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## A Microhistory of Congregational Music-Making in Överselö, Stallarholmen 1754

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Överselö organ built by Gren & Strähle in 1754 (Author's photo)

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## **Title: A Microhistory of Congregational Music-Making in Överselö, Stallarholmen 1754**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Keywords: Hymnal accompaniment, Seventeenth century, Sweden, Gren and Stråhle organ, 1697 Hymnal, Överselö, Handwritten chorale books.

In 1754 an organ was built in Överselö Church whose purpose was to accompany the congregational singing. My question in this project is to investigate how the accompaniment of the specific congregational singing in Överselö sounded. Sweden adopted its first common hymnal in 1695/97. However, it is not clear from the text of that book how it was used. To reach a higher level of knowledge and understanding of the subject, several components were needed; knowledge from written sources in the field, basic research in materials from the actual church and surrounding areas in Sweden, deepened knowledge about figured bass playing in eighteenth-century Sweden and a prepared experiment for the artistic research.

Using artistic research one can make important contributions to the quite unexamined field of knowledge of hymn accompaniment in the eighteenth century. The art of hymn accompaniment is mostly an art of improvisation, which makes it hard to examine using only the tool of musicology. But by learning figured bass playing in the way it was taught in eighteenth-century Sweden and by conducting studies into the way in which hymns were sung one can prepare and evaluate hymn accompaniment using the kind of contextual experiments I have shown in this study. In my study I have deepened the knowledge about interludes, tempo, figured bass in hymn playing and asked questions about who was leading the congregational singing and the role of the organist in the service.

The strength of the micro-historical method in this type of study is that you can trace real persons in a specific time and place and their connections to each other. One single micro historic examination does not give the whole picture but since the method “asks large questions in small places” it contributes with new knowledge to the whole: in this case, a clearer picture of how the influences from Germany reached central Sweden and affected the musical traditions here. The results that come out of this kind of project can contribute to the interpretation in several fields of music, such as hymn accompaniment, improvisation and also interpretation of eighteenth-century music.

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# INTRODUCTION

In 1754 an organ was built in Överselö Church. The purpose of this organ was to accompany the congregational singing. In my thesis I want to examine the development of hymn accompaniment in Sweden with a special focus on the eighteenth century – when the 1697 hymnal was widely in use – up until the hymnal of 1820 was developed. My interest in the subject arises from many years of service in the Church of Sweden as an organist and, of course therefore long experience of hymn playing. One thing that has always puzzled me is the old chorale settings by the old masters like Bach, Buxtehude, Pachelbel and many more. What were the uses of these pieces in worship and how did the improvisation skills of hymn accompaniment develop side by side with these written compositions. What skills were necessary for an organist in the eighteenth century and how did they achieve those skills?

In the preface to the Swedish hymnal of 1986 we can read that the ambition was to restore old melodies to the harmonies and the rhythmical forms that they had before the eighteenth century. Nevertheless there were few settings written for the organ from earlier periods, so what we have in our 1986 hymnal is choir settings adapted for organ playing. This meant that the Gregorian modes came back, which gave a new freshness to melodies that had lost their attraction to the modern hymn singer. When I first came in contact with the hymnal of 1697 it struck me that maybe the hymnal of 1986 went a bit too far. What was won in the chorale singing maybe got lost in the playing? The harmonies of the 1697 hymnal reminded me of cantatas by Johann Sebastian Bach and Georg Böhm and the tonal language spoke directly to me. Then I asked myself: How could I use the old hymnal to make useful hymn settings in my modern context? How would they have used the hymnal, and can this knowledge inspire the way we play hymns today?

Of course there is also an artistic inquisitiveness in the endeavour to discover older ways of playing. Can the knowledge about old traditions inspire and give clues to new ways of playing in our time, which could in several ways be described as a new Basso Continuo era? With that I mean that the skills of improvisation over a chorale can be described as a way forward in the Swedish Church of today, since many students and church musicians not only have education in classical music, but also finds inspiration and take influences from the Afro-American tradition with chord-based music and an improvisational approach to accompaniment. If we want to promote a continued use of the organ in hymn accompaniment, finding new ways of playing it is a must, and then the looking back to older

organ techniques can be an inspiration: maybe an inspiration for a new flourishing time with the chorale in the centre?

When I discovered the organ in Överselö Church it raised more questions for me than it answered. Why would they prefer to build an organ like this when it's primary function was hymn accompaniment? The micro-historical approach built new paths to my subject. Who played here? Who taught him? What kind of schooling would he have gotten?

The process of getting to know the presumptive sound of a rural congregation in central Sweden became almost as exciting as a detective storyline. And the artistic process was a way to examine and to try out the different pieces and try to make the picture more complete: an aim that wasn't as easy as I might have thought it would be. It soon became clear that the area wasn't very well covered. Harald Göransson was the only musicologist that had touched the subject in Sweden, with his dissertation on the 1697 hymnal and an article about the enigmatic eighteenth century. And even from an international perspective the role of the organ in the hymn singing is not very well covered. Books by Daniel Zager and Robin A Leaver came in 2017 and they are pioneers in the field. Still, as my supervisor said: It is interesting that there is so little literature about it, when the clues are spread everywhere in written music. And, would like to add, those clues can also be found in many eighteenth-century theoretical books on music.

What we do find is critical articles about the hymn playing in Swedish churches in this time, that were part of the debate that intensively went on for decades prior to the writing and publishing of the 1820 hymnal. One of these articles, written in 1779 by the Swedish-German composer Joseph Martin Kraus, is published on the next page to cast light on several aspects on hymn accompaniment that I will refer to in my thesis.

In my work I want to invite you all to my interesting journey amongst old books and documents in church archives and in the intimate meeting with an instrument that is amazingly well preserved and restored and therefore can lead us back to the sounds that reverend Provost Eric Humbla and organist Olof Dufberg delivered to the congregation in Överselö in 1754. It is also a journey in the field of improvisation and Basso continuo with old, forgotten ideas about interludes and ornamentations and many thoughts about tempo and styles of singing. I hope you will enjoy the reading as much as I enjoyed my artistic process.

