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'Rise up and walk!' The Church of Sweden and the 'problem of vagrancy' in the early twentieth century

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ABSTRACT

The article examines how people within the Church of Sweden's leadership tried to solve 'the problem of vagrancy' in Sweden in the early twentieth century. In focus are the priest John Melander and the deacon Josef Flinth, who advocated and realized various activities for categories of poor and mobile men in the population. These interventions, defined as help-to-self-help, differentiated between the 'worthy' and the 'unworthy' needy. In publications and lectures, Melander and Flinth presented arguments to transfer 'unworthy' categories to the 'worthy', thereby expanding the *community of value*. This expansion was conditioned, however, by boundaries drawn regarding ideas on belonging and ethnicity. Working in the borderlands of the community as part of a Christian calling, Melander and Flinth contributed to the expansion of social work in the early twentieth century.

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Introduction

The early decades of the twentieth century are commonly described as a take-off phase for the development of modern European welfare states. Gradually during this period, many administrations abandoned the nineteenth century's limited and stigmatizing national poor-relief schemes favouring social welfare programmes targeting more and broader groups of the population. Research shows that at the time, Sweden was among the most socially stratified and conflict-ridden countries in Europe; yet during the coming decades, a majority of the population was enfranchised, and a widespread welfare system started to develop.¹ To explain the changes in social work before the organized welfare state began to grow, historians have mainly studied the actors that were more or less new to the field: the Labour movement, liberal reformers, philanthropic women and scientific experts.² The Church of Sweden, representing an old, hierarchical and paternalistic society, has received little attention. There is good reason to nuance this picture; prominent representatives of the Church also contributed to developing the social field during this formative period. This article studies how the Church of Sweden handled 'the problem of vagrancy', what the work consisted of, and which groups the work targeted.

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The Church of Sweden – *Diakonistyrelsen*

The Church of Sweden was a state church until 2000, with authority assignments such as the comprehensive duty to register the population.³ In the early twentieth century, the Church was a hierarchical institution with the Archbishop in the highest office, but bishops and priests had considerable leeway running their dioceses and parishes.⁴ Hence, a consensus within all levels of the Church was rare; disunity concerning the responsibility in social work was common.⁵ Indeed, at the turn of the twentieth century, the Church of Sweden lacked a national organization. In focus in this article is Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelse, hereafter *SKD* [Eng. The Church of Sweden National Board for Parish Life] – a new entity established in 1910 to revitalize church life and unify it at the national level.⁶ *SKD* was formally a part of the state church, but promoting voluntary work, it expanded the civil sector. The ambition of *SKD*'s early leaders was to create a central organ for voluntarism.⁷ At the time, there was no room within the Church's existing structure for this kind of work; hence *SKD* filled a perceived void.⁸ It was regulated through public laws (SFS 1910:142) and funded by donations and collections (not church taxes). Leading the work was a Governing Board of seven people chaired by the Archbishop, which delegated the work to various committees and councils, led by ordained priests or laymen.⁹ According to church historian Fredrik Santell, *SKD* controlled the Church's orientation during the first half of the 20th century, and the deputy secretary who chaired the Governing Board was highly influential.¹⁰ The first deputy secretary was John Melander (1875–1935), who served between 1910 and 1918.¹¹ Melander defined solving the 'problem of vagrancy' – intermittently called the 'wanderer' or 'tramp' question [Sw. *vandrarefrågan* or *luffarefrågan*] – as a specifically important task of Protestant social work.¹² Being unemployed, Melander claimed in 1926 at a national priest's meeting [Sw. *prästmöte*], 'is more than a social state of emergency, it is a moral emergency, a most serious threat to the soul'.¹³ Apart from being *SKD*'s deputy secretary, Melander also chaired its Social Committee; he was thus essential in formulating Protestant social work.¹⁴ The Social Committee engaged Deacon Josef Flinth (1886–1939), who had received training at *Diakonanstalten Stora Sköndal*, an institution tied to the Church.¹⁵ John Melander and Josef Flinth are the main actors in this article; they formulated arguments and developed activities to solve the 'vagrancy problem'. My research questions concern the motivations behind and the content of these activities.

Source material and method

The primary source is *SKD*'s archival material concerning social issues, preserved at the Swedish National Archive.¹⁶ I have also used published sources such as *SKD*'s pamphlets on Protestant social work and the 'problem of vagrancy' and contemporary journals and newspapers. The Governing Board of *SKD* met approximately five times a year and kept minutes of their meetings. I have studied minutes from 1910 to 1911 when the Social Committee was established to handle social issues. I have checked the Social Committee's minutes and other material from 1911 to 1930 when the 'problem of vagrancy' had fallen entirely out of interest for Swedish church actors at the national level.¹⁷ The Committee met at uneven intervals over the years. Between 1911 and 1916, meetings were held approximately four times annually, and after 1916 between one and three times a year.¹⁸

During the 1910s, the organization was relatively small, and the first deputy secretary could personally handle or at least participate in handling cases. The work was mainly supportive; *SKD* would issue statements and recommendations and endorse local activities.¹⁹ Furthermore, I studied Josef Flinth's correspondence preserved in a notebook and two volumes of received letters. Flinth was inspired by the Danish Protestant association *Arbejde Adler* [Eng., Work Ennobles], I thus also studied contemporary pamphlets that describe the ideas and practices of this association.²⁰

The archive material contains records of various origins created for different purposes. A specific religious mode of presentation sometimes permeates Christian texts, which produces a problematic distance to the questions at hand; it is rarely given clear notice.²¹ To surmount such interpretative problems, I have consulted contemporary newspapers and journals that commented on topical issues concerning *SKD*, Protestant social work and questions relating to vagrancy. I collected these items from *Sigtunastiftelsen's* archive of newspaper cuttings (*Sigtunastiftelsen* is a Christian association established in 1917 to enable ecumenical and societal dialogue) and *SKD's* journal *Församlingsbladet* that was distributed to all Swedish congregations to communicate *SKD's* work and the ideas behind it.²² Methodologically, I have 'followed cases', an approach inspired by the Canadian historians Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson.²³ Whenever the Governing Board or the Social Committee discussed an issue relevant to my study, I tried to follow it through the rest of the source material. I have also worked in the 'reverse' order; guided by events or information in Flinth's correspondence or other source material, I investigated minutes and journal cuttings from the same period. Thus I determined how and when ideas have resulted in action and whether practices have been normatively sanctioned.

Previous research

Historians have studied Swedish Protestant social work as part of the diaconal activities that developed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Exploring Protestant women's 'rescue work' among prostitutes, Anna Jansdotter describes the movement as characterized by a combination of social control and care, with religious conversion as a requisite for complete rehabilitation.²⁴ Focusing on the development of the female diaconate in Sweden, Todd H. Green argues that *functional differentiation* – the process in the nineteenth century when the formal responsibility of poor relief was moved from the Church to the municipality – was a condition for the expanding deaconess movement.²⁵ Among the researchers investigating the contribution of liberalism and scientific philanthropy to social work is Lennart Lundqvist, who maps a network of people he calls the Poor Relief people [Sw. *fattigvårdsfolket*], involved in the early development of social policies.²⁶ One of the critical organizations in this network was *Allmänna Svenska Prästföreningen* [the General Swedish Corporation of Priests], which John Melander was highly engaged in, and which church historian Fredrik Santell has identified as an organizational predecessor to *SKD*.²⁷ Thus Lundqvist identifies (some) priests as influential in the expansion of social work. He asserts, as does Marika Hedin, that the actors on the social field prescribed the same method: self-to-self-help leading to moral uplifting.²⁸ Hedin argues that also liberal ideas of Poor Relief required applicants to behave in a morally correct manner to receive relief. Still, it was science, she argues, that constituted

the grounds for moral truth.²⁹ Focusing on the period leading up to the reformed Poor Relief legislation of 1918, Mikael Sjögren contends that the liberals' intention with Poor Relief was to develop the individual's will and ability to support oneself and one's family. The advocated relief system evaluated people according to a moral and gendered yardstick, differentiating between the 'worthy' and the 'unworthy' poor.³⁰ As Geremek, Midré, and Althammer, Gestrich & Gründler have shown, such differentiations had long and far-reaching historical roots stretching across Europe.³¹

