Introduction

Railway Environments and Landscapes

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This issue of *Fabrik & Bolig* – Factories and Dwellings – is inspired by the recent publication of three books on Danish and Swedish railway environments, as well as by the shared concern among experts regarding the scale of preservation efforts – or, rather, the lack thereof. Most listed railway buildings are isolated buildings that do not say much about the main function of the railway: Connecting different places. You could say that railways have become one, big cohesive system.

The books are reviewed, in Danish, at the back of this issue. One of the main points emerging out of the books is that we must look at the wider landscape, and that this can be done so on different levels. This issue of Fabrik & Bolig is a modest follow-up to these books which presents several overviews of the research history on railway environments in Denmark and Sweden, as well as the preservation efforts and by providing examples of different railway environments in Denmark, Finland and Sweden.

The focus is here on the built environment, and on the natural environment in one of articles, but it is worth remembering that there are historically a number of approaches to railways. The American business historian Alfred D. Chandler has stressed how the American railroad companies pioneered the establishing of large organisations and bureaucracies for the planning and coordination of running the railways, and therefore as pioneers of large corporations themselves, which later came to dominate American business.[1] Others have characterised the middle of the 19th. century as the Railway Age.[2] The British-Venezuelan scholar, Charlotta Perez, specialising in technology and socio-economic development, likewise argues that the period lasting from 1829 to around 1875 was dominated by a techno-economic paradigm of steam and railways.[3] Especially in American historiography, a transport revolution has been seen as important for the economic growth of the USA, first with canals and later with railways. The railway has also been seen in relation to the city and urbanisation.[4] Common for most of the various perspectives is a focus on the early development, on the introduction of the railways, and thereby on the railways as innovations.

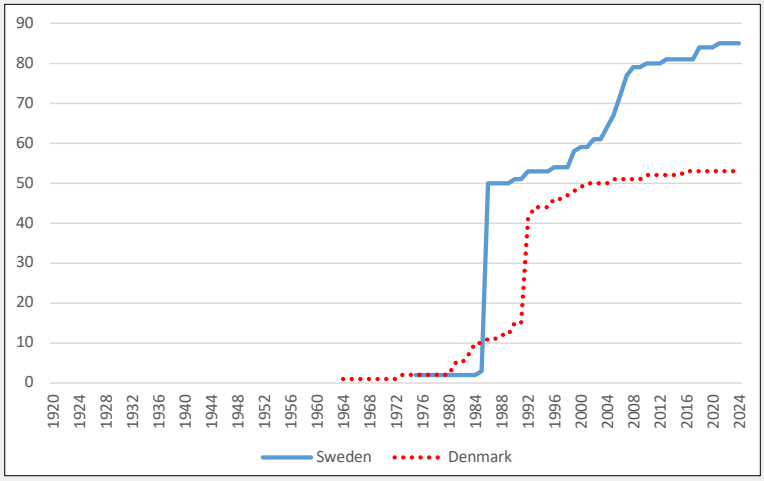
Another approach is to analyse railways as big systems and thereby laying a greater emphasis on the years around 1900, or as parts of 'mega-systems' as the Swedish historian of technology, Staffan Hansson, has done for the mining activities, the railway and electricity supply in Northern Sweden in the period 1880-1920, where each element is dependent on one another.[5]

Others have argued for the need to look not at innovations, but on how long the technology, the buildings and the rollingstock was in use, how long it lasted, and especially how it was renewed, repaired, improved and adapted for new requirements.[6] Many railways are still functional; some are closed, and new ones have been laid out. The railways of today, however, have little in common with the one inaugurated in 1829 between Manchester and Liverpool.

In architectural history, the interest has mostly centred on the station buildings as part of the revaluation of historicistic architecture.[7] This interest also included functional analyses of the station buildings.[8] The layout of early stations clearly reflected and supported a class society, as David Cannadine among others points out for Britain, and the same appears to hold true for Scandinavia.[9] In Sweden and Denmark, the passengers were likewise divided into three classes, not only in the wagons but also with different waiting rooms at the major stations. At the moment, we do not have a precise chronology of when the waiting rooms were amalgamated, but we know the second and first class in the trains was combined from 1934 in Denmark, and the third class was abolished in Sweden from 1956 on.

Another change which research has drawn attention to is the introduction of direct passenger transit through the stations to the platforms. This transit blocked by the ticket office and luggage room in the first generations of stations, meaning that passengers were directed to waiting rooms on the sides. Starting in the 1890's, the way through the stations became more direct and clearly planned.

On another level, terminals were changed into passthrough stations made possible by the laying out new tracks through, or along, the built-up area – in the case of Copenhagen along the former ramparts. An early example – also in a European context – is "the Connecting Line" (Sammanbindnings-Banan) in Stockholm from 1870, which required both bridgebuilding and tunnel construction. German examples include the central station in Hanover



Listed Railway Buildings in Denmark and Sweden. Source: Slots- og Kulturstyrelsen and Riksantikvarieämbetet.

from 1881, which additionally has subways linked to the platforms; the Stadtbahn stations in Berlin from 1882, and the Hauptbahnhof in Hamburg from 1906. In Denmark, the change occurred later with the rearrangement of the terminal in Viborg in 1896; the third central station, "Boulevardbanen", in Copenhagen from 1911, and finally the station in Randers in 1936.

Another change was the establishment of a second track which likely took place earlier in Denmark than in the other Nordic countries. For example, the line from Roskilde to Korsør was established in 1856, with the second track in use from 1900. But these changes, as well as the forms of the new embankments, has not been the subject of any research.