## Article in Stockholmsposten April 1, 1779

(“Concerning the playing of the organ during church services”)

My dear Sir, since you took the opportunity to comment upon the lack of music, especially on the organ, in church during Lent in the 63rd issue of the Posten, you will not take offense at a small reflection. Although I am in agreement with you concerning the prohibition [of the organ during this season], for other reasons I am in no way ready to desire its repeal. Allow me to ask you, my dear Sir, in which of our churches decent and worthy music is executed upon the organ in support of and beneficial to the accompaniment of the singing? Organ accompaniment for the psalms should be simple, full-voiced, and syncopated according to the church style, but not, as you have intimated in your country, with ornamentation on every note, dissonances that are never prepared and seldom resolved, expression on various words of the psalm in the bass, which, despite the figuration, is incomprehensible, much too often for the organist himself, and other things that idiots impart to the church style as artistic, learned, moving, decent, worthy, useful, arousing, etc., etc. Such music awakens only anger in those who know the church style, which quite probably does not lead to greater devoutness. In those who can be seen as knowledgeable concerning secular music, such organ playing would likely call forth pleasure, but always at the cost of devoutness, which in this case is to be forthcoming both from the organ and the worship service. Among the congregation itself would ensue confusion in the singing [of the psalms]. Whether or not this leads to devotion, you should judge for yourself. I am of the opinion that our passion Psalms, although beautiful and moving, profane and desecrate the worship service in the manner of all passion music, when they are performed in this way, for how can one accept that the organist would transcend his miserable psalm method in a burst of ecstasy and then be able to play in the [correct] Passion style? Pardon me, my dear Sir, but I don't believe in miracles so easily. Music, which has rightly earned the name Passion music, possesses something worthy, useful and decent.

My dear Sir should not in any way feel repulsed by the [performance] of the Passion music [i.e. Stabat Mater] of Pergolesi which is customarily done on Good Friday, for this [work] is recognized indirectly much more of the Passion style than all of our organists are able to master, even disregarding those who perform badly our otherwise so beautiful and moving Passion psalms. In conclusion, may I invite you Sir and all of our organists – without exception – to the Rittarhussal on Good Friday, to receive a concept of the psalm which concerns both the construction as well as the performance. There my dear Sir, in so far as he is knowledgeable in this type of music, may decide whether or not psalms accompanied on the organ in church leads to the exhortation of devoutness as well as a good sermon.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bertil Van Boer, “The sacred music and symphonies of Joseph Martin Kraus” (Uppsala: Institutionen för musikvetenskap, 1983), 23.

## 2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of my thesis is to recreate the way hymns were played in Överselö Church when the organ was built in 1754. To enable that aim many questions needed to be asked and several qualified guesses needed to be made.

- What was the main cause for making the decision to build an instrument in Överselö Church?
- What role did the new organ play in the congregational singing?
- Can we find evidence in the archival material from this church about what kind of hymns were specifically performed here?
- Can we conclude, out of knowledge of history and repertoire of this time, in what way the hymns were accompanied, and find educated guesses about tempo, registration and hymn settings?
- Can playing of this repertoire increase the understanding of the organ's role in the church room in eighteenth-century Sweden? Can the study of the old Swedish hymnals from 1697 and earlier be better understood in the light of the room, the context, and the organ?

### 2.1 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In his dissertation on the 1697 hymnal "*Koralpsalmboken 1697*" Harald Göransson discuss the use of the organ in relation to the hymnal. His discussion mainly treats the seventeenth century and early principles of figured bass. In his article "*Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*" he further develops the reasoning in to the eighteenth century in a study of handwritten choral books. In this article he introduce the discussion of a lowered tempo, ornamentation and interludes. In "*Organ as a mirror of its time*" Pamela Ruiten-Feenstra and Eva Helenius-Öberg discuss the hymn accompaniment with the Cahman-organ in Löfsta bruk in focus. In his book on the 1820 hymnal "*Dödshugget mot vår nationella tonkonst*" Anders Dillmar thoroughly writes about the singing traditions in Sweden during the eighteenth century and cites many sources with criticism about how the organists in Sweden used the organ in hymn accompaniment. Robin Leaver and Daniel Zager published the books "*Organ Accompaniment of Congregational Song: Historical Documents and settings*"<sup>2</sup>2017, in which they make new assumptions about hymn accompaniment in a German perspective. Per Högberg makes artistic research in the area in his dissertation "*Orgelsång och psalmspel*," and examines the hymn playing in context of the organ in Gammelkil in the nineteenth-century context and the Vasa Church in Gothenburg in a twentieth century context.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> All of these sources are included in this thesis and can be found in the index of sources on page 52.



## 3 METHOD

- To find local text-sources that are relevant for the period
- To find music that has most probably been played in that room and on that organ
- To practice the music on the organ and to construct arrangements and find tempos and registrations that fit the instrument and the room.
- To experiment with the material discovered using a singing congregation.
- To set the micro-historical perspective in the light of what is more widely known from this period in Swedish hymn singing

### 3.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE SOURCE MATERIAL

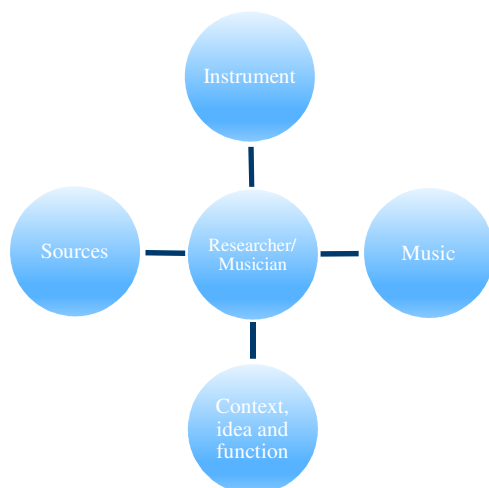
- The 1697 Hymnal in facsimile
- Archive material from Överselö Church and the national archive in Uppsala
- Handwritten chorale books from Royal library in Stockholm
- Basso Continuo schools from seventeenth and eighteenth century
- Written music by J. S. Bach, S. Scheidt, G. Böhm and several others
- Musicological books in German and Swedish contexts
- The room and the organ
- The experiment with recordings and written survey

