similar to how taxes were talked about in the context of pastoral care. But why did taxes become a topic for pastoral care, and which fiscal norms did this practice seek to inculcate?

Since taxation was an area of government where the prince might sin it could be addressed by the ruler and his confessor privately. Late medieval rulers had private confessors and Scandinavian monarchs like Magnus, Margareta and Christian were no exceptions. The confessor regis – often a Dominican or Franciscan or Birgittine brother who was handpicked by the king – might have preached, taught or provided other services within the royal household, but first and foremost he would have heard the king’s confession.63 We have no residual sources that take us straight into the intimacy of these private meetings where the confessor helped the king to scrutinize his conscience for mortal sins. We can, however, examine the normative sources that served as aides for this practice.

The administration of the sacrament of penance was more demanding than for the other sacraments. Ideally, this was no mere repetition of liturgical protocol but a process that required knowledge and judgement – the priest was tasked to identify and evaluate the gravity of the penitent’s sins and impose a suitable penance. In response to this challenge, which was imposed on a clergy that often lacked the proper education, a large penitential literature was produced to guide and advise in the task.64 Through this literature, we can glean which matters the confessors were expected to bring up for moral scrutiny, and they help us recreate the confessor’s response to moral-political conundrums that might appear. Which books would the confessor have relied on for his training or have consulted in the process of pastoral care? To what extent did this literature address the issue of taxes? Which fiscal norms was it supposed to ingrain in the penitent subjects and rulers of Europe?

Abbess Ingeborg compiled her advice for Christian with the help of her own confessor, probably the general confessor of Vadstena, Magnus.65 Together they could draw on the many works of penitential literature at hand in the monastery’s massive library.66 This penitential literature was part of a common store of familiar titles that circulated all over the fifteenth-century continent, and they built on a tradition from the thirteenth century, when penance was made compulsory for all adult Christians. The reverence for pastoral tradition, combined with the fact that these works consist largely of materials culled from common sources of canon law and theology, meant that the contents of the individual titles are largely similar. For the purposes of this inquiry, any of the more popular works serve to provide an idea of how taxes were discussed in the pastoral context where Christian and other Scandinavian monarchs confessed.

The penitential literature can be divided into two main groups, one of shorter ‘manuals of confession’, which provided basic advice for the practice of the sacrament of penance, and another of larger moral-theological summae, which supplied the confessors with
a broader set of relevant theoretical knowledge, for instance about the deadly sins.\textsuperscript{67} Our scant knowledge of the pastoral care afforded Scandinavian monarchs does not allow for any precision on the point of which penitential titles circulated at court. The best we can do is to scrutinize works that were popular to gain an idea about what types of issues they addressed. A large monastic library like the one found in Vadstena could contain numerous titles of different authors but it is helpful in this context to examine the works of one individual since this gives us a sense of how works of different genres were intended to be combined to provide for the various needs of the confessor.

Antoninus (d. 1459), archbishop of Florence, wrote popular works in both genres mentioned above.\textsuperscript{68} It cannot be ascertained if his works were present in Sweden before the time of print but they certainly appeared as incunabula at Vadstena and other monastic libraries, as well as in the hands of secular clerics and lay collectors. One of these penitential works in fact belonged to Ingeborg, wife of Swedish regent Sten Sture.\textsuperscript{69} Antoninus’s manual of confession is commonly known as the Defecerunt, after its introductory quote from Psalms: Defecerunt scrutantes scrutinio (‘those who search have failed in their search’). The ‘search’ or inquiry that Antoninus had in mind and wished to facilitate was confession, where his manual advised how the penitent should probe his or her conscience for sins under the guidance of the confessor.\textsuperscript{70} Defecerunt provides practical instructions, for instance, a set of questionnaires to help penitents identify sins that might otherwise go unnoticed and unabsolved. Each questionnaire is aimed at a particular status group or profession and provides queries that target this group’s particular spiritual hazards. ‘Princes and barons’ and other temporal lords have their separate questionnaire in the manual, with many questions that probe for their transgressions in government.\textsuperscript{71} Had the prince, for instance, gained his rule through usurpation? Had he incarcerated clerics? Had he embarked on unjust wars, defended heretics, sold justice or neglected to crack down on robbers that made his land insecure? Questions that concern public revenue also come to the fore: had the ruler imposed or increased road tolls (pedagia) in areas that were under the authority of another lord; had he required such tolls and indirect taxes (gabella) from the clergy without the consent of the pope? Illicit taxation of clergy, says Antoninus, should lead to excommunication. But taxation of the clergy is only one particular fiscal concern, and the Defecerunt condemns all unjust taxes: ‘should he impose unjust tax extractions he commits robbery (rapina)’. Unjust taxation is a serious offence, according to Antoninus, tantamount to the crime of a highwayman.

‘But what should be declared an unjust tax or levy (iniusta tallia vel collecta) and how should he [the prince] amend for it? This, of course, was a question of great practical relevance for both the prince and his confessor. The Defecerunt offers no reply, but instead refers its reader to paragraphs in the Summa theologiae moralis, another work by Antoninus.\textsuperscript{72} We can picture the situation. Glancing over the columns of the Defecerunt and its probing questionnaire, the confessor is made heedful of the fiscal policies of his penitent prince. Perhaps his attention has even been stirred by grumble about ologged that has reached his ears from the towns and villages of the realm. To engage with this issue will certainly be awkward, and he must gain a better understanding of the position of the church on matters fiscal. He would put down the slimmer volume of the Defecerunt and turn to the three massive tomes of the Summa.

