

Scholars and Literati at the University of Lund (1666–1800)

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This note is a summary description of the set of scholars and literati who taught at the University of Lund from its inception in 1666 to the eve of the Industrial Revolution (1800).

1 THE UNIVERSITY

Despite the fact that the city of Lund was the first and most important center of learning in the whole of Scandinavia during the Middle Ages (Fehrman et al. 2005), it was not until 1666 that it was endowed with a university. This was when the Scania region became Swedish and the university was a way to help integrate the new region into the kingdom of Sweden. From the beginning, the University had four faculties: Law, Theology, Medicine and Arts (including Sciences). Besides these classics, there were also dancing, horse riding and fencing courses. The University of Lund remained small compared to its two famous neighbours, the University of Copenhagen and the University of Uppsala.

2 SOURCES

Delen and Weibull (1868) provide a complete list of the professors at the University of Lund (in Danish). Their publication also lists teachers acting at lower levels, such as adjunct professors and fellows (docents). Rarely does one come across such an exhaustive list of scholars acting from one institution. We often found additional biographical information on genealogical websites such as Geni or Geneanet. It is surprising to see the extent to which Swedish families (and Scandinavian families in general) were encoded on these websites. We also consulted Tersmeden (2015) for a list of rectors in English, and the thesis by Jensen (2018) which identified full professors in universities around the Baltic Sea.

3 SOME STATISTICS

Table 1 shows some descriptive statistics. There are 264 scholars and literati. The year of birth is known for 93.6% of them. The mean age at appointment is 29.7 years. This is low, but remember that we include in the sample the fellows (docents), who were generally combining some teaching with their studies. Longevity is slightly above 60 years on average. Similar to what we found for the Holy Roman Empire (Stelter, De la Croix, and Myrskylä 2021), longevity improves markedly in the last period.

The birth place is known for 97% of the people, thanks to the details in the main source and to the genealogical data. The median distance between the place of birth and Lund is 184km. It declined during the last period, suggesting perhaps that the University of Lund did not escape the tendency to become more local as time passes. Finally, 54.2% of the scholars have a Wikipedia page (in some language), and 84.8% of them have left a footprint in the catalogues of the libraries of the world, Worldcat, either by having published some work, or by having been the subject of published books

and articles. Those numbers are quite high and comparable with what we found for the University of Copenhagen (De la Croix 2021).

Period		nb.	% birth year	mean age	mean age	exp. age
Start	End	obs	known	at appoint.	at death	at death
1618	1685	36	94.4	37.5	60.7	60.6
1686	1733	42	95.2	32.4	63.1	64.4
1734	1800	186	93	27.6	66	67.9
1000	1800	264	93.6	29.7	64.8	60.3
			% birth place known	median distance birth-institution	% with Wikipedia	% with Worldcat
1618	1685		100	235	88.9	77.8
1686	1733		97.6	335	81	90.5
1734	1800		96.2	143	41.4	84.9
1000	1800		97.0	184	54.2	84.8

Table 1: Summary statistics by period

4 FIELDS

Figure 1 shows the relative importance of fields, broadly defined. The pie chart shows that humanities has a large share. It includes philosophy (theory and applications), Greek, history, poetry, economics, and literature. Law has a small share and sciences a relatively large one.