## 3.2 Microhistory as a Method

Microhistory is the intensive historical investigation of a well-defined smaller unit of research (most often a single event, the community of a village, or an individual). In its ambition, however, microhistory can be distinguished from a simple case study insofar as microhistory “aspires to [ask] large questions in small places,” to use the definition given by Charles Joyner.<sup>3</sup>In the case of this study we found the micro-historical perspective appropriate in several ways. We have an organ recently restored to the original state of 1754 that still is placed in the same room as it was originally. We have the 1697 hymnal found in the church to support the study. It is possible to generate findings about the environment in the well preserved Swedish church books. The micro-historical method is not meant to cover the whole field of knowledge but can give important clues to the field. The strength of the micro-historical method in artistic research is that, as both the artist and the researcher, the musician embodies the improvisation practices that were relevant for that place in that time. Playing the old repertoire, from the original book, on the right organ, in the right acoustics creates new knowledge - not in the What but rather in the How.

## 3.3 The Artistic Research Model

This model of artistic research is taken from Hans Davidsson.<sup>4</sup> The sources and the music in



interaction with a specific instrument and a given context is the environment within which the musician develops ideas about interpretation. The researcher and the musician are the same person and in the reflection of his own musical interpretational process new knowledge can evolve and be evaluated.

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia, s. v. “Microhistory,” accessed February 5, 2018, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microhistory>.

<sup>4</sup> Hans Davidsson, “The North German Organ Research Project at the School of Music and Musicology, University of Göteborg,” in *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* 1 (1993): 7–27.

As inspiration I have used Per Högberg's dissertation "Orgelsång och psalmspel," and he describes his method like this:

The project's research method used can be summed up as a four-part one:

- explorative: in the project the organ's participation in the congregational singing is explored.
- descriptive: the process in the performance of congregational singing is described from the organist's point of view, with reference to the artistic course of events and connections.
- participating observation: As a researcher I am also an actor in the artistic and liturgical processes that are observed.
- comparative and historical: the written as well as the sounding sources are studied and compared.<sup>5</sup>

In the combination I have chosen between artistic research and the micro-historical method the context, the actual historical place needs to go in to the middle of the model. To support



this idea I constructed the following model. The researcher/ organist in this model has the task to read literature in the field both in Swedish and international context. The researcher further needs to develop the ability to play from a Basso continuo according to the ideas of the time period, and mainly the ideas that supposedly, or evidently reached central Sweden / Stockholm. The researcher also needs to search the

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<sup>5</sup> Per Högberg, "Orgelsång och psalmspel" (PhD diss., University of Gothenburg, 2013), 35: Den fyrdelade metoden är: \*explorativ: i projektet utforskas orgelns delaktighet i församlingssången. \*deskriptiv: förloppet i gestaltningen av församlingssång beskrivs ingående ur organistperspektiv, med uppmärksamhet på konstnärliga skeenden och sammanhang. \*deltagande observation: som forskare är jag själv medaktör i de konstnärliga och liturgiska processer som studeras. \*komparativ och historisk: såväl skriftliga som klingande källor studeras och jämförs. (All translations were made by the author unless otherwise stated).

archives of the site of the micro-historical study. Out of the assembled knowledge the researcher can prepare hymn settings on the organ that is in the center of the study, and try out the ideas that develops using a singing congregation. The experiments are not the results but can support the conclusion process and contribute to create new knowledge in the field. From the recordings the acoustics and the sound of the organ can give new input to the artistic process.

### 3.4 The function of the Instrument in the study

I will let a quote from Per Högberg's dissertation "*Orgelspel och psalmsång*" illustrate the function of the instrument in the study.

I want to examine if the organs can mediate something about their pipes and air system, its disposition, the mechanics and its sound, that supports the interaction in the hymn singing. My curiosity reaches further to a pedagogical hypothesis in connection to [Mats] Åberg: that the organ is an educator for the organist, that in his turn fills that function in relation to the singing congregation.<sup>6</sup>

An important introduction for the work was to get to know the organ and the sounds. The aim for me was to investigate if the organ could teach me facts about factors like tempo and breathing in the specific room. I made recordings to be able to analyze how the mechanics and the techniques of playing affected the sound in the room.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.5 Eighteenth-century music theory sources

I found early in the process that I needed to try to "become" an eighteenth-century rural organist in Sweden to be able to explore the subject. What were the inputs for an organist in that time? What knowledge and skills did they carry with them? How is the environment for their work without electricity and the need for someone who could run the bellows while playing? Many organists were needed to be educated as the instruments were built in more churches, and therefore many books

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<sup>6</sup> Högberg, *Orgelsång*, 3. "Jag vill undersöka om orglarna förmedlar något om sina respektive pip- och bälgverk, sin spelregering, disposition och klang, som gagnar interaktionen i församlingssången. Min nyfikenhet sträcker sig vidare till en pedagogisk hypotes i anslutning till Åberg: att orgeln är en pedagog för organisten som i sin tur fyller sådan funktion i relation till den sjungande församlingen."