The matter of tax abuse appears in the second volume of the Summa theologiae moralis.\textsuperscript{73} As with Ingeborg’s advice to Christian, the immediate context for this discussion
of taxes is an exposition of the deadly sins, and in particular avarice. Antoninus explores avarice as the root of many ills, from simony to usury, forgery to robbery, to negligence of the needy. Unjust taxation is considered a type of robbery – it involves taking something from someone by force or threats or trickery. Chapter 13 aims to discuss robbery and rulers, taxes imposed unjustly, tax levies that are not due but nevertheless demanded by the lord or his officials, and road tolls and indirect taxes. From this declaration of intent, Antoninus proceeds to state that some taxes are lawful while others are unlawful. But how should the confessor know if the taxes imposed by his prince are legitimate? Antoninus does not suggest to check with the national law code or the native legal expertise but presents a number of factors to consider, derived from authorities on canon law or theology. He refers to Gratian and other jurists, Aquinas and, of course, Raymond of Penaforte (the inventor of the moral theological summae genre). From these references in the text of the Summa, the reader could seek out the original source and delve deeper into specific and sometimes rather technical concerns. However, by way of a lengthy quote from the text known as Aquinas's letter to the Duchess of Brabant – a lady who had asked if it would be right to tax her subjects and particularly the Jews – Antoninus also provides a more general understanding of what taxes are for and when they are justified, here quoting Aquinas at length:

The princes of the lands are instituted by God, not to seek their own gain but to procure the common utility of the people; revenues were established so that living on them, they [the princes] would abstain from plundering. [...] It sometimes happens that princes do not have sufficient revenues to protect the land or for other things that threaten them, which princes reasonably take care of. In such cases it is legitimate that subjects provide that by which their common utility is procured. And so, in some countries it is age-old custom that lords impose levies upon their subjects, which can be exacted without sin if they are not immoderate. [...] And a similar reason seems to be at hand when a new case emerges, where it is necessary to spend a lot for the common utility of the people or to keep the prince in good standing, and for which his own revenues or the customary taxes do not suffice. For instance, if enemies invade or other similar cases emerge the princes can exact something for the common utility, above the customary taxes.

The prince procures for the common good and he has the right to be compensated by the subjects who benefit from his protection. There is no sin in these customary exactions if they are moderate, and in some particular cases, extraordinary levies are also permissible. Aquinas's main contribution to the tax lore presented in Antoninus's Summa is this general account of the moral economy of taxation. The remainder of the chapter explores particular cases that make extraordinary taxation acceptable and other factors that must be considered when assessing whether or not a tax is just.

As one might perhaps expect from the pen of an archbishop, Antoninus begins by pointing out that different rules apply depending on whether the prince taxed clergy or laity. Clerics, in Antoninus's view, should not be taxed without licence from the pope. In support, he refers to Gratian and the story of the famine of Egypt in Genesis 47. To survive, the Egyptians sold their belongings and their personal freedom to pharaoh for grain, but pharaoh sustained the priesthood from the public granaries for free.

The remainder of Antoninus's account concerns the laity only. And the first factor to consider in taxing the laity concerns the legitimacy of the tax sovereign himself. Either the lord has lawful dominion and holds his towns and castles rightfully or he has usurped
a position that belongs to someone else, for instance, the church or the emperor or some other lord. A tax imposed by a usurper is robbery (rapina) and a mortal sin. He must restore what he has levied, save what has actually been used for the benefit of the town or place in question.  

The second factor concerns the legitimacy of the cause for which the tax is imposed. Is it just or unjust (aut pro iniustic causis imponuntur aut pro iustis)? Will it, for instance, finance unjust wars, or pay for a pompous lifestyle beyond what is considered decent for the status of the ruler, or on prodigal spending on banquets? This too is robbery and should be repaid. In addition to this initial account of unjust causes for taxation, Antoninus later in the text presents learned opinions, for instance of Raymond of Penaforte, about cases that allow the prince to tax above the usual. The examples brought up are the following: if the land is invaded and must be defended; if the lord takes part in an expedition called by the church or prince against heretics; if the lord is captured for ransom in a just war (if the war is unjust he has no right to ask!); if he wishes to travel to some higher authority to obtain a special privilege for himself or his subordinates but cannot bear the cost for this useful and necessary undertaking; if the lord arranges a marriage for his daughter; if he has his son knighted; if he enlarges his fief, for instance, through purchase; if he restores bridges or roads. All these cases justify the imposition of extraordinary taxes. Some of them, however, appear to jar with Aquinas’s account of the rationale for taxes, which was quoted at length above. They seem beneficial only to the lord, less obviously to the ‘common utility’ that Aquinas felt should be procured. Antoninus foresaw such reservations, because he explains the ways in which these cases served the community at large: the marriage of a king’s daughter makes allies (sibi aquiret amicos); the knighting of a son strengthens the defences of the land and the enlargement of the fief makes it richer.

If the lord is no usurper and his cause can be established to be just, there is still the legitimacy of the level of the tax to contend with. Does the required amount exceed what has been agreed between the prince and his subjects, or his ancestors and theirs, as this sum appears from statutes (pacto statuto) or age-old custom (consuetudine antiqua)? Has this tax raise been achieved through deceit, threats or direct or indirect constraints? By ‘indirect constraints’ (coactione indirecta), Antoninus means cases where a prince puts pressure on his subjects by withholding his duty to establish justice or provide defence.

Chapter 13 inquires primarily into the rights and duties of the tax sovereign – in focus is the prince as a potential sinner. The result of this focus is that the tax payers are awarded a certain amount of protection from unjust and overburdening exactions. Exhortations to moderation recur in the text. Even though some circumstances permit the lord to exact extraordinary taxes, he must be moderate and proceed with his claims in the spirit of charity instead of violence. Raymond of Penaforte suggests that when the documents that detail the existing agreements about the taxes are unclear, the prince should consider the actual tax capacity of his subjects (inspectis onere et facultatibus subditorum) and be moderate in his requirements. In addition to these general appeals to moderation, Antoninus grants subjects the moral right to evade unjust exactions. The legitimacy of the lord affects their obligation to pay: subjects who evade paying the tax required by a usurper – for instance, by hiding the taxable goods – do not sin, but they must be vary of committing other sins such as perjury in the process. But Antoninus’s moral perspective also implies that the subjects are accountable, to some extent, for the manner of public spending: subjects who agree to pay for an unjust war, without having been coerced to do so, sin mortally while subjects who manage to evade an exaction for this unjust cause
do not sin. The right to evade holds true also for cases when the prince unjustly extorts more than what is customary, where the subjects do not owe the prince their pay. Of course, tax evasion is acceptable only if the burden is unjust. Antoninus, drawing again on Aquinas, makes it perfectly clear that subjects who evade taxes that they owe commit theft and mortal sin.