Fredrik Santell has examined the emergence, organization and activities of *Diakonistyrelsen*, *SKD*, from its inception up to the late 1930s. Through a detailed description of the organizational predecessors and the involved actors, he places a part of the struggle for the Church's orientation during the first decades in the social field. *SKD* created or directly supported diaconal initiatives, which caused conflict with those who argued for parish driven Protestant social work.³² Exploring church discourses during the interwar period, Maria Södling shows how these departed from and created specific notions of masculinity and femininity. To prevent people from falling outside prevailing social and moral norms and ending up as 'vagrants' or prostitutes, church actors strengthened the idea of the good Christian home.³³ Both Santell and Södling show that *SKD* during the first decades of existence focused on social ethics regarding 'problems' like the 'population question' and sexual issues. In focus here is the 'problem of vagrancy', which Bridget Anderson, professor of Migration and Citizenship Studies, defines as a predecessor to the 'problem of migration' that has evolved during recent decades.³⁴ She asserts that the combination of poverty and mobility has been problematic for authorities and other institutions to deal with ever since the consolidation of European states.³⁵ The meaning of boundaries, hence the identification of 'vagrants' (or 'migrants'), has varied depending on who has had responsibility for the poor; national boundaries grew in importance as local and regional boundaries became economic-administratively less critical. With Anderson's approach, the welfare for poor and mobile people, whether internal or international, can be drawn into one historical narrative and analytical framework. Within this framework, I place the Church of Sweden's work to solve the 'problem of vagrancy' in the early twentieth century.

The Church in the social field

The Swedish Church was an integral part of the agrarian society, with ninety per cent of the population living in rural areas. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, processes of industrialization and urbanization rapidly changed the Swedish social and political landscape. Between 1850 and 1900, the population of Stockholm increased from 75,000 to 300,000. These processes contributed to create an identity crisis for the Church of Sweden, whose traditional role as a mainstay was seriously challenged.³⁶ 'Never before in its history', states church historian Oloph Bexell, 'had Swedish Christianity been subjected to such intense criticism as during the last decades of the nineteenth century'.³⁷ The background was the functional differentiation that had gathered speed when, in 1847 and 1853, new Poor Relief legislation stated that a Board, of which the vicar was no longer the self-evident leader, should administer local poor relief. The relief was to be financed by taxation and not the donations and fees transferred via the congregation since the seventeenth century.³⁸ The municipal reforms of 1862 further clarified that church taxes shouldn't finance poor relief. Losing many of its former social functions, the Church's

influence in the public sphere declined, and new diaconal and voluntary associations developed outside the Church.³⁹ At the turn of the century, societal conflicts increased, and socialist ideas challenging religion gained ground. This development contributed to renewed interest in social issues within the Church; many people assumed that the Social Question could not be solved without church engagement.⁴⁰ The main argument was that religious actors such as priests and deacons were particularly well suited to protect the rights of the poor.⁴¹ The key to this work was voluntarism and personal care, values that allegedly had been lost in the nineteenth century's regulation and secularization of the poor relief system.⁴² Because the State church system did not support social work organized by the Church, it had to be a voluntary activity. What is more, voluntarism was thought to strengthen both individual faith and the congregation, hence the establishment of SKD (Diakonistyrelsen) in 1910.

Diakonistyrelsen, morality and the 'problem of vagrancy'

The 'problem of vagrancy' was often discussed at SKD's Committee meetings.⁴³ The fact that the Church saw problems regarding the mobility of poor and so-called unruly people was not a novel phenomenon in the early twentieth century. On the contrary, such ideas have deep historical roots and should be seen as states' and elite groups' attempts to regulate work, keep the lower classes in check and preserve the social order.⁴⁴ Vagrancy legislation has for centuries been used to regulate the mobility of the poor and unemployed in Sweden and elsewhere.⁴⁵ However, this legislation's boundaries and content have been elastic and blurred, which has brought insecurity to the poor but possibilities for the state and ruling classes.⁴⁶ The vagrancy legislation employed in Sweden at the beginning of the twentieth century had been established in 1885 (SFS 1885:27) when it expanded to include a paragraph centring on the individual's morality. Apart from requiring that the unemployed poor could present means of support [Sw. *Laga försvar*], they now risked being identified as 'vagrants' solely based on their way of living. Any poor person perceived as leading a life 'that risk[ed] the security of the public, of the order, or morality' could be treated as a 'vagrant' (SFS 1885:27 § 1, my translation). Hence, the 1885 Vagrancy Act did not define vagrancy as criminal per se. Still, local police authorities could sentence to forced labour people they identified as 'vagrants', a measure which some experts at the time categorized as rehabilitative rather than punitive.⁴⁷ Although the Act was repeatedly criticized and under constant revision, it wasn't abolished until 1965. In 1925 and again in 1930, some 200 men and women (including the Archbishop and the deputy secretary of SKD) organized in a Christian association called for partial decriminalization of vagrancy and more fine-tuned sorting systems. Specialized Protestant social institutions dedicated to caring for marginal citizens would be responsible for these systems.⁴⁸ Their suggestion was based on Protestant voluntarism as a duty and a gift to the collective. Morality, then, is tied to the context in which it operates; shifting conventions of moral responsibility create shifting forms of what is deemed good citizenship.⁴⁹ According to SKD's first deputy secretary John Melander, the overall purpose of SKD's mobilization in the social field was to ensure that Swedish society was set up to promote in the best possible way the wellbeing of the Swedish *släkte*.⁵⁰ The term *släkte* carries various connotations; it can mean extended family, race or population. Either way, it refers to

a community with boundaries, separating the included from the excluded. People who were placed by actors in the social field within the limits of the accepted were included in what Bridget Anderson defines as the *community of value*; these were the 'worthy poor'.⁵¹ In the following sections, I will show how SKD, through Secretary Melander and Deacon Flinth, contributed to managing the boundaries of the community of value in their efforts to solve the 'problem of vagrancy'.

The social committee

Soon after SKD's establishment in 1910, the Board assembled a Social Committee of three people with John Melander as secretary. The initiative had come from *Diakonsällskapet*, which asked for SKD's support in their intensified rescue work with 'released prisoners, vagrants, alcoholics' and similar groups.⁵² The Committee's first meeting was in January 1911, and the first item concerned the opening of a workhouse [Sw. *arbetshem*] for 'vagrants' in *Björknäs*, close to Uppsala. The meeting commissioned Secretary Melander to write pamphlets about the 'problem of vagrancy', which SKD decided to distribute free of cost to all congregations.⁵³ Furthermore, the guidelines stated that the Committee would: a) dispatch travelling lecturers to convince local audiences of the distress of the 'strays' [Sw. *vilsegångna*] and inform about available church interventions, b) awaken interest to engage in these personally, c) establish an institution in Stockholm for newly released prisoners and 'vagrants', and unite all the city congregations' rescue work, and d) provide advice, information and recommendations in related matters at SKD's Bureau in Stockholm.⁵⁴ In the following sections, I will discuss some of these approaches in detail.