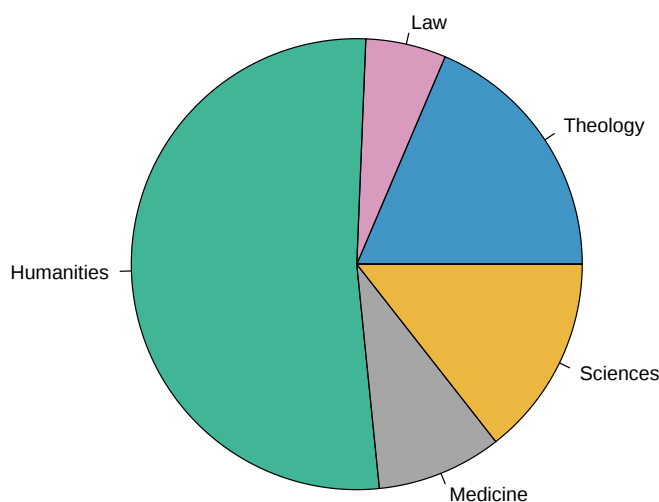


Figure 1: Broad fields at Lund

5 PLACE OF BIRTH

Figure 2 is a plot of the places of birth of all the scholars at the University of Lund, and shows the strong Scandinavian nature of this university. Notice that, in the last period, it recruited within Sweden exclusively. The few Germans and Danish scholars on the map were recruited before 1685.