In England, there has been some research done on railway works such as Swindon, and an overview of railway goods sheds and warehouses. In the Nordic countries such work is still missing although some of the works have been documented.[10)]

There exists sketches of how railways made their impact on the landscape in the first years, especially with reference to romantic poets and critics like Wordsworth and Ruskin: *"Your railroad mound, vaster than the walls of Babylon – they brutally amputated every hill on their way"*. The planned construction of the railway embankment to Venice appears to have triggered Ruskin to write *The Stones of Venice,* which was published in 1851-53.[11)] According to the pioneering work, *The Making of the English Landscape,* from 1955 by the English historian W.G. Hoskins, who was in turn inspired by preceding romantic authors, the railways made a major imprint on the English landscape, but it is as though the Railways did not change after their introduction. The industrial archaeologist Barrie Trinder goes into more details in his book, *The Making of Industrial Landscape,* from 1981 and operates with a wider chronology, but the approach is basically the same as Hoskins'. Trinder distinguishes between the early wagonways (horse drawn with wooden rails) in the mining districts up until 1840, the breakthrough of the railways in the period 1830-50, and their development in the years 1850-1900. Besides the change of the landscape by the many embankments, bridges, cuttings and tunnels, Trinder underlines the creation of entire railway areas or quarters in the major cities with railway workshops, goods sheds, coal yards, locomotive depots, cattle docks, sorting sidings alongside the well-known viaducts, that carry the railway tracks through the English cities.[12)] One could also ask what kinds of industry were attracted by the railways, like the Burton-on-Trent breweries, or the impact of the railways on the local population.[13)]

The railways were also followed by gardens or parks, protective cultivation and kitchen gardens, at least it was so in Sweden, where this theme has been investigated.[14)]

While Hoskins and Trinder describes the impact of the railway on the landscape, the German-American critic, Wolfgang Schivelbusch, points to the change in perceptions of the landscape brought by the railway – among other things. The changes in perceiving the landscape, and the impact of different kinds of transportation, is also a central theme in the study of a local community in Scania by Henrik Ranby. Further the railway can be analysed as a symbol and as identity building.[15)]

All in all, there appears to be a general agreement within the historical literature on the importance of the railways in the middle of the 19th century, "the Age of Steam and Railways". The changes and effects of the railways around the beginning of the 20th century appears to be less valued in the general historical literature, although it is recognised. One can wonder why the period 1829-1875 and not the period 1875-1908 is called the Age of Steam and Railways. The extent to which the railway has changed the landscape is another question that could be explored. However, in this issue of *Fabrik & Bolig* we will not try to answer that question, but instead we will provide an overview of what has been written in Denmark and Sweden about railway history and especially railway landscapes, environments and buildings, and then restrict our self to three examples of railway environments seen through the eyes of an archaeologist, an art historian and a geographer.

LISTED RAILWAY ENVIRONMENTS IN DENMARK AND SWEDEN

Prior to wrapping up this introduction, giving an overview of listed railway environments in Denmark and Sweden may be of benefit to the reader, as it is possible to regard listing a type of history

An intercity train (IC3) at the mainline between Copenhagen and Korsør near Sorø. The line was established 1856 and extended to double track in 1900. The IC3 trainset was introduced in 1989 as a development of the IC-concept – intercity trains – introduced in Denmark in 1974. Photography by René Strandbygaard 2016.

writing. We will be omitting Finland as the protection of buildings and environments is organised differently, instead with planning as the main tool.[16)]

The listings in Denmark have been carried out since 1964, with Roskilde Station as the first, and Handest Station in 2016 as the latest. Most listings were passed in 1992-93 as a result of a review of the Danish State Railways (DSB) station buildings.[17)] In addition, the Copenhagen-Korsør railway line was designated as one of 25 national industrial monuments in 2007, which was only a recommendation to take care of the heritage with no legal consequences.

In Sweden, the listing started in 1975 with two stations: Vansbro from 1899 and Halsmo from 1858. As many as 47 listings were carried out in 1986 at the same time as the Nordic Journal of Settlement History and Built Heritage (Bebyggelseshistorisk Tidskrift) published an issue on railway environments. Later, several buildings have been listed, with Tjuls Station on Gotland in 2021 as the last for the time being.

There are currently 53 listings in Denmark and 85 listings in Sweden that include elements of railway environments. These are mainly station buildings, but there are also listed warehouses and a few examples of other building types such as signal posts and water towers.

In Denmark, two depots with associated turntables (in Roskilde and Viborg) and three locomotive workshops at the former central workshop in Aarhus, are protected. In addition, there are two porter's residences (portørboliger) at Vedbæk Station and six preserved railway bridges.

In Sweden there are three depots with turntables (in Kristinsstad, Nässjö and Nynäs), several bridges among others the Årstabron in Stockholm from 1929 designed by the architect Cyrillus Johansson, but like in Denmark it is difficult to find examples of listings of dwellings for railway personnel.

Chronologically, the buildings in Denmark cover the period 1847 to 1930; from the first railway station in what is now Denmark in Roskilde, to Nørrebro Station in Copenhagen.

In Sweden, the listings cover the period 1858 to 1935 from Fryksta Järnvägsstation and Göteborgs Centralstation to Falköpings Järnvägsstation.

In the last couple of years a few short railway lines have been listed. In Sweden, sections of two narrow track railways and the buildings along the Malmbanen (Ore Railway) in the far north, and in Denmark the short line to Aabenraa have been protected in 2024 as an ancient monument, with 11 shorter embankments registered since 2020. It is possible to see these events as the inception of a wider recognition that railways are more that station buildings. On the other hand, the railway works, warehouses and workers dwellings are still largely missing, not the least in the period after 1935.

As in architectural history the main interest in listing has been in the (early) station buildings.

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16) See Fabrik og Bolig 2023 which focus on the preservation of industrial heritage in the Nordic and Baltic countries.
17) cf. Fabrik og Bolig 1991, 2, p.17- 37.