In addition to what has been discussed above, the Summa contains a reflection on the responsibility of a lord for the tax abuse of his officials, a thorny discussion about how to proceed if the existing taxes were not imposed justly back in the day when they were set, more on tolls (de pedagiiis) and plenty about how taxes are distributed in the government of city states. The examples above however are enough to conclude that the penitential literature that was produced to guide the pastoral care paid attention to taxation as a potential area of sin. Practical manuals like the Defecerunt suggested that questions about taxes should be part of the spiritual routine scan of the prince, and reference works like the Summa theologae moralis provided information about the fiscal norms that ought to guide this scrutiny.

To what extent were these norms applicable to the Scandinavian situation, and how were discrepancies between their fiscal ideals and the current fiscal regimes handled in pastoral care? It is clear that some of the norms imparted by, for instance, Antoninus would have been out of step with the fiscal policies of Christian and other Scandinavian monarchs. For instance, Antoninus's account of fiscal dos and don'ts safeguarded clerical, or rather papal, interests by its wholesale refusal of lay taxation of the clergy – but extra taxes were regularly imposed in Sweden on tenants cultivating clerical lands. However, we should not assume that such discrepancies automatically caused embarrassment or rendered the penitential handbooks useless. The penitential literature did not provide hard and fast rules without concern for shifting (alleviating or aggravating) circumstances, but served as guide for the complex process of evaluation of action and intention. It was not always easy to decide which rules applied in each particular case, and it was generally accepted that decision-making always involved an amount of uncertainty. The high medieval, so-called 'tutiorist', attitude to moral decision-making required that one always choose the path of action that involved the least risk of sin, but late medieval advice evolved to allow for more wriggle room. Antoninus's own view was that the tutorist demand to choose the 'safer' path of action was a mere recommendation. It was fine to settle for the comparatively less certain alternative of action, if it was deemed 'safe'. We might be excused in thinking that one of the tasks of the royal confessor was to locate authoritative statements in the wider literature that helped put the king in the clear. In fact, we know from another context where Christian violated canon law (his incarceration of the Swedish archbishop Jöns Bengtsson in 1463) that he had the resources to drum up authoritative arguments in defence of his actions. No doubt the bold venture should have led to the enforcement of his excommunication, but even the clerical opposition considered the arguments that he made in defence worthy in the eyes of the law (juris digna excusacione protestaciones).

**Conclusion**

Christian I commenced his reign with the claim that he would rule with the fiscal moderation that was regulated by Sweden's written law and age-old custom. Many of his subjects and competitors would come to contest this claim. Some simply decried his policies as unlawful, while others made the point that his tax abuse was not only a crime but also a sin. Amidst this public clamour, we find a letter of devotional advice from the
abbess of Vadstena, which reminds us that taxation was considered to involve spiritual dangers, and hence it was also a topic in the quieter conversations of the king’s pastoral care. In this inquiry, the reign of Christian I offered a moment to explore the fiscal discourse that took place in both these two spheres and consider if penance shaped how taxes were talked about in public.

Taxes were at the heart of late medieval political discourse because tax extraction was a tangible, frequent and often sore point of interaction between subjects and their rulers. Hence, taxation – and particularly the abuse of fiscal power – was also a central theme in the political literature of fifteenth-century Sweden. Chronicles, pamphlets and missives chastised the fiscal measures of ‘bad’ rulers, legitimized the tax levies of the good, and lauded the tax relief of the heroes. The national law code, with its definition of the rights and duties of the tax sovereign, served as a yardstick in these discourses; taxes are referred to as *lagas* or *olaga*, and the legitimacy of particular extraordinary taxes are sometimes measured against the circumstances detailed in the code. Besides references to this explicit legal framework, the extracted amounts, the extraction in coin rather than goods, and the assessments of the solvency of the taxable population could also be criticized for breaking the gold standard of age-old custom (*non erat ab antiquo consuetum*). However, it is notable that some arguments *pro* a particular tax in these stories have no counterpart in the secular law, and can hardly derive from notions custom. Christian I expected people to pay for his Russian crusade, and Margareta’s request for the purchase of Gotland was met with favour. In addition, some accusations in these partisan texts exhibit a strangely idiosyncratic turn of phrase, as when the archbishop accused Karl Knutson of unlawful taxes and robbery. In short then, the political languages of law and custom gave body to much of the fiscal discourse found in the narrative sources. A closer look at which fiscal norms that this might have entailed suggests that some of them were found in the law, some of them can be considered customary, while yet some of them are of unknown origin.

Is it possible that specific norms derived from the penitential literature migrated and became part of the native fiscal outlook, or are we talking about a more general kind of influence on the Swedish tax discourse? Even though the moral-theological works that were written to guide the confessors were not native but represented continental traditions of canon law and moral theology – which, in addition, in the case of Antoninus’s *Summa* had been codified in the context of the economically precocious northern Italy – we can observe overlap between the account it gave of legitimate taxes and the account provided by the Swedish law code. Both held that the customary taxes – or *lagas* *skatten* as it was sometimes referred to in the sources – were unproblematic and should be paid. They agreed about some of the extraordinary cases that justified imposition of extraordinary cases, such as the defence of the realm or the marriage of the king’s daughter. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the reasons for this overlap, the point so far is that when it came to their account of taxes the native law and the pastoral literature did not represent incompatible traditions. Certainly, Swedish subjects would have agreed with the general rationale for taxes as this was described for instance by Aquinas: taxes were not established to enrich the prince but to serve the common utility; the prince may exact taxes because he fills certain important functions, and only as long as he does so.
Arguably, this principle can be found at the root of the many statements of tax discourse in the fifteenth-century political literature that criticized tax abuse.

Overall, then, the discourse on taxes in the penitential literature was also largely relevant to the Scandinavian political context. Certain features of the Swedish fiscal discourse, as it appears in the chronicles and pamphlets, are in fact compatible with the fiscal account of Antoninus’s *Summa* but have no explicit counterpoint in the native law code. Raymond of Penafort had said that it was legitimate to exact extra taxes to finance crusade or to purchase new territory, and at least Christian and Margareta appear to have expected no less from their subjects. Here again, to claim that this proves a direct influence from the pastoral care over the way that people thought about these specific cases and taxes would be to pressure the evidence beyond what is reasonable. But it indicates, at least, that there were cases that rulers and subjects considered as just causes for taxes that had no real counterpart in the native law but found support in authoritative traditions elsewhere.

