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God – human – society in 1695 psalmbok

2006-2011

The project's three main results can best be summed up and developed under the three chapter headings, which constitute the monograph developed in line with the project's overall intentions. 1) "En förste til at wara”. King, politics, and hymn, 2) "Een qwinna in främmand drägt hon går." Fashion, society and hymn; 3) "Jesus är min wän then bäste". Worship, individual and hymn.

The first study expose with emphasis the close ties between hymns and politics. Collaboration between state and religion are investigated and discussed. This is done with special attention to the central royal ideology, its most typical features and its medialization via propaganda. Contextualization aims to facilitate understanding of the royal hymn Jesper Swedberg wrote directly to Charles XI at the parliament in 1693, "Jagh kommer för tigh, Hërre" (1695:320). In other words, hymn writing and realpolitik in the compound. In the psalm, which can be described as a royal or princely mirror, is made clear above all the prevailing view of the sacred monarchy and the king's special mission and role as vicarius Dei, as well as his political and religious crucial role in the late 17th century.

In accordance with the project plan attention is also paid to the anti-Catholic propaganda. The inventory of anti-Catholic elements in the Hymn-Book of 1695 and the critically oriented theorization of this aspect of the confessional state and the development of an nationalistic self-image and invites a broader and contextualizing study of especially the first hymn in the characteristic section entitled "Om Antichristo", "O Rom/ går thet nu så medh tigh" (1695:236). The Swedish anti-Catholic hymns coming from the era of Reformation are still alive in the Caroline hymnal. The need to perpetuate the stereotypical metaphorization of "Rome" in the absolute State was strong, and in the Hymn-Book of 1695 the anti-Catholic formulations survived in the Hymn-Book of 1695, and contributed to the excluding power of the discourse.

In the monograph's second, and most extensive chapter a single hymn-verse is the starting-point for a multi-leveled investigation of the increasing sumptuary- and fashion critique in the latter half of the 17th century. The Stanza, which proved to be a late addition to an old German hymn, functions as an entrance to a thorough discussion of one the early modern Sweden's most intense discourses and for the understanding of the social changes of the time most rewarding subject field. Why were bishop Swedberg and so many others during the latter half of the 17th century with such frenzy occupied with clothing fashion, luxury, morality, society and religion? The answer to this question is given in the form of a study of clothing and fashion criticism in many areas during the latter half of the 17th century. After an initial background drawing, the history of luxuries from antiquity until the early modern society, the luxury and fashion discourse during the late seventeenth century in Sweden, this task is carried out with aid of varied sources (parliamentary protocols, sumptuary laws, homilies, Jesper Swedberg as representative example, religious polemic, devotional literature, hymn, poetry and other belles-lettres). To understand
and explain the strengthening and diversification of this discourse some aspects are
dealt with in a more thorough way. Firstly, the rapid development of Stockholm in to
a large capital, i.e. the process of urbanization of the nation’s main capital, in other
words, urbanity and fashion is subjected so attention. Secondly, the woman, the city
and the fashionable are highlighted. "Een qwinna i främmand drägt hon går,/ Ehwad
thet månde kosta" – says the hymn verse, and women were considered particularly
vain and easily influenced by fashion. It was a well-established stereotype as well as the
combination of women, fashion and the city was a strong figure of thought. But the
male fashion – "En man nu drager qwinno håår" – was also subjected to special
scrutiny and criticism during the latter half of the century. Therefore, the manliness,
gender order and women's history are subjected to special attention.
This second part of the monograph ends with a thorough study of the hymn in which
this "fashion-stanza" is included. The hymn that was meant to be used "Uthi stora
Landzplågor" (1695:309) give reasons for a series of digressions concerning the views
on society in early modern Sweden, where religion was the unifying band in the state.
The second chapter does answer the thesis about the psalm as an ideological
instrument with great significance for the contemporary society.
The third part of the monograph deals with the pietistic elements in the Hymn-Book
of 1695, particularly the so-called Christ-hymns. This is done through a study of the
professor of history and hymn writer Jacob Arrhenius, and his significant hymn
production. The established image of Arrhenius life and hymn writing led to a critical
examination of the Arrhenius-reception and the fundamental elements which
constitutes the portrait of Arrhenius in personal history and literary history. The main
study of the Arrhenius contribution is, however, carried out within the field of rhetoric
– politics – aesthetics. The study of his adaptations and translations of new German
hymns show small but significant changes that apparently sought to downplay the
pietistic elements of the original texts. In accordance with the view of the Hymn
Book's literary values, a study of the significance of Peter Lagerlöf's efforts as a
classicist and important style critics with influence also on Arrhenius’s hymn writing is
carried out. In this part of the study Arrhenius's most famous hymn, "Jesus är min vän
den bäste" (1695:245), is studied. Many aspects of this hymn are highlighted
(philological, rhetorical, stylistic and theological aspects, and indirectly political).
In the monograph - which thus constitutes the project's main results - we move from
the king and the official policy of the autocracy, from society's sacrosanct head, to the
people, their subjects and the passage of luxury and fashion critique discourse, to
finally approach the individual devotional man, the self before God. In this
movement, we can not only imagine the range of the text collection of the Hymn-
Book of 1695, but also its ideological and theological charging and significance in a
society undergoing change.

Publikations (in Swedish)

Monografi: Jesper Swedberg och peruken. Tre studier i 1695 års psalmbok.
(Ca 220 sidor. Förlagskontakt etablerad, tryckfärdigt manus 2011/2012). Innehåll:
Inledning; KAP. I ”En förste til at wara”. Kung, politik och psalm (En psalm på
riksdagen; Bakgrund; Kungabilden – propagandamaskineri; Ett grupporträtt; Swedberg och teokratin; Psalm 320; Konfessionaliseringens konsolidering och den antikatolska propagandan; Avslutning. KAP. II "Een qwinna i främmand drägt hon går". Mode, samhälle och psalm (En psalmmstrof; Lyx, mode, moral och samhälle – en lång historia; Lyx och mode i det sena 1600-talets Sverige; Riksdagen; Överflödsförordningarna; Kyrkan; Swedberg, mannen och peruken; En stridsskrift i tiden; Andakt och Vitterhet; Staden; Kvinnan, modet och staden, Psalmen, Psalm 309). KAP. III "Jesus är min wän then bäste". Andakt, individ och psalm (Jacob Arrhenius – liv och psalmdiktning; Psalme-Profwer 1691; Jaget och Jesus – Arrhenius psalmbearbetningar; Petrus Lagerlöf, perspicuitas och psalmen; "Jesus är min wän then bäste" – en analys). Avslutning. Noter. Litteratur. Register


"En peruk i varje hörn" (Essä om mode och moral, samhälle och 1695 års psalmbok [svenskt 1600-tal]), Upsala Nya Tidning 10/1 2010.


"En psalmmstrof. Om mode, samhälle och psalm i svenskt 1600-tal." (Essä, 15 000 tecken, om och kring 1695 års psalmbok och svenskt 1600-tal), Hufvudstadsbladet (Finland), augusti 2011.

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