The pamphlets

Hedin, Lundqvist, Sjögren, Wisselgren and Vammen have shown that the Swedish social field was patchy in the time under study, with many (sometimes cooperating) private and public actors and institutions.⁵⁵ Since the changes in legislation in the mid-nineteenth century, the Church of Sweden was not among the more significant players. Still, SKD cooperated with other national and international Protestant actors. It was standard procedure to make study visits to other countries when developing new activities.⁵⁶ Apart from the Nordic neighbours, Secretary Melander also turned to other Protestant countries for inspiration. In 1908, he travelled to Germany, England and Scotland on a national travel grant that the Swedish state provided.⁵⁷ In Germany, he visited Friedrich von Bodelschwingh (1831–1910), a priest who, in 1882, had founded the first German worker's colony, which housed and employed male workers. By 1904, more than 30 colonies with the capacity to accommodate around 3,500 people had been established.⁵⁸ The purpose was to provide 'help-to-self help' and the work was defined as a part of the *inner mission*, meaning evangelical work combined with diaconal interventions targeting the needy within national borders.⁵⁹ The German worker's colonies were part of an expansive international field of diaconal social welfare work; similar colonies existed in Holland, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark and Russia.⁶⁰ Althammer asserts that the 'vagabond question' was a much-

debated issue throughout the industrializing world around 1900.⁶¹ In Sweden, concerns peaked in the 1920s when the government launched a comprehensive commission on vagrancy.⁶²

Melander's pamphlet 'Our brothers from the country road' [Sw. *Våra bröder från landsvägen*] (1910) is a detailed report on his impressions from von Bodelschwingh's colony in Bielefeld. Despite significant social, political, demographic and geographic differences between Germany and Sweden, he considered the German 'solution' an ideal to follow. Combatting unemployment was a Christian calling, he argued: 'How could we as Christians remain quiescent when the physical and spiritual wellbeing of our fellow beings is at stake?'⁶³ Melander's identification of 'vagrants' as fellow beings differed slightly from more common descriptions, like that of Poor Relief Inspector and liberal politician G. H. von Koch (a prominent member of Lundquist's Poor Relief People⁶⁴): 'The vagrant ... [or] the tramp is a social parasite. He is without exception a preying member of society as he generally does not work for a living'.⁶⁵ While von Koch put up a firm boundary between the 'vagrant' and 'society', Melander's characterization expanded the boundaries. Helping people on the outside to get in was a church responsibility, he claimed:

Although the Church is primarily responsible for the moral nurture of the people, it has no right to remain idle towards the unemployed masses that roam our country roads. Their number in Sweden is estimated to comprise some 20,000 people.⁶⁶

The Church should support the establishment of workers' colonies following the German model, Melander suggested. He estimated that two institutions (housing 200–300 men) might be enough for the time being, one in the north and one in the south of Sweden. For complex cases, the 'worst elements', smaller units that accommodated up to 20 people during one year, would be suitable. Referring to his visits to England and the Church Army (not to be confused with the Salvation Army), he argued that such institutions must provide a variety of work besides agrarian tasks; 'vagabonds', were poorly equipped for agricultural work, Melander reckoned.⁶⁷ The *Björknäs* workhouse was set up with this category in mind. While *SKD* owned the premises and supported it financially, *Diakonsällskapet* managed it and used it as a drillground for deacons in training, presumably preparing a cadre of professionals awaiting the establishment of a network of work hostels along German lines.⁶⁸ Since the seventeenth century, workhouses had been established across Europe to regulate work and discipline (and contain) the needy. Depending on the socio-historical context, various forms of institutions have met different purposes. Sometimes, corrective features have been prominent, while at other times, arguments concerning the safekeeping of the underprivileged have dominated.⁶⁹ Olwen Purdue shows that also those who have sought relief have utilized workhouses as a strategy for survival.⁷⁰ The deprivation of freedom and labour compulsion were considered parts of the same (re)socializing interventions that, according to Geremek, had been in use for more than two centuries.⁷¹ The workhouse that *SKD* financed and supported was non-compulsory and admitted men after application (written by a prison priest or themselves), and they had to sign a pledge to stay one year. They were free to leave at any time, but in that case, they would not get the letter of recommendation that might be decisive when applying for work in keen competition.⁷²

The target groups were released prisoners and 'vagrants' who would have difficulty finding work and presumably had to be re-socialized. Moral reform would come about through physical work, it was assumed. Social and criminal experts proposed meticulously planned schedules to solve all problems (poverty, criminality, immorality, etc.).⁷³ When the poor relief legislation was reformed in 1918, *Björknäs* was transformed into a state-supported alcoholism treatment institution. *SKD* took no further part in its management but remained as the owner of the premises until 1932.

Like his international colleagues, Melander viewed institutions like *Björknäs* as a temporary Band-Aid to the 'problem of vagrancy'.⁷⁴ In the pamphlet 'Rise Up and Walk!' [Sw. *Stå upp och gå!*], he described the long-term goal of Protestant social work: the 'vagrants' reintegration into society. In practice, this implied regular work and a settled life with a (heterosexual) family in a steady, devout home. The general aim of the pamphlets was to convince local parishes of their responsibility to support the 'brothers from the country road', as Melander called them, to achieve this goal. The pamphlet's title drew on passages in the Bible where Jesus heals the faithful blind or paralytic Christians by forgiving them their sins and urging them to rise up and walk.⁷⁵ Melander maintained that it was a Christian calling to reclaim the 'strays' – baptized but lost – that once had belonged to the Church and the community.⁷⁶ Referencing Bible quotes, he described it as a fundamental duty of the parish (i.e. both the clergy and the congregation) to take responsibility in social relief work, which was far from evident at that time. Inspired by the inner mission in Germany, he also underlined the vital role of laypersons such as deacons in these endeavours.⁷⁷ Laypeople should work at the boundaries of the community, with people that had distanced themselves or been pushed out of established society, such as the Sami people in the north, seamen, soldiers, and the needy clients of poor relief boards and child welfare agencies.⁷⁸ The inner mission was thus presented as essential in *SKD*'s boundary drawing around the community of value.⁷⁹ Many of the liberal reformers explored by Hedin, Sjögren and Lundqvist shared *SKD*'s devotion to rehabilitating men perceived to be outside or on the margins of the community.⁸⁰ Work ethics were at the core of a moral lifestyle, which had to comply with class and gender-related socio-moral norms.

The problem of differentiation

From *SKD*'s perspective, vagrancy was a whole complex of problems that priests and other Protestant actors were particularly well suited to disentangle. Paramount in this work was the difficult task of differentiating the needy.⁸¹ Contemporary expertise found it hard to establish whether people were willingly or unwillingly unemployed; in effect, to decide whether they were 'worthy' or 'unworthy' of social relief.⁸² In 1917, 17 cooperating voluntary organizations in Stockholm, one of which was *SKD*, issued a joint statement mapping the situation and proposing solutions regarding male homelessness, unemployment and begging in the capital. Crucial to this work, the statement said, was assessing the men's willingness to work. Once differentiated, registers of the 'distinctly unwilling' should be created and distributed to all affiliated organizations.⁸³ Melander asserted that priests and deacons were specifically well prepared to judge people's authentic character and motifs. A precondition was that people under evaluation presented themselves to the evaluators, for instance, within the framework of an