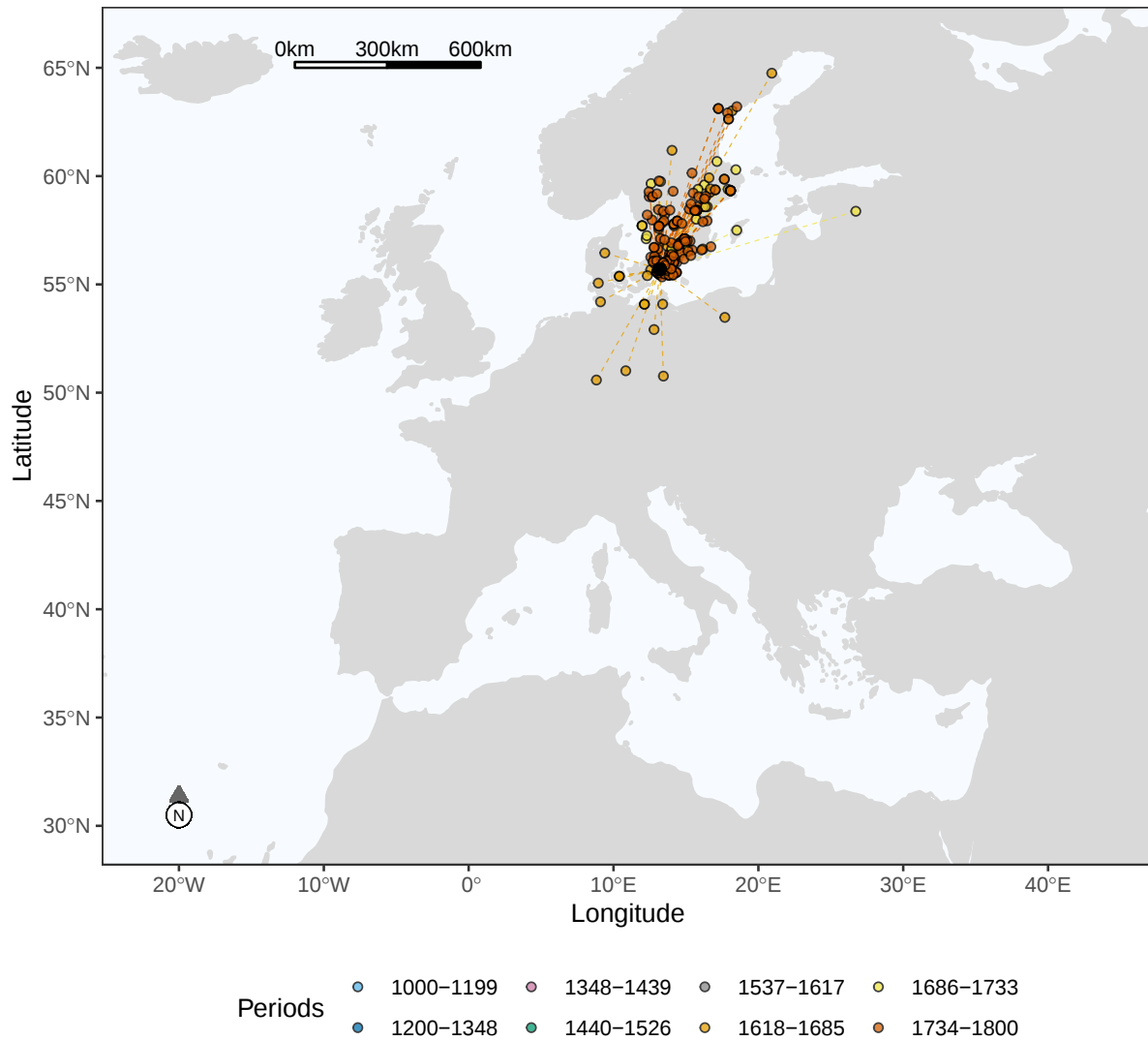


Figure 2: Places of birth of the scholars and literati at the University of Lund

6 HUMAN CAPITAL OF SCHOLARS AND LITERATI

For each person in the database we compute a heuristic human capital index, identified by combining information from Worldcat and Wikipedia using a principal component analysis. We also compute the notability of the University at each date by averaging the human capital of the scholars active in Lund 25 years before that date. Details are given in the Appendix. Figure 3 shows the names of all the scholars with a positive human capital index. The orange line plots the notability of the University.

The pattern shows a fast rise in notability at the time of the foundation of the University. A first peak is reached around 1700, followed by a decline. This decline did not last long, and the notability reaches its 1700 level again in 1750 and remains constant until 1800. In terms of levels, we are around 5 for most of the period, which is slightly below the level of the University of Copenhagen.

7 TOP 5 PROFESSORS

We now provide a brief overview of the five professors with the highest human capital index.