It is, on the one hand, in the small detail, and, on the other, in the general mode of the fiscal discourse that we can ascertain that pastoral care shaped the way that people talked about taxes. As for the small details, it is perhaps no surprise that an archbishop who accused a prince in front of the pope took recourse to the language familiar from the penitential literature. This is what happened when Archbishop Jöns claimed, somewhat awkwardly, that Karl Knutson both had imposed unlawful taxes and robbed his people. The phrase makes perfect sense once we are familiar with the penitential literature, which always treats unjust taxes as species of robbery (*rapina*). By way of this implicit reference to familiar categories, Jöns practically told the pope with which type of offence and offender they were dealing.

Beyond such small but explicit details, what definitely migrated from the pastoral sphere to the public fiscal discourse was its general mode or penitential language. Taxes were talked about in the secular idioms of law and custom, but also in the idiom of moral theology. In the pastoral literature, like Antoninus’s *Summa* or in the advice from Abbess Ingeborg to Christian, it is the focus on the sin of avarice that brings the question of taxes to the fore. This understanding of taxes as an area of government that easily invited avarice found support in the political-philosophical literature of the time (*Konungastyrelsen*), and occasionally we hear rulers, like King Magnus, themselves deny that they have been misled by this vice in their fiscal policies. Also Margareta’s apology to Uppland served a defensive purpose, but it employed a more complex strategy and one that could never have worked without the common familiarity of the institution of pastoral care and confession. The reason that she addressed her subjects in the mode of a penitent sinner was, of course, that both she and her addressees, both the ruler and her subjects, belonged to the same community of faith, which believed that a penitent sinner should be forgiven. This penitential language was designed to forgive and absolve, but it could of course be used to deliver critique, as in the blackening accounts of King Christian – *konung botnalōs toma taska*. The pastoral care linked taxation and other matters of government to the moral universe of the Middle Ages. It contributed to the language in which the state formative changes that were underway could be discussed in public, and it offered a forum were individual rulers and subjects could negotiate and internalize what these changes might mean to their developing political roles.
Notes

1. Kumlien, “Kristian I.” Christian also was king of Denmark (1448–81) and Norway (1450–81).
2. Carlsson, Svensk historia, 306–307.
3. This pamphlet is published in Andersson, Tre politiska pamfletter, 17–23.
4. The unease with Christian’s incursions in the life of the monastery and with his taxes nationwide appears from the pages of its annals, see Gejrot, Diarium Vadstenense, no. 712 and 719.
5. Geete, Skrifter till uppyggelse, 196–197: ‘Fämna dödhetliga synden är giri J henne maa manskian swa ransakas Om hon haffuir nakath oråthlika afflat för giri skuld antiggia stulith röffuath állir olaghhiga skattat.’ The same paragraph scolds the man [i.e. Christian] who ‘has withheld or arrogated to himself goods that have been pledged or lent, or goods left in custody or hidden lost property, and used it for himself’, which is exactly what the Diarium Vadstenense accused him of doing. According to this account, he did so first in the convent of the Stocholm Dominicans, where his rival Karl Knutsson had deposited a treasure, and then in Vadstena itself. Gejrot, Diarium Vadstenense, no. 712:1–2: ‘then the aforementioned King Christian came to our monastery in Vadstena […] requisitioning from our monastery the treasure that had been left by Lord Erik, once king of these three realms. And this treasure of gold and silver […] the king obtained and brought with him’.
6. See for instance Hicks, English Political Culture, 9–13.
7. See for instance Bonney, Economic Systems, which appeared within the European Science Foundation’s project, ‘The Origins of the Modern State in Europe, 13th–18th Centuries’. More specifically for Scandinavia: Imsen, Taxes, tributes. Classic works for the development of state finance and taxes in medieval Sweden are Lönnroth, Statsmakt och statsfinans and Dovring, De stående skatterna.
8. Lindkvist, “Taxation Systems,” 265–277.
9. Watts, The Making of Polities, 223–233.
10. Hallenberg and Holm, Man ur huse, 38: ‘[…] statsbildning handlar också om förhandlingar mellan furstar och undersåtar, där kulturella föreställningar om rättigheter och legitimitet spelade en avgörande roll’. To some extent the perspective of Hallenberg and Holm has also been borne out in research on late medieval taxation. In a study of how taxes were implemented at the local level in the early sixteenth-century period of the Sture regencies, Dag Retsö finds a concept of ‘inter-class mutuality’ at work, favouring negotiation over rebellion. See Retsö, “No Taxation Without Negotiation”, 451.
11. A survey of medieval theories of taxation is found in another publication of the ESF project on the origins of the modern state: Isenman, “Medieval and Renaissance,” 21–52.
12. Korpiola, “Not without the consent”.
13. The original positions in this debate about penance and ‘social control’ are summarized in the contributions of Tentler, “The Summa for Confessors” and Boyle, “The Summa for Confessors”. More recently: Harren, “Confession, Social Ethics”.
14. de La Selle, Le service des âmes charts the development of this office at the French court, and details its wider responsibilities in diplomacy, teaching and preaching. More interested in the confessors as agents of political counsel are, for instance, the contributors to The Renaissance Conscience, edited by Braun, H. E. and E. Vallance. A brief survey of royal confessors in Sweden is found in Tjällén, “Kungens biktfader”.
15. This article is published as one outcome of a project that explores this political-historical perspective on penance more broadly. The project, ‘Prince, People and Pastoral Care in Fifteenth-Century Europe’, is funded by The Swedish Research Council.
16. Heuman and Öberg, Ericus Olai Chronica.
17. Klemming, Karls-krönikan.
18. Pierozzi, Confessionale—Defecerunt. Pierozzi, Summa Theologiae.
19. Rydberg, Sveriges traktater, 261. ‘Ydermere lofue wii, at wii ey wele elle skule legge noghen vlagilghen thynge pa Sveriges inbyggere med skat, gestningh, hestelopp eller noghre andre uilaghë alegningå, vden effter Sveriges beschrefuen lagh och therres gamble godha sidhwane.’
20. Lönnroth, *Statsmakt och statsfinans*, 214. Both the narrative sources explored below and the immediate actions of Engelbrekt and the interim regime suggest that taxes were the heart of the matter.