institution.⁸⁴ While workhouses like *Björknäs* were intended for the 'worst elements', the institutions envisaged here aimed at the supposedly less troublesome 'tramps' and 'vagabonds'. For these men on the borderline to the community of value, the Social Committee presented a solution along German lines: a network of Protestant work hostels [Sw. *arbetshärbärgen*]. Another source of inspiration was the Danish priest Nicolai Dalhoff who had created the organization *Arbejde Adler* and established a comprehensive system of work colonies and work hostels dedicated to 'vagabonds' and 'vagrants' in the early 1910s.⁸⁵ In January 1912, the Social Committee engaged Deacon Josef Flinth to reinforce the congregations' social work and support individual help-seekers, priests, and potential employers. Flinth met with Dalhoff in 1915 and was convinced that his network model would be successful in Sweden.⁸⁶ Flinth reckoned that the Swedish institutions, like the German and Danish ones, should be placed in the countryside, keeping wanderers from the city's demoralizing effects. As Flinth soon would notice, however, the targeted men valued their independence, preferring to decide for themselves what kind of help they wanted and needed. He had to quickly abandon his ideas about destitute men waiting to be 'taken care of'.⁸⁷ That poor people made choices and utilized the system of poor relief as suited them, regardless of administrators' intention, is also observed by Purdue, who studies the contested role of workhouses in Belfast around 1900.⁸⁸ Normative constructs of deviance and how Protestant social work might remedy it was thus continuously challenged by the people deemed deviant.

Apart from alleviating poverty and providing temporary work for the unemployed, Melander visualized that the work hostels would function as sorting and control stations; separating 'bona fide workers' from the 'vagrants' was an essential task in social work according to Poor Relief Inspector von Koch.⁸⁹ During the clients' short stay – 24 hours on average – the personnel (priests or deacons) would evaluate them and propose further action. 'By [...] gathering the stream of wanderers in certain furrows and leading them through these control stations', Melander stated, 'it is possible to achieve a roughly correct sorting and to incorporate different people in the treatment that suits them'.⁹⁰ He suggested that the police authorities and the public cooperate to maintain these 'furrows' and direct the 'wanderers' to the hostels. For maximum efficiency, he advised using railways for transporting the men. There already existed several (non-cooperating) institutions for unemployed and homeless men in the bigger cities (e.g. *Stadsmissionen* and *Hemmet för de elända* in Stockholm), but very few in the countryside, where the 'wanderers' were assumed to roam. Thus Melander called for two primary measures: the establishment of more institutions and better organization between them.⁹¹ Achieving this was the paramount aim of Deacon Flinth.

The aim was to assist the 'genuine job seekers' in finding permanent and paid regular work and direct the rest towards suitable institutions.⁹² Unga, Svensson and Åmark assert that the Social Democratic national labour market policy in the early twentieth century focused on respectable and honest workers.⁹³ Indeed, Eriksson characterizes the time's Social Democratic unemployment policy as a 'sociopolitical sorting institution' that, apart from regulating and alleviating, also separated the unrighteous needy from the righteous.⁹⁴ There were thus some affinities between *SKD*'s and the labour movement's moralizing approach to poor and unemployed people. But like conflicts and differing

notions marked the Church of Sweden, labour market policies in the early twentieth century also varied depending on the level. Both Svensson and Unga show, for instance, that local activities did not always follow national guidelines, which gave leeway to strong personalities and local customs.⁹⁵

Deacon Flinth's work

Flinth's work included a labour exchange service administered at *SKD's* Bureau in central Stockholm. From there, Flinth acted as a link between associations, released prisoners and potential employers across the middle and south of Sweden.⁹⁶ Voluntary associations started caring for released prisoners and their families in the late nineteenth century, and the number of associations grew when new legislation on probation came in 1906.⁹⁷ Through Flinth, *SKD* became one of the new actors on the field. Flinth counselled his clients and developed and distributed information material for parishes, decision-makers and the public. He created a two-page form for administrative purposes with which the prison priest should register each job-seeking man.⁹⁸ The requested data was comprehensive and concerned the client's name, age, work, education, confirmation, parents, siblings, marital status, health (illness and disabilities), sobriety, date of release, work in the institution, skills, previous convictions and crimes, number of sentences to forced labour, number of penalties for drinking, previous employment and work reports, employment at the time of the most recent crime, and personal wishes. Furthermore, the person filling the form could choose from characteristics describing the client: did he seem good-tempered or irritable, modest or unbending, reliable or unreliable? In his prison work, had he been meticulous or sloppy, industrious or idle, talented, obtuse or less knowledgeable, dangerous, hopeless or unoffending? Was his alcohol use moderate? Did he make a pleasant or unpleasant impression? Finally, the form-filling priest could recommend suitable jobs for the client in question.⁹⁹ It is uncertain whether priests used the forms; the archive contains only a few filled-in forms with most questions unanswered.¹⁰⁰

In his work to find employment for the released prisoners, Flinth could contact potential employers directly or advertise in local newspapers and *Församlingsbladet*.¹⁰¹ Another strategy was to engage local agents that would connect job seekers with employers on the local level. Ideally, the agents would also spread the word about *SKD's* social work to the local community.¹⁰² The employers should be sober, 'good Christians' while job seekers were described as temperate, well-behaved and hard-working.¹⁰³ Skilled and unskilled labourers were the easiest to place; men with a background as civil servants were more difficult.¹⁰⁴ The types of employment that could arise included tailoring, stable work, shop work and gardening; office clerks were not in demand.¹⁰⁵ Preferably, the workplaces should be situated outside the city since its allure would potentially corrupt the ex-prisoners.¹⁰⁶ However, for men who had proven diligent, employment opportunities were also available in bigger cities like Gothenburg.¹⁰⁷ Through a system of receipts accompanying the ex-prisoners or 'vagrants' to their new employers, *SKD* was held contingently liable. The Bureau could be billed if workers dropped out and left with the employer's equipment.¹⁰⁸ The employment service exchange was highly gendered. Neither Flinth's nor the work of the Social Committee

targeted women during the 1910s. 'Women's issues' became a topic of interest for SKD only in the 1920s, when some women joined the Governing Board and the Social Committee.¹⁰⁹

Despite the seemingly well-established cooperation between prison priests, authorities and associations, the labour exchange service was unsuccessful. Flinth ascribed most failures to the help-seeking men; instead of showing up at their appointed new employer's directly after their release, many 'took a vacation' or failed to show up altogether.¹¹⁰ He contended that the transition was hard and suggested placement at the *Björknäs* workhouse as a better option for some men than employment at 'real' jobs. Flinth described *Björknäs* as a 'home' where 'work willing' released prisoners, and 'vagrants' would spend a year 'under observation, guidance and discipline', after which they would be placed with employers.¹¹¹ The best-case scenario was that the men had a job awaiting them after leaving *Björknäs*.¹¹² Whether this was the case is not revealed in the sources.