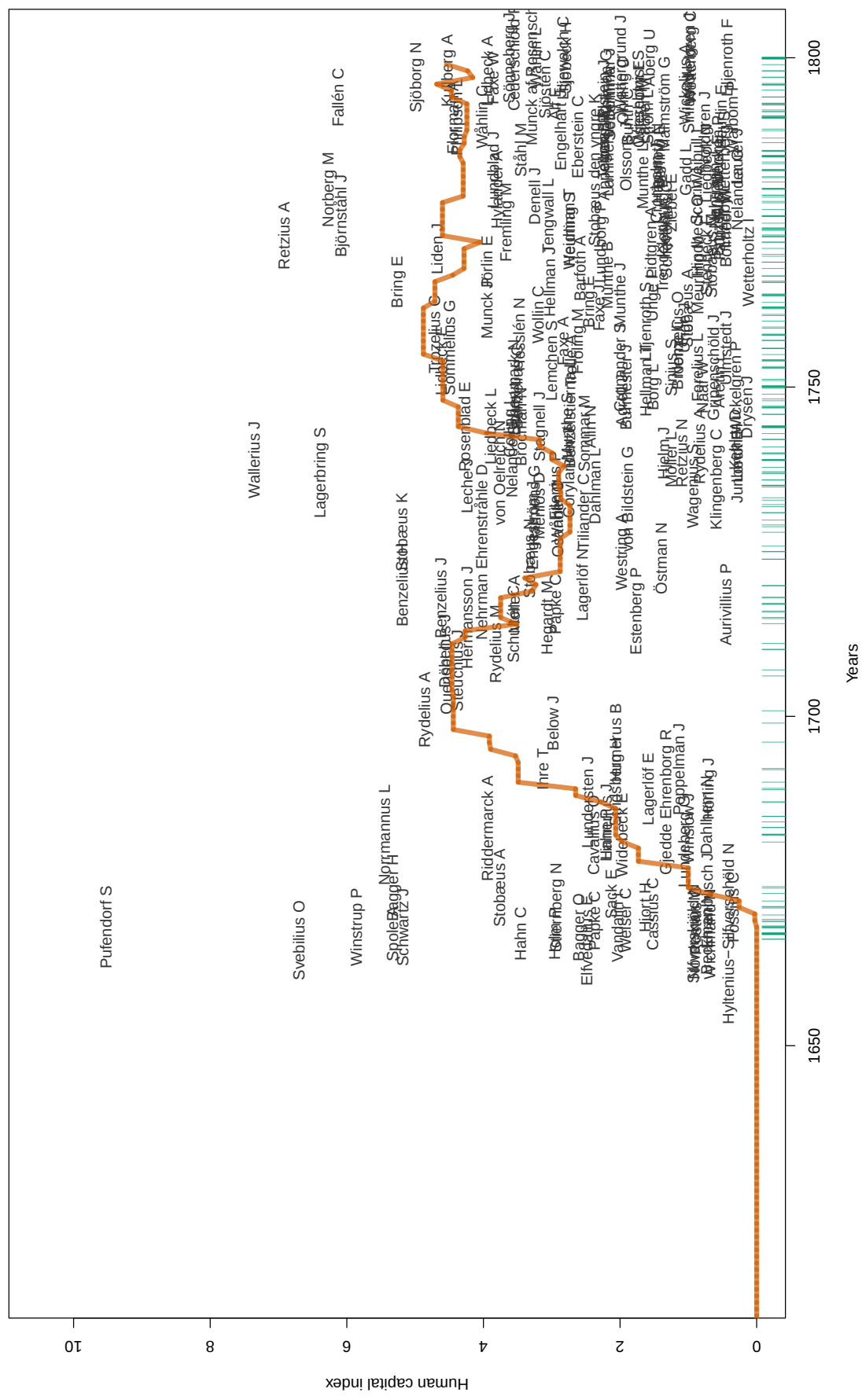


Figure 3: Famous scholars and university notability (orange)

Samuel Pufendorf (Zwönitz 1632 – Berlin 1694) was a German political philosopher, a forerunner of the Enlightenment. Trained at the Universities of Leipzig and of Jena, he obtained a chair at the University of Heidelberg. He was very critical of how the Holy Roman Empire functioned, and had to leave Heidelberg in 1668. The same year, he was called to Sweden, to strengthen the newly created University of Lund. He spent 20 fruitful years there. In 1672 he published his great work, *De iure naturae et gentium* (Of the Law of Nature and Nations), in which he argued that every individual has a right to equality and freedom, going against Aristotelian principles, as well as against Lutheran authorities, such as the Bishop of Lund. It was the first academic book printed in Lund to become famous in Europe.

Johan Gottschalk Wallerius (Stora Mellösa 1709 – Uppsala 1785) was a Swedish chemist. He studied sciences at the University of Uppsala between 1725 and 1731. He then moved to the University of Lund to study medicine, during which period he also taught at the University. Afterwards, he returned to Uppsala, where he obtained a chair in chemistry. He also became a member of several prestigious academies (Leopoldina in 1748, Stockholm in 1750, Saint-Petersburg in 1776). In Uppsala, he became famous for advances in agricultural chemistry.

Anders-Jahan Retzius (Kristianstad 1743 – Stockholm 1821) was a Swedish chemist, botanist and entomologist. He had to postpone his studies as a young man, due to financial difficulties, and instead opened and operated a pharmacy for several years. He started his academic career as docent of chemistry at Lund in 1766, and thereafter held various chairs of natural history and chemistry. Retzius was elected a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1782. He is considered as a disciple of the famous Swedish naturalist Carl von Linné (Linnaeus). He described many new species of insects and published fundamental work on their classification, besides general works on Swedish fauna and flora.

Olof Swebilius (Ljungby 1624 - Uppsala 1700) was a Swedish theologian. After a training at different prestigious universities in Europe, including Königsberg, Strasbourg and Paris, he occupied several positions at court and in the Church of Sweden, finishing his life as Archbishop of Uppsala. At Lund University, he taught theology for a short time. He appears in the list of top professors because of his book *Martin Luthers Lilla katekes med Katekesförklaring* (Simple explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's little catechism, with questions and answers) which was an immense success.