21. Retsö and Söderberg, “The late medieval crisis.”

22. Tjällén, *Church and Nation*.

23. Heuman and Öberg, *Erics Olai Chronica*, XLV (14). “[...] soluerent enim viui pro mortuis et habentes aliquid pro nichil habentibus essent perpetuo obligati. (15) Et ita tributum, quod de regno suo tempore soluebatur, non erat legale nec ab antiquo consuetum sed prefati consiliarii sui austicia adinuentum. Quod eciam pecunia daretur pro tributo, non fuerat antiquitus obseruatum, sed iste erat modus sibi conueniens ad euacuandum regnum omni- bus rebus, que poterant in pecuniam commutari. (16) Iste erat eciam modus aptus ad transferendum in Daciarn quidquid potuit Suecia comportare, vt veraciter dici possit: “Spoliauit Egiptios, ditauit Ebreos”. Hec et alia erant, que Engilbertum muebant ad appo- nendum manum reducendi Sueciam ad pristinam libertatem.”

24. Klemming, *Karls-krönikan*, vv 130–135. ‘Fämte edh swor han saa/olagha skat ey leggia vppo/vtan berga sik aff kronuna rentha/och almogenom jangan tunga hempta/vtanthz kunde saa hendha/at örlogh sik moth riket wende.’ On the origins and demagogical intent of Karlskrönikan, see Kumlien, *Historieskrivning och Kungadöme* and Herman Schück, *Engelbrektsskrönikan*. Schück demonstrated that Karlskrönikan comprises works that originally were separate, such as an introductory ‘Engelbrektsskrönikan’. As for the audiences and functions of this latter work, Schück suggested that it pertained to a German tradition, commenting on contemporary events and rehearsed orally to broad audiences by itinerant, relatively low status people. Most recently on the expression of contested issues and ideologies in the fifteenth-century rhyme chronicles, see Nordquist, *A Struggle for the Realm*.

25. Ibid., v. 146. ‘och alla hans laga skat mz vilia vtgöra’.

26. Holmåck and Wessén, *Magnus Erikssons landslag*, Konungsbalken, § 6.

27. Dovring, *De ständene skatterna*, 148–49. Several examples where ‘lagha skatt’ should be understood as the ordinary tax, and not as antonym of ‘illegal taxes’ are presented by Söderwall, *Ordbok över svenska medeltidsspråket*, vol. 1, 722.

28. Söderwall, *Ordbok över svenska medeltidsspråket*, vol 2, 157.

29. Klemming, *Karls-krönikan*, vv. 1003–1019.

30. Ibid., vv. 6839–6849.

31. Andersson, *Tre politiska pamfletter*: “Danske kong Christierns handel,” 19. The same formula – ‘skattæ laghelic ok olaghelic’ – appears in the second of the three pamphlets published by Andersson, ‘En anonym flygskrift från 1466’, 24. And the accusation of ‘olaglige och alt för tunga skatta’ is made also in the third of these pamphlets, “Karl Knutssons brev till domkapit- let i Uppsala,” 33.

32. Ibid., 19.

33. Ibid., 31: 90–94. “Och är eder och nogh witterligit huru han synnerligen haffuer scrifruit wår helige fader påfwen thill iblåndh mere lögener, att wij [...] lade mänge hande ologa skatta vppå, och giorde röfweryj.”

34. Klemming, *Sturekrönikorna*, vv. 671–680.

35. Ibid., vv. 736–746. “och wille häller döö ån liffua ån the sculo annan tiidh oolaghлин skat wtggifua”.

36. Dovring, *De stående skatterna*, 142.

37. Andersson, *Tre politiska pamfletter*, 19:87–93. ‘Jtem tencken ath alt thet konungh Christiern kunde samman komma med lagha och olagha skattar borga och låna, beskattningh, guld, silf, kopp, iern, bly, skip ok hästar, ther gode mend skulle göra theris herskap tienist åff, thet förde han alt aff rikidt och sette her igen många j stor armodh, både med hwstru och barn, som han fförderffuade för hans giri skuld etc.’ Similar statements in Ibid., 24:18–20, 26:88, 33:140–147.

38. Klemming, *Karls-krönikan*, vv. 350–469.

39. Ibid., vv. 524–539. ‘[...] thy rothnado slotten nider j grundh [...]’
40. Lönnroth, *Statsmakts och statsfinans*, 210 and 236. Lönnroth notes that this proto-mercantilist policy of keeping the good coin in the country was a consistent policy with the Swedish Council.

41. Styffe, *Bidrag*, vol 3, 44. ‘Kære almoge som i nogh forstondit hauha huru the Danske hauha gongit oc gonga oss oc alla wora rikis inbyggjara efter, sa at the mena welja komma worite rike och all wor almoga vndher them i ævinneligh tredrom [...]’

42. Andersson, *Tre politiska pamfletter*, 19:61–63. ‘Item fförst haffuer han på lact moth sin edh mongå stora swära olagha skatta och lögh stwondom till sääc ath han wilde strida mot rytzerne.’ For Christian’s Russian crusade, see Møller Jensen, *Denmark and the Crusades*, 135.

43. Klemming, *Karls-kronikan*, vv. 59–64. ‘almogen thz jille behagha/then skatten the togh swa vtdragha/och giorde thz willelicla ther vppo/at gotland til sverige ater foe/thz hörir mz retta til sverigs krona at wera/thy wille thz svenska ey vntbera.’

44. Ibid., vv. 1003–1019.

45. Ibid., vv. 524–539.

46. Ibid., vv. 647–667.

47. Ibid., vv. 942–943.

48. Ibid., vv. 7537–7541. ‘tog gjordo böndher ther til engen skat/alt thz konungen loth forgöra/loth han mz sik aff wyborg föra/oc köpte til for sina peninga/oc engen almoga ther fore twinga’.

49. The description of these texts as rabble-rousing propaganda – right or wrong – is found in most surveys of the vernacular Swedish literature of the period, for instance, Lönnroth, *Från svensk medeltid*, 81.