Lectures and work hostels

Flinth interpreted the ex-prisoners' preference to find employment on their own as an expression of their unwillingness to work. He placed the fault with the almsgiving public, whose 'highly inappropriate charity at the doors' encouraged 'work shyness'.¹¹³ Therefore, fighting almsgiving was an additional purpose of Flinth's travels across the country to hold lectures on the 'problem of vagrancy' and inform people about his idea of a network of work hostels. A network, he claimed, 'would be a major contribution to the solution of the contemporary problem of unemployment'.¹¹⁴ Flinth described helping marginalized men as 'a task that principally concerned the Christians'; he aimed to convince local congregations and clergy to 'take care of their own'.¹¹⁵ Flinth defined this work as a 'branch of the inner mission' – a whole new type of diaconal work.¹¹⁶ After some time, however, it became challenging to uphold the labour exchange service simultaneously as travelling.¹¹⁷ As a consequence, SKD terminated the service in October 1916.¹¹⁸

John Melander also gave lectures, and he sometimes joined Flinth on his tours. They advertised their appearances in local and Church newspapers, and their talks centred on themes such as the 'wanderer question', the 'vagabond question' or the 'hostel question'.¹¹⁹ The aim was twofold: to convince the audiences that the 'knights of the road' [Sw. *landsvägsriddare*] were worthy of social and missionary efforts, and to persuade the parishes, municipalities and other local actors to assume responsibility for administering these efforts or give money to the social work of the Church.¹²⁰ Eligibility thus lay in worthiness; only the 'worthy poor' could be the focus of church interventions. However, 'vagabonds', 'vagrants' and 'tramps' were generally not included in the worthy categories; on the contrary, they were routinely defined and approached as deviant poor.¹²¹ To legitimize Protestant social work targeting these groups, the boundaries around the community of value must shift. Melander's and Flinth's view of the 'unworthy' as potentially 'worthy' may be compared to the opinions of Swedish clergy in the nineteenth century. Exploring rural poor relief in 1829, Skoglund asserts that Swedish priests generally had a negative view of the poor, whom they described as idle and irresponsible.¹²² Petersson, however, nuances the picture as she traces two perspectives evolving parallelly during the nineteenth century: one repressive and controlling, and one that proscribed merciful and moral uplifting through Christian acts of love.¹²³ Exploring local attitudes to

vagrancy and the treatment of 'vagrants' in the 1830s, Johnsson also shows how local officials', priests' or parish meeting's evaluations of a poor person's status could be decisive for her welfare.¹²⁴ Without overstating the significance of individual agency in historical processes, the Church of Sweden's decentralized structure allowed local agents to exercise their power as they saw fit if only they found support in the scriptures, national church regulation, and legislation. In the early twentieth century, before the social field was consolidated and coherent procedures were lacking, well-established individuals like Melander and Flinth working for an institution like *SKD* could also have much influence. They thus formed part of the Stockholm-based bourgeois network that Lundquist named the Poor Relief People, whose work was integral to the early development of social welfare policies in Sweden.¹²⁵

Melander's and Flinth's efforts paid off moderately well; the local interest in work hostels grew, and several were opened.¹²⁶ The hostels in Gävle and the small town of Götene are representative of the period's patchy and locally organized social field; the Gävle hostel formed part of the public poor relief administration while the local clergy ran the one in Götene. According to Flinth, the Götene community referred all 'wanderers' there, thus ridding the parish of the detrimental system of almsgiving.¹²⁷ He upheld this institution as a role model and a token of success for *SKD*'s 'mission', and he anticipated the swift development of a network of hostels in every parish.¹²⁸ In an enthusiastic report from Västergötland County in April 1916, Flinth declared that the 'hostel question' was almost solved and that the local community supported the Church's efforts.¹²⁹ The support seems reasonable considering that voluntary-driven work hostels would not impose heavy tax burdens on local populations. But Flinth seldom used finance as an argument. Instead, he referred to the system's efficiency; parish-driven work hostels formed a *rational* solution to the 'problem of vagrancy'. In December 1916, however, Flinth complained that the work was not developing fast enough, so he again went to study Dalhoff's network of work hostels in Denmark.¹³⁰ He also sought inspiration from Norway, where priests successfully had established Protestant social work, targeting groups defined as 'deviant' (see below).¹³¹ It seems, however, that the leadership of *SKD* and Deacon Flinth disagreed on the importance of work hostels in solving the 'problem of vagrancy'. In late December 1916, Flinth wrote to the Archbishop, disappointed that the Social Committee had ignored the 'wanderer question' in their autumn meeting. He was also alarmed that the Archbishop had suggested that Flinth should step down from his assignment.¹³² Despite Flinth's efforts to persuade the Archbishop and *SKD*, they terminated his assignment in 1917. He dedicated the rest of his life to missionary, welfare and educational work for Swedish seamen. The Social Committee continued working with socially marginalized groups in the 1920s but no longer targeted 'vagrants' and 'vagabonds'.¹³³

Managing the borders of the community of value – guarding the boundaries of belonging

Flinth's and Melander's rhetoric centred on confirming the affiliation of the target groups to justify their inclusion in the Church's social work and, in effect, in local communities of value. They described potential clients as *belonging*: 'Through baptism, the stray have once been incorporated into the body of the community. They are also children of the

congregation'.¹³⁴ Nevertheless, there were limits to the boundaries of belonging; people perceived as falling outside of the Church's responsibility were not legitimate relief targets. In 1922, the Free Church Pastor Sundberg approached the Social Committee with a proposal to establish missionary work for the nation's 'Gypsies' [Sw. *zigenare*], following the Norwegian example.¹³⁵ In Norway, the priests Eilert Sundt (1817–1875) and Jakob Walnum (1871–1925) had formulated and implemented the Norwegian state's policies targeting Romani people ('omstreifere' or 'tater').¹³⁶ Assimilative interventions were developed and implemented within missionary frameworks in Finland, England, Germany and Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century.¹³⁷ The Norwegian model centred on mandatory care of children and (forced) labour camps for adults.¹³⁸ Sundberg viewed these interventions as expressions of care that the Church of Sweden should also extend to the Swedish 'Gypsy' population.¹³⁹ SKD investigated the matter but decided not to establish any particular 'Gypsy mission', partly due to the problem of differentiation; how could they establish who belonged to the Church and the nation and who were foreigners, probably belonging to the Roman Catholic faith?¹⁴⁰ This was a topical question. The Swedish police and the Social authorities launched investigations to differentiate between 'zigenare' and 'tattare', all of whom had been called 'zigenare' [Eng. 'Gypsies'] until around 1900. 'Zigenare' were identified as foreigners and 'tattare' as part of the Swedish population. Both are today included in the Swedish national minority of the Roma.¹⁴¹ Using the framework of Bridget Anderson, these differentiations signify a border drawn around an ideal community of value. 'Gypsies' in Sweden were not included among the 'worthy poor' and thus not identified as a target group of SKD's interventions, while 'tattare' were already considered targets of various interventions.¹⁴² Indeed, attracting the attention of missionaries might result in increased vulnerability and discrimination, but being identified as a target group also implied being acknowledged as a legitimate receiver of (conditioned) relief.¹⁴³ Put otherwise, the boundaries of belonging were drawn based on ideas concerning religion, ethnicity and the right of residence [*hemortsrätt*].¹⁴⁴ With the establishment of diaconal and missionary activities targeting different groups in the country, SKD contributed to the drawing of boundaries between 'belonging' and 'foreign' categories within the nation. The proposed interventions aimed at previously dismissed groups like 'wanderers', 'vagabonds', 'tramps' and 'vagrants', but in the 1920s, they did not include Romani groups identified as 'zigenare'.

Concluding remarks

The Church of Sweden's social and moral influence over people had waned by the twentieth century, but, in many instances, the Church still owned the Social Question at the local level. The Church was hence not a homogenous actor. Still, *Diakonistyrelsen's* (SKD) establishment in 1910 was an effort to unify the Church and create coherency in various areas, Protestant social work being one of them. The article studies SKD's approach to the 'problem of vagrancy', specifically the deputy secretary John Melander's and the deacon Josef Flinth's work. Melander and Flinth formulated arguments and developed activities targeting different poor and mobile men categories, among them 'vagrants' and 'wanderers'. With inspiration from Germany and Denmark, they argued that it was a duty of the Church to assume responsibility for these 'lost' children of the community who,

thanks to a combination of social and moral reform, would be able to *rise up and walk* again. Their inclusion of the mobile poor into the community redrew the boundaries between the 'worthy' and the 'unworthy' poor.