Sven Lagerbring (Bosjökloster 1707 – Lund 1787) was a Swedish historian, involved in teaching at the University of Lund from 1731 to 1771. In 1770, he was exempted from lecturing so that he could devote himself to the writing of the *History of the Kingdom of Sweden, From the Earliest Times to the Present*. He was also elected member of the Royal Danish Science Society in 1786. The University of Lund has displayed a bust of Lagerbring since 1907.

It is interesting to compare the top scholars we obtain with our measure of human capital with the top scholars mentioned in Fehrman et al. (2005). Fehrman et al. (2005) devote sections of their book to Andreas Rydelius and Sven Lagerbring, and show paintings of Samuel Pufendorf, Andreas Rydelius, Killian Stobaeus, and Mathias Norberg. Andreas Rydelius is missing from our top list because his human capital index is not high enough (he clearly appears on Figure 3 in 1700), although he is credited for having initiated a Socratic tradition in philosophy in the University of Lund which was long lasting. Wallerius and Swebilius did not stay long enough in Lund to deserve a long discussion in the book by Fehrman et al. (2005).

8 FAMILIES OF SCHOLARS

Among the professors included in our data, we counted 17 father-son pairs. Figure 4 shows the root of the genealogical tree of the Stobaeus family (data from www.geni.com), and highlights those who taught at Lund. The first generation was born to the pastor Jens Lauritzen Hedenstadiensis in the village of Stoby. They took the name Stobaeus from their birthplace.

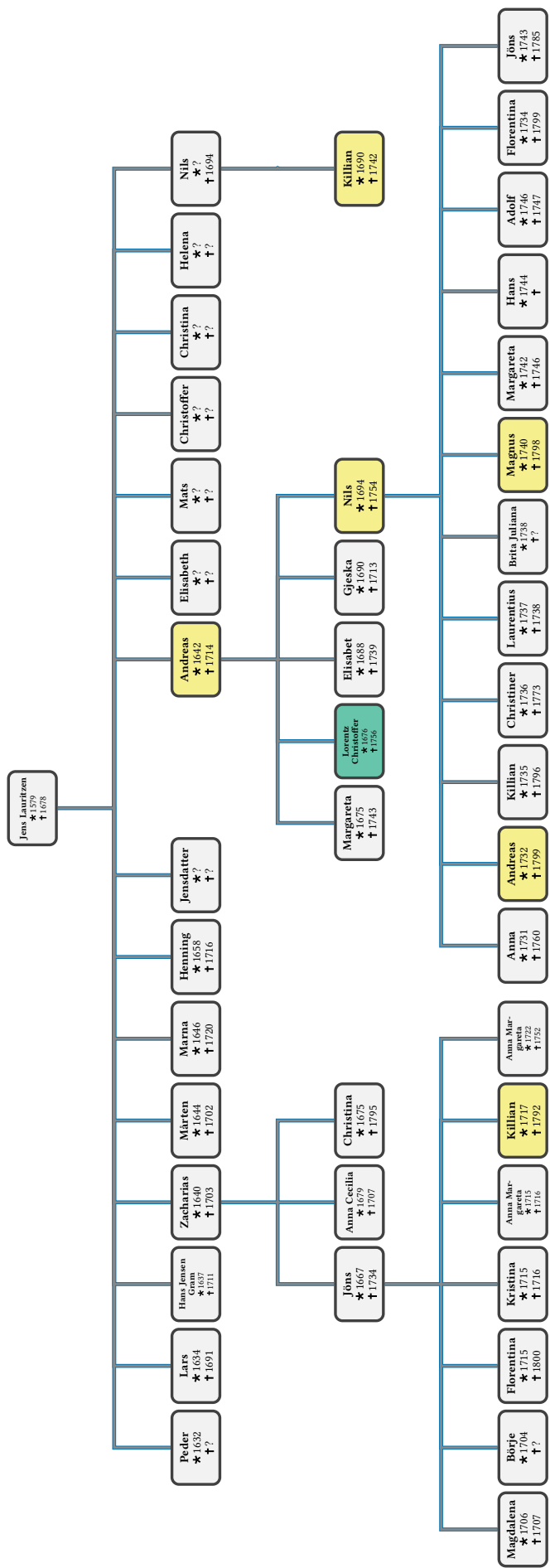


Figure 4: The Stobaeus family. Professors at Lund in yellow squares. Member of Academy in Stockholm in green.