50. Christian’s sobriquet – konung botnalös toma taska – appears in Andersson, *Tre politiska pamfletter*, 12 and 16. The same text claims that it was his avarice (för hans giri skuld) that made him impose unlawful taxes (olagha skatt).

51. Bureau, *konnunga stylrise*, 57. ‘Suā ödhe ok förderuar girughr höfdinge thet medh allum ålaghum ok marghfeldan orät. Ok ty skal godhr ok rätvis kunungr wärna at han warde ey girughr up å sina vndidån godhz. Ty at huilkin kunungr ella höfdinge thz gör/Thz wardr hans deruils ok hans fòrgäninga.’ Ibid., 77. ‘Ok ty skuu kununga ok höfdinga warna/ath the göra ey sin almogha arman medh olaghom.’

52. Styffe, *Bidrag*, vol. 2, 260–61. ‘Dit doen se alle vmme des willen dat ed hir in Sweden sal also wedder stan alz et in uortiden by konynk Erix tiden stunt de nu gar hillich is den man hir im lande erbarliken viret. do en was hir gen tollen noch gene beschattunge edder beswerunge’.

53. This vernacular version of the vita is published in *Handlingar rörande Skandinavens historia*, 7–8. ‘Jac later nóghia aat mina thed idht är bleffwe firiit ty at ma wel sket at Edhra epterkomande kunna tarffwa thet widhr. O hwilken rättwiis höfdinga hwilken själlan findz i höghwälde som sigh later nóghia aat sina ey aastundende med giri sina wndertana ághodela.’

54. *Svenskt diplomatarium*, no. 4059. ‘Novit enim omnipotens deus quod neque auditate neque aliqua ducti vanitate sed propter difficultates maximas quas continue habueramus a tempore quo primum placuit deo et vobis eligere nos in regem jnvti et ex euidenti necessitate feceramus.’ This letter is discussed in Michael Nordberg, *I kung Magnus tid*, 246–247.

55. *Svenskt diplomatarium*, no. 328. ‘[...] wi wilde at bönderna hæ raetter at giorthæ therræ arlicæ scat wt, oc swa meghit her til som the giorthæ i sancti Eriks konungx daghæ [...]’

56. Dovring, *De stående skatterna på jord*, 144–45. Lönnroth, *Statsmakts och statsfinans*, 176–79.

57. *Svenskt diplomatarium*. no. 328. ‘[...] een deelz hauer thæt waldet stort orlogh oc thungæ, som riket haffuer warit alligedæ.’

58. Ibid. ‘[...] een delz haffuer the toç woldet selzwold, gira oc eghen wilgh, wor oc wore fogetes oc embotzmens.’

59. Ibid. ‘[...] somt mata wij oc the oc wæll hauæ baethraet, æn tho at thet ær tho ikæ æn scheet, thy wær.’

60. Ibid. ‘[...] tha saw wij gerna at thet nokot mata nw nokot af bætræs oc boot wppa rathæs, oc ehaels nu maethen wi ther nokot maeth mughæ ræthæ of Gaths nathæ.’

61. Dovring, *De stående skatterna på jord*, 145
62. Margareta’s state-financial acumen is discussed in Linton, *Margareta, Nordens drottning*, 137–145.

63. For the development of the office of confessor regis, see de La Selle, *Le service des âmes*. For royal confessors in Sweden, see Tjällén, “Kungens biktfader”.

64. Tentler, *Sin and confession*, 28–53.

65. Ingeborg mentions the support of her confessor, probably the General confessor, Magnus Unnonis. And the manuscript context suggests that the pair worked on a more ambitious programme of devotional and political advice for Scandinavian monarchs. Apart from the pamphlet with 14 points of devotional advice for Christian, *Uppsala universitetsbibliotek C 50* also includes an Epistula de devoto modo vivendi that Magnus may have written originally for King Christopher; a Swedish translation of the Enseigneïons of St Louis, and excerpts from Birgitta’s The Heavenly Emperor’s Book to Kings – all of it literature written to educate rulers.

66. As can be expected, many Vadstena MSS contain material relevant to confession. See for instance *Uppsala universitetsbibliotek C72*: 20 r–47 r (Speculum confessorum); 100 r–146 r (Aureum confessionum/Ars artium); *Uppsala universitetsbibliotek C73*: 114 r–141 v (Confessionale); 166 r–174 v (Tractatus de modo et ordine confessendi); 175 r–v (Johannes Gerson – De modo confessionis sacramentalis). A brief discussion of the penitential literature at hand in medieval Swedish libraries is found in Gummerus, *Beiträge*, 9–13.

67. Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, 28–53 accounts for the different genres. See also Boyle, “Summae confessorum”.

68. Pierozzi, *Confessionale–Deecerunt* and *Summa Theologiae*. For the author, see Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*.

69. Collijn, *Katalog der Inkunabeln*, no 124, Antoninus Florentinus, Confessionale (Vadstena klosterbibliotek); No 130, Antoninus Florentinus, Summa theologica P. 4 (‘liber swenonis magni’ – Sven was possibly a canon in Uppsala); No 131, Antoninus Florentinus, Summa theologica P. 1–4 (Vadstena klosterbibliotek); No 132, Antoninus Florentinus, Summa theologica P. 2–4 (‘Frouwe Ingeborg dedit uxor governoris steen stuer […] liber domus pacis marie in gripzhelm’).

70. Pierozzi, *Confessionale–Deecerunt*. “Deecerunt scrutantes scrutinio” (Ps xliii). Scrutinium quidem est confessio vel inquisitio in quo et penitens scrutatur conscientiam suam et confessor cum eo’.

71. The questions for temporal lords is found in Pierozzi, *Confessionale–Deecerunt*, 76v–79r.

72. Pierozzi, *Confessionale–Deecerunt*, 78r. ‘Si iniiustas exactiones vel collocans imposuit, rapina commisset. Et quod dicantur iniesta talia vel collecta et quo satisfacere debeat vide i.i.p.ti.1.c. xiiii. et i.iii.praeter.t.iii.c.iiiii.i.iii.’

73. Pierozzi, *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 2, titulus 1. The matter of abuse of tax powers also appears briefly in a chapter of the third volume of the *Summa: Pierozzi, Summa Theologiae*, vol. 3, titulus 3, chap. 4 (‘About the various vices of lords and their officials’). This chapter, however, does little more than to abstract the more in-depth discussion found in volume two.