Bridget Anderson has demonstrated that the boundaries between social categories are changeable and porous; people and groups once defined as legitimate recipients of aid may slip out of the 'worthy' class and vice versa. The different categories are not straightforward binaries (like included-excluded) but define each other through shifting relations. Protestant social reformers' arrangements in the decades around 1900 managed these boundaries via interventions defined as 'self-to-self-help'. In that sense, their efforts were akin to those of contemporary liberal voluntary charities and associations. The community of value was at stake, a community with borders permeated by ideas and norms attached to poverty and work, gender and ethnicity. Melander and Flinth defined the social work on the borderline of the community of value as part of a Christian calling. The activities – differentiation, supervision and treatment of the 'deviant poor' – were productive contributors to the expansion of the social area in the early twentieth century. Given the plastic character of this area, individual agents were able to develop interventions targeting the vast number of poor, unemployed and mobile people. Regardless of the framework, the activities departed from moralizing approaches to the poor and poverty. *SKD's* efforts to solve the 'problem of vagrancy' through Protestants social work was thus in unison with the actions of other social work agents in the early twentieth century. In the succeeding decades, however, the Swedish welfare state with its universal approach developed fastly. Policies based on moralizing attitudes and differentiations between 'worthy' and 'unworthy' recipients were gradually abandoned. Hence, *SKD's* contribution to the formation of social welfare policies in Sweden was ambitious but somewhat limited. Notably, it was formulated within a hierarchic and patriarchic social order soon dismantled in the establishment of a democratic welfare state.

Notes

1. Olsson and Ekdahl, *Klass i rörelse*; Bengtsson, 'Swedish Sonderweg in Question'.
2. Olsson and Ekdahl, *Klass i rörelse*; Wisselgren, *Samhällets kartläggare*; Jordansson and Vammen, eds., *Charitable Women*; Lundquist, *Fattigvårdsfolket*; Jansdotter, *Ansikte mot ansikte*; Taussi Sjöberg and Vammen, eds., *På tröskeln till välfärden* and Petersson, 'Den farliga underklassen'.
3. Population registration was a church responsibility until 1990.
4. On representativity, see Södling, *Oreda i skapelsen*, 36.
5. Johnsson, "Vårt fredliga samhälle"; Ohlsson Al Fakir, *Svenska kyrkans förhållande till romer och resande*.
6. Cf Melander, 'Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse'.
7. 'Det lagstadgade och det frivilliga', *Församlingsbladet*, no. 24 (1916).
8. Today this kind of work is administered by the national church secretariat in Uppsala. *SKD* was thus the first agency that organized and coordinated the Church on a national level.
9. Among these were the Committee on Church Art, the Congregation Committee, the Social Committee, the Committee on Spiritual Care of the Army (Military Committee), the Radio Committee, the Film Bureau, the Deaf-and-Dumb Board and the Committee on Spiritual Preparedness [Sw. *Utskottet för kyrklig konst*, *Församlingsutskottet*, *Sociala utskottet*, *Utskottet för den andliga vården vid armén (militärsutskottet)*, *Radioutskottet*, *Filmbyrån*, *Dövstumrådet*, and *Utskottet för den andliga beredskapen*].

10. Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 14 f, 151.
11. On SKD's first secretaries, see Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 151–163.
12. Melander, *Tro och kärlek*, 349, 353.
13. *Ibid.*, 350. Sw. '... mer än ett socialt nödtillstånd, den är ett moraliskt, en själfara av allvarligaste slag.' The priest's meeting [*Prästmötet*] was held every 6th year (nowadays every 4th year).
14. The other members were K. J. Ekman, Judge of Appeal and member of the Swedish Parliament (First Chamber) (Ekman also served as vice deputy secretary), and C.A.R. Carlman, first pastor at Långholmen prison. Styrelseprotokoll 8/121,910 A1a:1 DirA DA RA.
15. Styrelseprotokoll 23/111,911, § 27 A1a:1 DirA DA RA.
16. SKDs gamla arkivförteckning, 22, DA RA.
17. In 1932, SKD sold the workhouse *Björknäs* to *Svenska diakonsällskapet*. Köpekontrakt den 1 November 1932, F4:1 SocU DA RA.
18. For reasons unknown to me, there was no meeting in 1923.
19. Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 190 f.
20. I have collected the source material mainly from Direktorns Arkiv (DirA) and the Social Committee (SocU) in the archive *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse* (DA) at the National Archives (RA).
21. Cf Gunnarsson, *Kyrkan, nazismen och demokratin*, 36.
22. I have done systematic searches in the journal *Församlingsbladet* vol. 1911–1916, in Sigtnastiftelsen's archive of newspaper cuttings, the National Library's digitized newspaper database and national and international library catalogues (Libris and WorldCat). I have used search words like 'vagrancy', 'worker's colonies', 'workhouse', 'work hostel', *Björknäs*, John Melander, *Arbejde Adler*, Nikolai Daalhoff, *Bethel*, von Bodelschwingh etc.
23. Iacovetta and Mitchinson, 'Social history and case files', 3.
24. Jansdotter, *Ansikte mot ansikte*.
25. Green, *Responding to secularization*.
26. Lundqvist, *Fattigvårdsfolket*.
27. Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*.
28. Lundqvist, *Fattigvårdsfolket*; Hedin, *Ett moraliskt dilemma*.
29. Hedin, *Ett moraliskt dilemma*.
30. Sjögren, *Fattigvård och folkuppfostran*.
31. Midré, *Bot, bedring eller brød*; Geremek, *Poverty: a history*; Althammer, Gestricht and Gründler, *The Welfare State*.
32. Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 187, 190–191, 200.
33. Södling, *Oreda i skapelsen*.
34. Anderson, *Us and them?*
35. *Ibid.*; Cf Feldman, 'Migrants, Immigrants and Welfare'; Lucassen, Willems and Cottaar, *Gypsies*.
36. Cf Ekström, *Svenska kyrkan i utveckling*, 21.
37. Bexell, *Sveriges kyrkohistoria* 7, 166.
38. Fastborg, *Diakoni i Lappland*, 26.
39. Green, *Responding to Secularization*; Jordansson and Vammen, eds. *Charitable Women and Taussi Sjöberg and Vammen, eds., På tröskeln till välfärden*; Jansdotter, *Ansikte mot ansikte*; Wejryd, *Svenska kyrkans syföreningar*.
40. Anton Niklas Sundberg, Archbishop 1870–1900, Otto Centerwall, Supervisor of *Samariterhemmet* in Uppsala, and John Melander were among those leading church actors that saw the Social Question as fundamental to future church work. Melander, *Kyrkan och klasskampen*; Centerwall *Inre missionens sociala betydelse*; Bexell *Sveriges kyrkohistoria* 7, 174; Gellerstam, *Från fattigvård till församlingsvård*, 3.
41. Holmström, *Om kyrklig fattigvård*, 88–90.