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix B: 1 and 2.

were published in the field. For me, as a musician and a researcher, I found that deepening the knowledge of figured bass was necessary. Therefore I worked through some of the main books from that time, among them F. Gasparini's "*En uti Harmonie öfvad på Clav-Cymbal Translation J H Roman,*" F. E. Niedt's "*The musical guide,*" as well as C. P. E. Bach's "*Essay on the True Art of Playing the Keyboard,*" J.D. Heinichen's "*Gründliche Anweisung*" and Mattheson's "*Der vollkommene capellmeister*" and finally David Kellner's "*Underrättelse uti General-Basen.*" Working with figured bass as part of the preparatory studies was essential for understanding the improvisation practice of the eighteenth century, and gave important clues as to how to interpret the chorale-based repertoire that I studied as well as making new settings for the chosen hymns.

## 4 BACKGROUND

In the background I want to introduce the place for the micro-historic research and examine the people that are in the center of the study. The scene is central Sweden, close to Stockholm in one of the original dioceses in Sweden, with Strängnäs Cathedral as the seat of the bishop. The Överselö Church and congregation is only about twenty kilometers from the cathedral and only about fifty kilometers from Stockholm if travelling by sea. We can assume that the communication were frequent. So despite the rural context this church was in the center of eighteenth-century Sweden.

### 4.1 Överselö Church

Överselö Church was built on the shore of the largest island in Lake Mälaren, Selaön. The church is built in a typical Romanesque style and was richly decorated during the fifteenth century. On the island there is also another church, Ytterselö Church. Both churches are medieval, from the thirteenth century. Överselö Church is built on the foundation of an older stave church. On the island there have been settlements since at least the late Stone Age, which you can see from the ancient grave fields. The many runestones on the island shows that there was an early presence of Christianity here. The area of the congregation is seen as of national interest with large farms, rich findings of antiquities and a unique bishop's seat with roots in the middle ages. Although the church today is geographically far from urban areas, in medieval times the church was considered centrally positioned between the city of Stockholm with Ekerö and Birka, Strängnäs Cathedral, Västerås Cathedral and the royal castles of Gripsholm and several others. The main way of travelling in this area historically was by boat, which explains the position of the church, nearby the lake. In the congregation there was a large castle, which was built and owned by Gustav Vasa and the Vasa family. There were also several farms. Maybe this is why the congregation had the funds to build the organ in 1754. There are also traces<sup>8</sup> of an undocumented seventeenth century organ in the neighbor church of Ytterselö.

The church today is cross-shaped, but the north side where the organ is placed today was added in 1881-1882. So in the eighteenth century the church was a bit smaller. The total area of the church today is 620 square meters, and according to the painting by Eric Humbla it measures about 35 meters in length and 13 meters from north to south. Today the north-south distance is about 20

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<sup>8</sup> Appendix C: 1



meters. The height can be estimated to about 8 meters in the center aisle. The acoustics are generous but not very large. The estimated reverberation time is about one and a half to two seconds and the organ fills the whole room even with a few stops. It is also an easy room to sing in.

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In historic time in Sweden the pews in the churches were reserved for the different farms and crofts in the area. In the books from Överselö we can read:

### **Seats in the pews**

... On the Organ balcony behind the shield. St Fröslunda 1. Seats for the other knights and nobilities, the Deanary, the Vicary and the higher estate's laborers, The Gardener, the Fishermen, the Blacksmiths etc. on the manors. On the old platform the Soldiers keep their usual seats, the other chairs are kept for the users and the sons and sons in law of the congregation, half to each of them. In front of the organ on the balcony, no one is seated, because these seats are reserved for the organist to arrange, mainly meant for godly travelers and foreigners.<sup>10</sup>

Sweden had, at this time church duty, which meant it was mandated for everybody in the congregation to attend the Sunday service.

<sup>9</sup> Appendix C: 2 – a drawing from Eric Humbla's dissertation *De insula sela*, kept at Roggebiblioteket, Strängnäs. Picture taken by Elin Andersson (used with permission from the photographer) .

<sup>10</sup> Appendix C.:7. Odaterat, bänkrum. På Orgel Läktaren bak för skärmen. St: Fröslunda 1. Rum de öfrige för Ridderskapet och Adelens Proestegårdens, Capellanens och Stånds personers drängar, Trägårdsmästaren, Fiskare, Smeder etc. wid Säterierna. På Gamla Läkaren behållna Soldaterne sina wanliga rum, de öfrige stolar tilkoma Hälften brukare och Församlingens Söner och mågar. Framanföär wärket på Orgel Läktaren blir ingen wiss indelt utan dessa rumen Komma at stå under organistens disposition, som i synnerhet har at inläppa Gudelige resande och Främmande Pärsoner. (Transcription Eva Helenius-Öberg)

## 4.2 The Gren & Strähle Organ in Överselö Church

The organ was built in 1754 by Jonas Gren and Peter Strähle. This year, 1754, several organs were delivered out in the country. The organ is a minor standard type of organ with one manual and a pull-down pedal. This type of organ had been established since a couple of generations in the Stockholm Cahman-tradition: Sparkling, powerful and colorful, in contrast to the broader tone that later became more popular in Sweden. For the sake of the organ a balcony was built at the western end of the church.

### *Disposition* <sup>11</sup>

Manual	Gedact	8´		
C-c´´´	Principal	4´		
	Spitz Fleut	4´	B/D	(h/c´)
	Quinta	3´		
	Octava	2´		
	Scharf	3 ch		
	Trompet	8´	B/D	(h/c´)
	Trompet	4´	B	(C-h)
	Vox viriginea	8´	D	(c´-c´´´)
	Pedal	Pulldown Pedal		
Tremulant				<u>Sperventil</u>

The organ is evidently built for the purpose of accompanying the hymns. In the protocols from Överselö we can read:

November 17, 1751, protocol for Överselö Parish

8. P.P read the letter that organ builder Gren had written and a proposal to set up a contract for a new organ, *that will be fabricated to support the singing in Överselö Church*, which was granted and it was decided that the Contract was to be written in two copies, and signed by both parts, and one copy was to be kept in the Church for the future, and the other copy was to be sent to Mr. Gren with the three hundred

<sup>11</sup> Mats Arvidsson, *Överselö Restaureringsrapport och Dokumentation av Gren & Strähle-orgeln från 1754* (Private printing), 1.