They are all in the field of humanities except Killian (1717-1792), who is physician, and Magnus, who is theologian. This is a family of excellent scholars, many of whom appear in Figure 3. They all have a Wikipedia page, except the theologian Magnus.

9 UNIVERSITY NETWORK

Here we assume that when a professor occupied a position at more than one university over his life, this established a link between those universities. The universities with which Lund is linked are displayed in Figure 5. Despite the excellent coverage we have for the University of Lund, we do not find many links compared to most other universities (see the various issues of RETE).

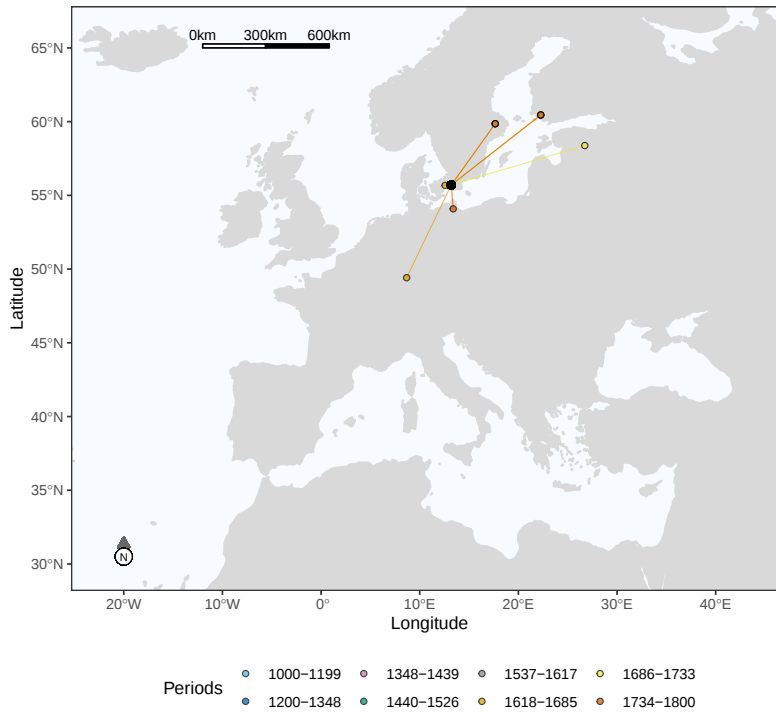


Figure 5: Links between Lund and other universities through scholars' mobility, by period

APPENDIX

The individual human capital index q_i of an individual i is given by:

$$q_i = -1.76 + 0.43 \ln(\text{nb. characters of the longest Wikipedia page}) \\ + 0.40 \ln(\text{nb. Wikipedia pages in different languages}) + 0.47 \ln(\text{nb. works in Worldcat}) \\ + 0.46 \ln(\text{nb. publication languages in Worldcat}) + 0.47 \ln(\text{nb. library holdings in Worldcat})$$

We assume that having no Wikipedia page is similar to having one page with a length of 60 characters and that having no Worldcat page is similar to having a page with one work in one language held by one library. The constant -1.76 normalizes q_i at 0 when there is neither a Wikipedia page, nor a Worldcat page. The weights (0.43, 0.40, etc) are obtained from the first principal component of the five indicators (De la Croix et al. 2020).

The notability Q of a university aggregates the q of the top 5 persons who were active in the preceding 25 years using the following formula:

$$Q = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{5} \left(\frac{q_i}{s_i} \right)^2}$$

where s_i is the number of universities in which i had an appointment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 883033 "Did elite human capital trigger the rise of the West? Insights from a new database of European scholars." I thank Faustine Perrin for her help with the sources.

First version November 15, 2021

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