42. Gellerstam, *Från fattigvård till församlingsvård*, 11 f. There was no formal opposition between 'the Church' and 'society'; a majority of the Swedish people belonged to the Church. Södling, *Oreda i skapelsen*, 35. Of just over 5 million inhabitants in 1900, less than 64,000 were registered as other/alien faiths, *Statistisk årsbok för Sverige*. Membership of the State Church or another religious denomination remained obligatory until 1951.
43. Protokoll A1:1 SocU DA RA.
44. Cf Johnsson, *Vårt fredliga samhälle*.
45. New Vagrancy legislation came into force in Sweden in 1886; it remained in some form until 1965 but was critiqued and revised throughout this period. Cf Edman, 'Lösdrivarlagen'; Johnsson *Vårt fredliga samhälle*; Lis and Soly, *Worthy Efforts*; Montesino *Zigenarfrågan*; Wallentin, *Lösdriveri och industrialism*; Anderson, *Us and Them?*; Lucassen, Willems and Cottaar, *Gypsies*.
46. Anderson, *Us and Them?* 31.
47. The number of people sentenced yearly to forced labour decreased from 1,342 to 937 between 1886/1890 and 1911/1915, and 50% in the following five years. *Historisk statistik för Sverige*. In 1910, 2,246 persons were arrested for vagrancy and begging in Sweden, *Statistisk årsbok för Sverige*.
48. Sigtunastiftelsens klipparkiv, 07 f 'Tiggaväsendet'; *Förbundet för Kristet Samhällsliv*, missive to the King F1:4 SocU DA RA.
49. Cf Malkki, *The Need to Help*.
50. Sw. 'för att på bästa möjliga sätt befrämja vårt släktes sanna väl'. Melander, *Vår tids sociala fråga*, 5. Cf Lagerlöf Nilsson, 'Kyrkan som nationens grund'.
51. Anderson, *Us and Them?*
52. Styrelseprotokoll 8/121,910 A1a:1 DirA DA RA.
53. Protokoll 3/1 1911 A1:1 SocU DA RA; Styrelseprotokoll 7/2 1911, 30/3 1911 A1a:1 DirA DA RA. Pamphlets: Melander, *Våra bröder* (1910); *Vår tids sociala fråga* (1907); *Kyrkan och klasskampen* (1911); Centerwall *Inre missionens sociala betydelse* (1908). The Social Committee strongly supported a continued procurement and distribution of Christian social literature. Protokoll 16/111,911 A1:1 SocU DA RA.
54. Protokoll 16/111,911 A1:1 SocU DA RA.
55. Hedin *Ett liberalt dilemma*; Wisselgren, *Samhällets kartläggare*; Vammen and Janfelt *Den privat-offentliga gränsen*; Lundqvist, *Fattigvårdsfolket*; Sjögren, *Fattigvård och folkuppfostran*. Cf Montelius, *Samarbete*.
56. Markkola, 'Diakonissan mellan'; 'Med svenska fattigvårdsmän till Norge' *N.D.A* 19/6 1919. Protokoll 20/5 1919 A1:1 SocU DA RA.
57. Melander, *Reseminnen*; 'John B Melander', *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*; Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 153–154; Fastborg *Diakoni i Lappland*, 39. Melander collected published reports from Nordic institutions dedicated to 'vagabonds' and 'vagrants' F 4:3 SocU DA RA.
58. 'Arbetarkoloni', *Nordisk familjebok*. Similar institutions for women existed, with tasks considered suitable, that is, work they could perform in or near the home.
59. Snyder, 'The Bodelschwingh Initiative'.
60. Von Koch, *Hem och anstalter*, 19–32; 'Arbetarkoloni', *Nordisk familjebok*.
61. Althammer, "Transnational Expert Discourse on Vagrancy".
62. SOU 1923:2.
63. Melander, *Våra bröder*, 27.
64. See above 26.
65. von Koch, *Hem och anstalter*, 3. 'Lösdrifvaren. . . [eller] luffaren är en parasit på samhället. Han är en uteslutande tärande samhällsmedlem, då han i regel icke arbetar för sitt eget eller andras uppehälle.'
66. Melander, *Våra bröder*, 26.
67. *Ibid.*, 32.
68. One of Melander's arguments for establishing a network of work hostels was that deacons in training needed institutions for developing their skills. *Ibid.*, 33.
69. Seip, *Sosialhjelpstaten blir til*, 26–27.

70. Purdue, "Contested Role of the Workhouse".
71. Geremek, *Europeiska fattigdomens betydelse*, 244 ff.
72. Flinth t. Pastor, (n.d.) B2 SocU DA RA.
73. Stenvik, *Om socialt förfall*; Stenviks yttrande F1:4 SocU DA RA.
74. Dalhoff, *Landsforeningen Arbejde Adler*, 16 f; Melander, 'Stå upp och gå!'.
75. Cf King James Bible, Acts of Apostles 3:6; Matthew 9:5; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26.
76. Melander, 'Stå upp och gå!'.
77. Melander was a driving force in the establishment in 1919 of education for laypersons [Sw. *Lekmannaskolan*].
78. Fastborg, *Diakoni i Lappland*, 40.
79. Centerwall, *Inre missionens sociala betydelse*.
80. Hedin *Ett liberalt dilemma*; Wisselgren, *Samhällets kartläggare*; Lundqvist, *Fattigvårdsfolket*; Sjögren, *Fattigvård och folkuppfostran*.
81. Von Koch, *Hem och anstalter*.
82. SOU 1923:2. The problem of differentiation dominated the debate concerning the 1885 Vagrancy Act until the 1960s, see Montesino, *Zigenarfrågan* 90 f.
83. 'Betänkande med förslag', 5–6 F1:1 SocU DA RA. The organizations and associations were: *Centralförbundet för socialt arbete*, *Centrala hjälpbyrån*, *Diakonanstalten*, *Diakonissanstalten*, *SKD's Social Committee*, *Frälsningsarmén*, *Föreningen för välgörenhetens ordnande*, *Hedbergiska stiftelsen*, *Hemmet för elända*, *Metodistkyrkans sociala mission*, *Skyddsvärnet*, *Stockholms centrala diakoniråd*, *Stockholms kristliga nykterhets- och sedlighetsförbund*, *Stockholms stads asylstyrelse*, *Svenska fattigvårdsförbundet*, *Svenska sällskapet för nykterhet och folkuppfostran*, *Föreningen Söderhem*.
84. Melander, *Våra bröder*, 13–14.
85. Von Bodelschwingh was well known among social reformers across Europe. Snyder, 'The Bodelschwingh Initiative', 155. Flinth t. Biskop 29/121,916 B2 SocU DA RA; Dalhoff, *Landsforeningen Arbejde adler*.
86. Flinth t. Biskop 29/121,916 B2 SocU DA RA.
87. Flinth t. Ekman 1/7 1913 B2 SocU DA RA.
88. See above 70.
89. Von Koch, *Hem och anstalter*, 57.
90. Sw. 'Genom att ... samla vandrareströmmen i vissa fåror och leda den genom dessa kontrollstationer är det möjligt att åstadkomma en något så när riktig sortering och föra de olika personerna in under den behandling, som passar för dem.' Melander, *Våra bröder*, 14.
91. *Ibid.*, 29–30.
92. Melander, 'Stå upp och gå!', 7, *Våra bröder*, 13–14, *Bruks- och grufförvaltningarna*, 157; E2:1 SocU DA RA; *Församlingsbladet*, 1911:23, 25; 1912:11, 12, 16; 1915:42, 43.
93. Åmark, *Hundra år av välfärdspolitik*, 66–70; Unga, *Socialdemokratin och arbetslöshetsfrågan*; Svensson, *När järnarbetare hanterar spaden*.
94. Eriksson, *Arbete till varje pris*, 263.
95. Svensson, *När järnarbetare hanterar spaden*, 91–92, 201; Unga, *Socialdemokratin och arbetslöshetsfrågan*, 132.
96. Ekman t. Flinth 6/121,914 E2:1 SocU DA RA. Flinth cooperated with *Fångvårdsstyrelsens centrala byrå* and *Skyddsvärnet*, the Swedish poor relief association's section for 'rescue work'.
97. Losman, *Förvaltningshistorik*, ch. 37.
98. The priest often contacted Flinth when a soon-to-be-released prisoner needed help finding employment, but sometimes the job seekers themselves would reach out. Broman t. Flinth 23/2 1914 E2:1 SocU DA RA.
99. Formulär E2:1 SocU DA RA.
100. E.g. two from a priest at a forced labour institution in Karlskrona, 5/4 and 27/7 1916. E2:1 SocU DA RA.
101. E.g. in *Församlingsbladet* 1915:12:42, 43; 1916:13:21. Cf Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 149.