Daler<sup>12</sup> in copper coin, that was requested.<sup>13</sup> In 1852 some of the stops were replaced to better suit the ideals of that time, but the main character of the organ was still intact. Some pedal stops were added along with a fugara and a Principal 8 only in the descant, and the scharff and the Vox virginea were removed.<sup>14</sup> In 1952 the organ was renovated and built together with a Hammarberg organ on a new raised platform on the north side. The old balcony in the back was torn down. Luckily the old organ was kept intact, which is all too unusual.

In 2015, Mats Arvidsson restored the organ to its original state.<sup>15</sup> In this restoration a new air system was built and a few stops needed to be supplemented, among them the Vox virignea, that was restored with the Olof Swahn organ in Dala Husby as a model. On the whole the old pipes were in good condition. The Hammarberg organ was, after this restoration placed beside the Gren and Strähle. After the restoration the organ was tuned in Neidhardt in  $a' = 455$  Hz at 17 degrees celsius. This pitch is historically called chorton. In the contract for the organ it is written that the organ should be tuned in chorton.<sup>16</sup> The temperament however is not mentioned. In Hülphers 1773 dissertation on the organs in Sweden he cites a discussion of temperament by the cathedral organist in Linköping, Miklin, in which he mentions equal temperament as a theoretical but not artistic temperament. Neidhardt however is suggested as a possible temperament for the organ. He also writes:

The organ should be tuned in Chorton, in part for better and livelier strength, and in part because in the whole world, chorale books are established for Chorton. If the organ were tuned in Kammerton instead, all of the chorales would have to be transposed up one tone higher... Furthermore, if the temperament is not all correct, much dissonance will exist in certain chords, which would not tolerate certain transpositions. Such a tuning on an

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<sup>12</sup> Daler is an old international currency, based on a given value in silver. 300 Daler in copper was equal to 100 Daler in silver at this time. An annual salary for a farm-worker would be about 100 Daler in copper.

<sup>13</sup> Appendix C Picture 16 A and B: **17 november 1751**, sockenstämmoprotokoll. 8. Upläste P.P. [borde vara P.L., Pastor Loci] Orgbyggaren Grens bref och förslag til et Contracts uprättande om ett nytt Orgwärk, som kommer at förfärdigas til sångens understöd utj ÖfwerSellö Kyrka, hwilket bewiljades, och blef beslutit, at Contractet skulle renskrifwas [i] twänne Exemplar, samt å ömse sidor underskrifwas, då et Exemplar behålles qwar wid Kyrkian til efter rättelse i framtiden, och det andra öfwer sändas til bemälte Grén tillika med de begärte tre hundrade dahler Kppmt [kopparmynt]. Transcription Eva Helenius Öberg.

<sup>14</sup> The 1852 disposition can be found here: [http://goart-vas-1.it.gu.se/webgoart/goart/go\\_pub.php?p=23&u=1&f=353&l=sv&sectsel=sform](http://goart-vas-1.it.gu.se/webgoart/goart/go_pub.php?p=23&u=1&f=353&l=sv&sectsel=sform) downloaded April 27, 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Arvidsson, *Överselö Restaureringsrapport*

<sup>16</sup> Appendix C Picture 4 A

organ would force the congregation to sing very low and soft, which would be antithetical to our greatest purpose of giving thanks and praise to God in our hymns.<sup>17</sup>

I had many thoughts about the high pitch both in the organ and in the hymnals, but the sources shows distinctly that the high pitch were intentional. I will further develop this in chapter 6.6.

### 4.3 Organ builders in Sweden, Johan Gren and Peter Stråhle

A new organ-building movement in Sweden started with the great organ builder Johan Niclas Cahman (1670?-1737), also called the father of Swedish organ building. But not until 1860 did all churches in Sweden have organs.<sup>18</sup> J. N. Cahman had disciples in Olof Hedlund and Daniel Stråhle. Daniel Stråhle had, due to bad health, a very short active period as an organ builder (1741-1746). Two of his followers Johan Gren and Petter Stråhle together started a firm which built a great number of organs in central Sweden, one of them in Överselö Church. In her book “*Svenskt klavikordbygge 1720-1820*,” Eva Helenius-Öberg argues for a new view on what has been called the “Cahman-school.” Daniel Stråhle studied both with J. N. Cahman, and the Swedish inventor and scientist Christopher Polhem (1661-1751). Polhem was not a musician himself, but he was greatly interested in the mathematical aspects of music, of which temperament was one issue.

”However [Gren and Stråhle] was said to be the only organ builders in Sweden, that enjoyed the patronage of the Academy of Science. The reason for this is hardly that they were close friends with Christopher Polhem’s son Gabriel, to whom they also were in debt; rather the reason is that they were the inheritors of the art of Daniel Stråhle, and therefore approached the technical problems, mainly with mechanics, temperature and probably also mensural questions, in a rational way, and for that time “scientifically.” In particular, it ought to be observed that they were among the first

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<sup>17</sup> Kerala Snyder, ed., *The Organ as a Mirror of its Time* (Oxford: University Press), 149.