74. Pierozzi, *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 2, titulus 1, chapter 13. “Capitulum xiii. De rapina et principantibus in ea et tallis seu praestantias quae imponuntur inuieste, et exactionibus indebitis quae fiunt a dominis vel officialibus eorum et pedagis et gabellis.”

75. Pierozzi, *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 2, titulus 1, chapter 13, § 1. ‘Principes terrarum a deo sunt instituti non quidem ut prima lucrā quaerant sed ut communem utilitatem populi procurant et immo sunt eis instituti reditus ut ex illis viventes a spoliatione abistineant. […] Contingit autem quod aliquando principes non habunt sufficientes reditus ad custodiendam terram et ad alia quae iminent eis expediendi rationabiltier ipsis principibus. Et in tali casu licitum est ut subditi exhibeant unde possit communis utilitas procurari. Et inde est quod in aliiquis terris ex antiqua consuetudine domini sui subditi talliam imponunt quae si non sint immoderada absque peccato exigi possunt. Et similis ratio videtur esse si aliiquis casus de novo emergat in quo oportet multam expendere pro utilitate communi vel per honesto statu principis conservando, ad quae non sufficient redditus proprii vel exactiones consuetae,
puta si hostes terram invadant vel aliquis similis casus emergat, tunc praeter consuetam
exactionem possunt principes aliquid exigere pro utilitatem communi.’
76. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13. ‘Si talia exigantur a laycis tunc aut qui ista exigunt et imponunt
habent legittimum dominium super eos et iusto titulo possidet eorum civitates vel castra,
aut usurpatum puta qui pertinent ad ecclesiam vel imperium vel aliquam dominum et
iniuste sunt ablatas ab eis et contra voluntatem eorum detinentur et si isto secundo modo
usurpativa habentur tales actiones et collecte illicite et rapine sunt et mortaliter peccant
exigentes et tententur ad restitutionem, deductis tamen expensis factis in utilitatem eorum
per conservationem civitatis et aliorum locorum et huiusmodi.’
77. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13.
78. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13, § 1.
79. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13. ‘[..] si exigat ultra ea quae inter ipsum et antecessores suos et
subditos suos et antecessores eorum conventum esse ex pacto statuto vel consuetudine
antiqua et hoc ex fraude minis vel coactione directa vel indirecta a se facta vel a suis.
Indirectum voco denegat eis iusticiam vel non defendit eos […] Et subditi in tali casu non
tenentur ad dandum vel ad solutionem eorum verumtamen illa subtrahendo non peccant si
tamen fiat hoc sine scandalo.’
80. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13, § 1.
81. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13, § 1. ‘Ray. dicit quod si indistincte sit posatum in instrumento
conventionis aliquod tale verbum collecta tallia quaestam et huiusmodi intellegitur quod debet
ea moderate petere inspexis onere et facultatibus subditorum.’
82. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13. ‘illi autem a quibus exiguntur in non solvendo vel fraudes
adhibeendo videlicet occultando bona super quibus imponuntur non peccant, dummodo
tamen caveant a perierius et mendacii et locutionibus circa huiusmodi […]’
83. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13. ‘Qui etiam ex subditis propria sponte solverent pro huiusmodi
causis, et voluntarie assentiunt injustis guerris peccant utique mortaliter cum dominis suis
consentientes in malo […], qui consentit non tamen rapinam comittit ipse dominus nec
tenentur ipsi domini eis restituere per regulam scienti et consentienti non sit inuria neque
dolus […]. Coactis autem ad hoc solvenda tenentur et si possunt subterfugere solutionem
huiusmodi taliem sine scandalo non peccant.’
84. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13. ‘[..] si exigat ultra ea quae inter ipsum et antecessores suos et
subditos suos et antecessores eorum conventum esse […] Et subditi in tali casu non tenentur
ad dandum vel ad solutionem eorum verumtamen illa subtrahendo non peccant si tamen fiat
hoc sine scandalo.’
85. Ibid., titulus 1, chapter 13, § 1. “Et tunc subditi qui absque voluntate domini subtraherent per
fraudes vel alios modos tales tallias debitas ex statuto vel consuetudine antiqua rationabili vel etiam
de novo impositas moderate ex casis expressis [a.b.Tho.] peccant mortaliter furturn commitendo.”
86. Franklin, The Science of Conjecture, 64–70.
87. See, Tjällén, "Induced by the devil".

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the anonymous reviewers of the journal, to the Historical seminar at Mid Sweden
University, Professor Roger Andersson, and to Dr Susan Foran for invaluable advice regarding
English usage.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.
Funding

This work was supported by the Swedish Research Council under Grant number 2017-02158; and Stiftelsen Olle Engkvist Byggmästare under Grant number 2916/347.

Notes on contributor

Björn Tjällén is an associate professor of history at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mid Sweden University.

ORCID

Björn Tjällén (http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0099-7133

References

Andersson, Roger, ed. Tre politiska pamfletter från 1460-talets Sverige. Stockholm: Runica et mediaevalia, 2011.

Bonney, R., ed. Economic Systems and State Finance. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Boyle, L. E. “The Summa for Confessors as a Genre, and Its Religious Intent.” In The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion, edited by Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman, 126–130. Leiden: Brill, 1974.

Boyle, L. E. “Summae Confessorum.” In Les genres litteraires dans les sources theologiques et philosophiques medievales: Definition, critique et exploitation. Actes du Colloque international de Louvain-la-Neuve, 25–27. Louvain: Université catholique de Louvain, 1982.

Braun, H. E., and E. Vallance, eds. The Renaissance Conscience. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2011.

Bureus, J. En Nyttigh Bok om Konnunga Styrilse och Höfdinga. 1634. Uppsala: Almqquist & Wiksell, 1964. Reprinted by Lennart Moberg.

Carlsson, Sten. Svensk historia I. Tiden före 1718. Stockholm: Esselte studium, 1964.

Collijn, Isaac. Katalog der Inkunabeln der Kgl. Universitäts-Bibliothek zu Uppsala. Uppsala-Leipzig, 1907.

de La Selle, Xavier. Le service des âmes à la Cour: Confesseurs et Aumôniers des Rois de France du XII° au XVI° siècle. Paris: École de Chartes, 1995.