102. Local agents were people working in the congregation or in businesses and industries. Flinth t. Sjöstedt, (n.d.); Flinth t. Blossberg [?] 8/5 1914. B2 SocU DA RA.
103. Flinth t. Lindberg 4/7 1914; Flinth t. Lybeck 2/2 1915; Flinth t. Pettersson 3/6 1912 B2 SocU DA RA; Fängelsepastorn to Flinth 6/3 1914 E2:1 SocU DA RA.
104. Flinth t. Falk 7/5 1914; Flinth t. kyrkoherde 20/7 1915 B2 SocU DA RA
105. Flinth t. Bouvin 29/4 1912; Flinth t. Lybeck 2/2 1915; Flinth t. [?] (n.d.) 1912; Flinth t. Falk 7/5 1914; Flinth t. kyrkoherde 20/7 1915 B2 SocU DA RA.
106. Eng t. Flinth 25/111,915; Eliason t. SKDs byrå 12/5 1915 E2:1 SocU DA RA.
107. Eliason t. SKDs byrå, 12/5 1915 E2:1 SocU DA RA.
108. Göteborgs nya verkstadsaktiebolag t. SKD 23/111,915; Jägmästaren t. Flinth 26/8 1915; Ryholms gård t. Flinth 20/2 1915 E2:2 SocU DA RA.
109. A1:2 SocU DA RA. See also Södling, *Oreda i skapelsen*, passim; Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 192–201.
110. Flinth t. Ekman 1/6 1913 B2 SocU DA RA.
111. Flinth t. Andrén 13/2 1914 B2 SocU DA RA.
112. Eng t. Flinth 25/1 1913; 18/2 1914 E2:1 SocU DA RA.
113. See above 110.
114. Flinth t. Hutberg [?] (n.d.) B2 SocU DA RA.
115. Ibid.. By 1913, Flinth had visited seven Swedish provinces, enrolled ca. 200 employers and secured funding for *Björknäs* and his work. At a 'Björknäs evening' in Gävle, SEK 50 were collected. Another tour resulted in a total amount of SEK 125:74, a lot of money at that time. Flinth declared the incomes in *Församlingsbladet*. Clemmensson [?] t. Flinth 17/2 1914; Crona t. Flinth 25/1 1915 E2:1 SocU DA RA; Flinth to Ahlberg 17/3 1914. B 2 SocU DA RA.
116. Flinth t. Olander 19/3 1914; Flinth t. Lindgren 13/111,916; Flinth t. Bring [?] 14/111,916 B2 SocU DA RA.
117. Flinth t. Falk 7/5 1914; Flinth t. Thysell 28/5 1914 B2 SocU DA RA.
118. From 1917 the service continued under the administration of *Stadsmissionen* in Stockholm. Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 185.
119. Advertisements appeared in e.g. *Församlingsbladet* 16/6 1911; *Göteborgs aftonblad* 7/9 1912; *Kalmar* 11/4 1913; *Dalpilen* 5/121,913, and *Dagens nyheter* 28/101,916.
120. See *Dalpilen* 9/121,913; Bergqvist t. Flinth, 20/9 1916 E2:1 SocU DA RA; Melander, *Våra bröder*.
121. Cf Althammer, Gestricht and Gründler, *The Welfare State*.
122. Skoglund, *Fattigvården på den svenska landsbygden*.
123. Petersson, *Den farliga underklassen*, 260.
124. Johnsson, *Vårt fredliga samhälle*, 44.
125. See above 26.
126. Flinth t. Posse, 4/101,916 B2 SocU DA RA.
127. Flinth t. Fredholm 23/3 1914 B2 SocU DA RA.
128. Flinth t. Lindberg 8/7 1914; Flinth t. Olander 19/3 1914 B2 SocU DA RA.
129. Flinth t. Österdahl 26/4 1916 B2 SocU DA RA.
130. Flinth t. Östergren 2/111,916; Flinth t. Lindgren 13/111,916; Flinth t. Svensson 16/111,916; Flinth t. Biskop 29/121,916 B2 SocU DA RA.
131. Flinth t. Eger 4/1 1917 B2 SocU DA RA.
132. See above 86.
133. The Social Committee met less often during the 1920s, and during the interwar period, it focused on e.g. the seaman's mission, Protestant social ethics, 'women's issues' and sexual ethics A1:2 SocU DA RA. Cf Santell, *Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse*, 156–159, 186–201; Södling, *Oreda i skapelsen*, passim.
134. Sw. 'Genom dopet ha även de vilsekomna en gång inlemmats i församlingskroppen. Äfven de äro församlingens barn'. Melander, *Stå upp och gå!*, 2. Cf Melander, *Våra bröder*; Ström's 'Inledningsanförande' April 1927 F1:4 SocU DA RA.
135. Protokoll 17/3 1922 A1:2 SocU DA RA.

136. Rosvoll, Lien and Brustad. 'Å bli dem kvit'. 'Omstreifermisjonen' was the official name given to this work in Norway. The Swedish seamen's missionary Richard Gothe called Flinth 'omstreiferdiakonen' Gothe t. Flinth 1916 E2:1 SocU DA RA.
137. Thesleff, *Report on the Gypsy problem*. See Acton, *Gypsy politics*; Mayall, *Gypsy-travellers*; Fraser, *The Gypsies*; Crowe, *Gypsies of Russia*.
138. Departementenes sikkerhets- og serviceorganisasjon, *Assimilering og motstand*.
139. Sundberg t. SKD 16/3 1922 (copy) F1:1 SocU DA RA; Sundberg, Otto. "Varifrån komma de?", *Missionsförbundet*, no. 22 (1921), 344–347. With some involvement of SKD, Sundberg established the Freechurch mission *Zigenarmissionen* in the 1940s. See Ohlsson Al Fakir, *Svenska kyrkans förhållande*, 54 f.
140. Pehrsson t. SocU 21/3 1922 F1:1 SocU DA RA.
141. SOU 1923:3; Montesino 2002, ch. 5; Al Fakir 2019.
142. They were mentioned in the childcare, school and poor relief legislation and hence did not require specific interventions, it was assumed. Pehrsson t. SocU 21/3 1922 F1:1 SocU DA RA. Cf Björck, *Tattare*.
143. Ohlsson Al Fakir, *Svenska kyrkans förhållande*.
144. Establishing the right of residence was the priests' task. According to the 1847 Poor Relief legislation, a resident was entitled to poor relief after three years of dwelling in a parish without receiving relief. The parish meeting [*sockenstämma*] was not allowed to refuse entrance to a newcomer but could reject relief if the newcomer's right of residence was not acknowledged. In 1871, the poor relief harshened, enhancing the right of the parish at the expense of the relief-seeking individual. *Hemortsrätten* continued to be a subject of dispute in the early 20th century. Widén, *Om hemortsrätt*; Wagnsson, "Fattigvården och processerna"; Sigtunastiftelsens klipparkiv. Avd. 07 f) *Fattigvård, socialvård, socialhjälp*, – 1932. Cf Ohlsson Al Fakir, *Svenska kyrkans förhållande*; Losman, *Förvaltningshistorik*, ch. 20:2.

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