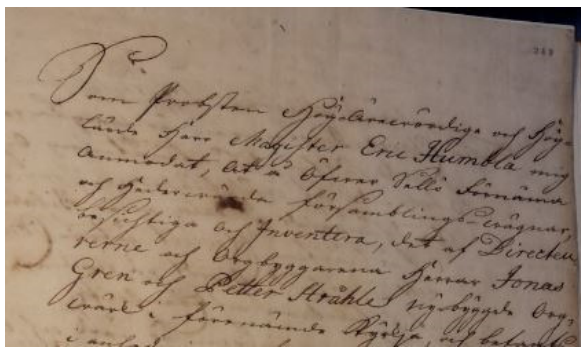
<sup>18</sup> In the early years of Lutheranism in Sweden the organ was not a common instrument in the churches, but in the big town churches there were organs as early as in the early sixteenth century. In Adam Hülphers’ book “Historisk afhandling om musik och instrumenter” (Historical thesis about music and instruments), published in 1773, he lists organs in Sweden in the late eighteenth century, after corresponding with organists, music directors and priests. Before this book there were no collected knowledge about organs in Sweden.

organ builders in Sweden that had aimed for equal temperament.”<sup>19</sup>

## 4.4 The parish in the eighteenth century

### 4.4.1 Eric Humbla

In Överselö Church there was a vicar whose name was Eric Humbla (1697—1766). He was the son of the vicar in Kjula, Eric Humbla the elder.<sup>20</sup> Eric Humbla seems to have been a very ambitious man. He wrote several dissertations and historical books and he also wrote a Swedish “Robinson



Crusoe”, with the following title: “*Gustav Landcronas, a Swedish nobleman’s remarkable life and dangerous travel, as he as a true Robinson, with a baptized Turkish woman, for twelve years lived on an uninhabited island, and lived trough the most horrible accidents*”<sup>21</sup> Eric Humbla was also assigned to be the provost by the bishop in Strängnäs. He is the

man behind the ordering of the Gren and Strähle organ. He is also the one who is mentioned in the inspection protocol, that is signed by the cathedral organist i Strängnäs, Georg Londicier:<sup>22</sup>

“March the 8, 1754, inspection protocol. Autograph G.R Londicer)

As the provost and highly learned and respected Magister Eric Humbla asked me to do, that on the account of the congregation of Överselö inspect and inventory the organ built in Överselö Church and that has been agreed in a contract between the congregation and the same Jonas Gren and Peter Strähle in January 26, 1752.

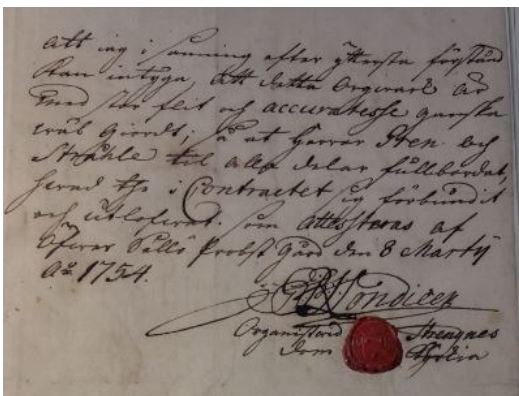
<sup>19</sup> Eva Helenius- Öberg, *Svenskt klavikordbygge 1720-1820* (Stockholm; Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1986), 17-23: “Däremot angavs de vara de enda orgelbyggarna i landet som åtnjöt Vetenskapsakademins beskydd. Orsaken därtill torde knappast stå att söka i att de varit personliga vänner med Christopher Polhemsson Gabriel, till vilken de till och med häftade i skuld; snarare är förklaringen den att de var Daniel Strähles arvtagare i konsten och således angrep de orgeltekniska problemen, främst sådana rörande mekanik, temperatur och sannolikt även mensurfrågor, på ett rationellt, för tiden “vetenskapligt” sätt. Särskilt bör observeras att de varit bland de första orgelbyggarna i landet som eftersträvat liksvävighet.”

<sup>20</sup> Svenskt biografiskt lexikon, s. v. “*Humbla, släkter*,” accessed January 21, 2018, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/13885>.

<sup>21</sup> Eric Humbla, *Gustav Landcronas, en swensk adels-mans märkwärdige lefwerne och fahrliga resa, tå han som en sanfärdig Robinson sig med en döpt turkinna, vti tolf åhrs tid på en obebodd ö underligen vppehållit, och eljest the förskräckeligaste olyckor* (Stockholm: Lorentz L. Grefing, 1740).

<sup>22</sup> Appendix C: 3a, 3b, 3c.

1. According to the contract two bellows in sufficient size is made, and they are made with leather and are very proof and gives good air support.
2. The tubes that transport the air are sufficient, so that the organ gets enough air pressure.
3. The windchest is to all parts well done, both in size, of measure and in the leather, so that the pipes can stand free and not hindered, and are provided with good springs under the ventils.
4. The key action is very well done, so that its measure and the action to the rollerboard, and with the pull-down pedal, and the very appearance is more beautiful than Ivory and Ebony.
5. The arrangement of the stops is strong and well, and on a new invention set. Although this arrangement is more costly than it usually has been, it is a great benefit for the playing. This benefit was not in the contract, that the Spitzflute 4 should be divided, but it opens up for more variations in Music and in the Hymn accompaniment.
6. I have examined all the pipes, all the stops and the individual pipes through the whole organ, and I have found them to be strong and firmly crafted, as well the flute as the reeds sounds well and are pleasantly intoned.



That I can truly and to the best of my knowledge certify that this organ is to great extent accurate and well done, so that the masters Gren and Stråhle have fulfilled what was promised in the contract that was certified in Överselö rectory the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 1754. G:R Londicer, Organist in the Cathedral of Strängnäs.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Appendix C: 3a, 3b, 3c: **8 mars 1754**, avsyningsprotokoll (GR Londicer, autograf)

Som Probsten HögÄrewördige och Höglärde Herr Magister Eric Humbla mig anmodat, at å Öfwer Sellö Förnäma och Hederwärda församlings wägnar, besichtiga och Inventera, det af Directeurne och Orgbyggarna Herrar Jonas Gren och Petter Stråhle nybyggde Orgwärc i förenämde Kyrkja, och befants i anledning af den emellan församlingen och samme Jonas Gren och Peter Stråhle den 26 Januari 1752 uprättade skriftelige afhandling, som följer nembl[...](Transcription Eva Helenius-Öberg)