Dovring, Folke. De stödande skatterna på jord 1400–1600. Lund: Gleerup, 1951.

Franklin, James. The Science of Conjecture: Evidence and Probability before Pascal. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Geete, Robert, ed. Skrifter till uppbryggelse från medeltiden: En samling af moralteologiska traktater på svenska. Norstedt: Stockholm, 1904–5.

Gejrot, Claes, ed. Diarium Vastenense: The Memorial Book of Vastena Abbey. A Critical Edition with an Introduction. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988.

Gummerus, Jako. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Buss- und Beichtwesens in der schwedischen Kirche des Mittelalters. Uppsala, 1900.

Hallenberg, Mats, and Johan Holm. Man ur huse. Hur krig, upplyopp och förhandlingar påverkade svensk statsbildning under tidigmodernt tid. Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2016.

Handlingar rörande Skandinaviens historia, vol. 6. Stockholm, 1818.

Harren, Michael. “Confession, Social Ethics and Social Discipline in the Memoriale Presbiterorum.” In Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages, edited by Peter Biller and A. J. Minnis, 109–122. York: York Medieval Press, 1998.

Heuman, Ella, and Jan Öberg, eds. Ericus Olai Chronica Regni Gothorum. Textkritische Ausgabe. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1993.

Hicks, Michael. English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century. London: Routledge, 2002.

Holmbäck, Åke, and Elias Wessén, eds. Magnus Erikssons landslag i nusvensk tolkning. Stockholm, 1962.
Howard, P. F. Beyond the Written Word: Preaching and Theology in the Florence of Archbishop Antoninus, 1427–1459. Florence: Olschki, 1995.

Imsen, S., ed. Taxes, Tributes and Tributary Lands in the Making of Scandinavian Kingdoms in the Middle Ages. Trondheim: Tapir Academic Press, 2012.

Isenman, Eberhard. “Medieval and Renaissance Theories of State Finance.” In Economic Systems and State Finance, edited by Richard Bonney, 21–52. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Jensen, Møller. Janus. Denmark and the Crusades 1400–1650. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2007.

Klemming, G. E., ed. Svenska medeltidens rimkrönikor D. 2 Nya eller Karls-kröikan. Stockholm: Norstedt, 1866.

Klemming, G. E., ed. Svenska medeltidens rimkrönikor D. 3 Nya krönikans fortsättningar eller Sturekrönikorna: fortgången af unionsstriderna under Karl Knutsson och Sturane, 1452-1520. Stockholm: Norstedt, 1866–68.

Korpiola, Mia. “Not without the Consent and Goodwill of the Common People’: The Community as a Legal Authority in Medieval Sweden.” Journal of Legal History 35, no. 2 (2014): 95–119. doi:10.1080/01440365.2014.925173.

Kumlien, Kjell. “Kristian I.” In Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon, edited by Erik Grill, 562–566. Vol. 21. Stockholm, 1977.

Kumlien, Kjell. Historieskrivning och kungadöme i svensk medeltid. Stockholm, 1979.

Lindkvist, Thomas. “Taxation Systems in Medieval Sweden.” In In Taxes, Tributes and Tributary Lands in the Making of Scandinavian Kingdoms in the Middle Ages, edited by Steinar Imoen, 265–277. Trondheim: Tapir Academic Press, 2012.

Linton, Michael. Margareta. Nordens drottning 1375–1412. Atlantis: Stockholm, 1997.

Lönnroth, Erik. Statsmak och statsfinans i det medeltida Sverige: Studier över skatteväsen och länsförvaltning. Göteborg, 1940.

Lönnroth, Erik. Från svensk medeltid. Stockholm: Bonnier, 1959.

Nordberg, Michael. I kung Magnus tid: Norden under Magnus Eriksson, 1317–1374. Stockholm: Norstedts, 1995.

Nordquist, Margaretha. A Struggle for the Realm. Late-medieval Swedish Rhyme Chronicles as Ideological Expressions. Stockholm: Department of History, Stockholm University, 2015.

Pierozzi, Antonio (St Antoninus). Summa Theologiae. Basel, 1485.

Pierozzi, Antonio (St Antoninus). Confessionale–Defecerunt. Venice, 1499.

Retsö, Dag. "No Taxation without Negotiation. War Economy, Taxes, and the Peasantry in Sweden in the Early 16th Century." Scandinavian Journal of History 42, no. 4 (2017): 439–458. doi:10.1080/03468755.2017.1349577.

Retsö, Dag, and Johan Söderberg. “The Late Medieval Crisis Quantified. Real Taxes in Sweden 1320–1550.” Scandinavian Journal of History 40, no. 1 (2015): 1–24. doi:10.1080/03468755.2014.976839.

Rydberg, O. S., ed. Sveriges traktater med främmande mäster. Vol. 3. Stockholm, 1895.

Schück, Herman. Engelbrecktskrönikan: tillkomsten och författaren. Kungliga Vitterhets- Historie- och Antikvitetsakademien. Stockholm, 1994.

Söderwall, K. F. Ordbok över svenska medeltidspråket. Lund, 1891–1900.

Styff, C. G., ed. Bidrag till Skandinaviens historia. Vol. 2. Norstedt: Stockholm, 1864.

Styff, C. G., ed. Bidrag till Skandinaviens historia. Vol. 3. Norstedt: Stockholm, 1870.

Svenskt Diplomatarium: Diplomatarium Suecnum. Stockholm, 1829.

Tentler, Thomas. “The Summa for Confessors as an Instrument of Social Control.” In The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion, edited by Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman, 103–126. Leiden: Brill, 1974.

Tentler, Thomas. Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Tjällén, Biörn. Church and Nation: The Discourse on Authority in Ericus Olai’s Chronica Regni Gothorum. Stockholm, 2007.

Tjällén, Biörn. “Kungens biktfader.” Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift 112 (2012): 49–59.
Tjällén, Biörn. “Induced by the Devil? Christian I and the Privilegium Canonis.” In Constitutionalism before 1789: Constitutional Arrangements from the High Middle Ages to the French Revolution, edited by Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde. Pax Forlag: Oslo, 2014.

Watts, John. The Making of Polities: Europe 1300–1500. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.