#### 4.4.2 Georg Londicer and Olof Dufberg

The organist in the cathedral of Strängnäs is a key person in this study. Not only was he the inspector and the expert in the building of the organ in Överselö. With most probability he was also the teacher of Olof Dufberg, who was appointed organist in Överselö in 1754.<sup>24</sup> This was a fact that I was eager to find: Who was the first to regularly play the Överselö organ in service? Who had been his teacher? What material could he have been in contact with? In the protocols from 1754 we can read:

*October the 20, 1754, personal guarantee*

Since my brother in law, the sexton in Överselö Church, Olof Dufberg, has asked me I will in accordance to the Church Law, signed by His Majesty the King, be his creditor. By this I oblige myself to be responsible, if my brother in law should cause damage for the church. This I confirm with my signature below: Strengnäs October 20, 1754. Carl Wilelius.<sup>25</sup>

Olof Dufberg was born and raised in Strängnäs and was about 28 years old at the time of the appointment. By that time Georg Londicer had been in Strängnäs Cathedral for some years. We have clearly seen that Londicer was involved in the process of the building of the organ in Överselö. He was also the director of music at the gymnasium in Strängnäs. It seems reasonable to assume with a high degree of probability that Olof Dufberg has been a student with Georg Londicer. We can only find a few words about Georg Londicer in Johan Leonard Höijer's "Musik-lexikon":

Londicer, Georg Rudolph, music director and organist in the cathedral of Strengnäs, brother to the former [Ernst Johan Londicer], often played at the court. The messenger that should summon him, on Second day of Christmas, to play before Gustav III, who was at Gripsholm castle with his court, met his funeral procession.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Appendix C: Picture 5

<sup>25</sup> Appendix C: Picture 14: **20 oktober 1754**, borgensförbindelse. Althenstund min Swåger Kläckaren i ÖfwerSela Församling Olof Dufberg mig anmodat, det wille jag i anledning af Kongl: Majest: Kyrkolag<sup>25</sup> wara hans löftesman. Altså förbinder mig härmedelst til samma caution, at wilja wara församlingen ansvarig, i fall emot bättre förmodan igenom min Swågers förwällande Kyrkan skulle något komma at lida. Hwilcket med mitt namn och Signets undersättande bekräftas warder. Strengnäs d: 20. Oct<sup>br</sup> 1754. Carl Wilelius (Transcription by Eva Helenius-Öberg).

<sup>26</sup> "Londicer, Georg Rudolph, musikdirektör och orgelnist vid domkyrkan i Strengnäs, broder till den förre, spelade ofta på hofvet. Det bud som skulle kalla honom att, Annandag jul 1775, spela inför Gustav III, som då med sitt hov vistades på Gripsholm, mötte i porten hans likprocession": accessed January 21, 2018, <http://runeberg.org/muslex/0266.html>.

There are interesting facts about his brother, Ernst Johan Londicer who was seen as a child prodigy in the musical life of eighteenth-century Stockholm. His father was an organist and a composer and a close friend of David Kellner.<sup>27</sup> Ernst Johan was a student of his father and of David Kellner. Therefore, we can assume that David Kellner also taught Georg Rudolph and that Kellner's ideas about music were important also for Olof Dufberg.

#### **4.4.3 David Kellner and the theory book “Treulicher Unterricht in General-Bas” translated into Swedish by Jonas Londée (1732/1739)**

David Kellner was a central person in the Stockholm musical life of the early eighteenth century. Kellner came to the German Church in Stockholm in 1711 as organist. He later became an organist in St Jacob's Church. He was born in 1670 and grew up in Liberwolkwitz, near Leipzig. His father was the cantor and “Erste Lærer” and probably the one who taught all the children in music. All the brothers also ended up in the Nordic countries and had a strong impact on the development of music in Scandinavia during the eighteenth century.<sup>28</sup> The book “Treulicher Unterricht in General-Bas” was widely spread in Germany and translated into Swedish in 1739 by Jonas Londée and the book became the first Swedish-language textbook in music. The book is said to be the first theoretical book based entirely on the major and minor tones. In his book he also criticizes a circle set up in Johann David Heinichen's “Gründelijke Anweisung” (1711) and by Johann Mattheson and gives his own suggestion on how to make one. A suggestion we recognize as a pretty modern circle of fifths.<sup>29</sup> In the book it is evident that the art of figured bass is central for his teaching.

The figured bass, which is also called Basso Continuo, is the foundation of all music, and consists of a necessary and useful science discovered by Ludovico Viadana from the Westlands, and born in 1605. This science consists of correct principles that agree with the rules of composition, teaching that contents for the harmony can be generated from the bass line alone, so that by sight one can generate many voices that harmonize with the music as a whole.<sup>30</sup>

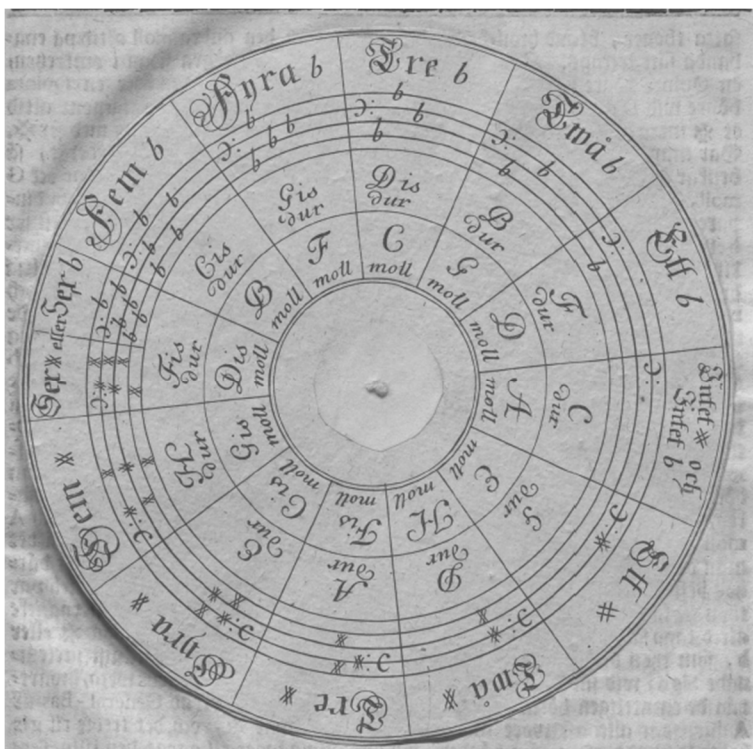
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<sup>27</sup> Appendix C: 12. Music by Ernst Johan and Georg Johan Londicer.

<sup>28</sup> Kenneth Sparr, “David Kellner lutenist klockspelare och organist” *Gitarr och Luta* 26 (1993): 3–13.

<sup>29</sup> David Kellner *Underrättelse uti General-Basen* (Stockholm: Benj Gottl Schneiders, 1739), 59.

<sup>30</sup> Kellner, *Underrättelse*, 1: “General—Basen, som ock kallas Bassus continuus, är fundamentet til hela musiqven, och består uti en av Ludovico Viadana, bördig af Westland, wid årh Christi 1605, upfunnen ock til Musiqvens förstärkning högnödig och nyttig wettenskap; hwilken, i anledning af riktiga ock med Composition öfwerensstämmande grundsatser, lærer at utaf blotta Basen utdraga contenta till harmonien, att man således i ett ögnableck kan på ett här til tienligt Instrument tillika slå an åtskillige stämmor, som med de der till satta Partier fullkomligen accordera.”



**Chapter 1** About Intervals, Chords, polyphony and several other occasions.

**Chapter 2** About the Signatures.

**Chapter 3** About the Natural pace of the Tones and Accompaniment.

**Chapter 4** About Extraordinary phases, which go from the natural.

**Chapter 5** On the development of the notes.

**Chapter 6** Consonants.

**Chapter 7** About Dissonants.

In the introduction from the Swedish editor and translator Jonas Londée, we can read a testimony from the time that maybe can be about Ernst Johan Londicer, the brother of Georg Rudolph in Strängnäs that can illustrate the high respect figured bass had in Stockholm at this time.

Credible people have told me what I can also remember having read in the newspapers, that a boy of seven or eight years old, in Stockholm has learned Music by this method, and gained such great skills that he in our Jacobi Church on a feast day at a Service was heard in public on the organ, and not only in figured bass to the music, but skillfully with both manual and pedal was able to treat Chorales and Preludes, not to mention all the others that have learned from this teaching in our city, at young ages with great success.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Kellner, *Underrättelse*, 14: “Mig är av trovärdiga personer berättat, det jag ock sielf erinrar mig hafwa läst i Post-tidningarna, at en gåse af 7 eller 8 år, som i Stockholm lärdt Musiqven efter denna Methode, aflagt ett få förundransvärt profftycke, at han i den vår warande Jacobi-kyrkia på en högtids Dag wid hållen Gudstienst offentligen låtit höra sig på Orgorna, och icke allenast spelt General-Basen till Musiqven, utan ock helt skickeligen manualiter och pedaliter kunnat tractera Choraler och Praeludier, til at förtiga åtskilliga andra, som vår å orten genom denna Läro-artens tillhjelp wid äfwen så unga år gjort öfvermåttan stora och tilförene hos barn ett försporda profecter.”

## 4.5 The hymnal of 1697

For this study the music from the hymnals found in Överselö Church, and mainly the hymnal of 1697, has been central. The sources from the church books and surviving documents from the eighteenth century gives important clues to the interpretation and the knowledge of hymn singing in Sweden during that period. In a search of the local archives we found an old copy of the original edition of the hymnal of 1697.<sup>32</sup> The hymnal was marked Överselö Church and you could clearly see that it had been used for a long time. From the findings in Överselö Church archives you can draw the conclusion that the 1697 hymnal was the main book used for singing in Överselö Church. In the copy from Överselö you could also find very clearly what hymns they had used the most. Some pages were as clean as new and some were well thumbed and dirty.

The hymnal of 1697 was the first common hymnal in Sweden. After the Reformation in Sweden in 1523 there was a long period in which the new order of service and congregational singing was developed. In 1529 (a second edition appeared in 1531) the first Swedish mass by Olaus Petri was published and put to use. Still, the dioceses had a large amount of autonomy, and every bishop had the freedom to superintend his diocese. The amount of hymns in use in the congregations was slowly increasing during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries although many congregations, what it seems, still preferred to use the old Latin songs. In 1643 a committee was appointed, with the aim to create a common hymnal for the whole country. The result was the Uppsala 1643 hymnal, which was spread and used, but not as broadly accepted as was hoped.

The aim of establishing canonic books still remained and in the late seventeenth century a Bible translation, a new handbook and the Choral book of 1697 was ready for use. This book was spread from Uppsala to every church in Sweden, and was therefore the first common hymnal. Even so, there was a large movement of hymn composing and development of the old hymns during the whole eighteenth century. The Age of Enlightenment period combined with pietistic theology called for clarity in language and a new musical simplicity. Still no other hymnal was ordered until 1811. The hymnal from 1697 reigned for more than a century.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Appendix D: 1-48

<sup>33</sup> Harald Göransson, *Koralpsalmboken 1697: Studier i svensk koralhistoria* (Göteborg: Gidlunds Bokförlag, 1992), 194–211.



## 4.6 Handwritten chorale books

In Harald Göransson's article "*Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*"<sup>34</sup> we can learn that it was a common practice in the eighteenth-century Sweden that an organist in his first appointment wrote his own chorale book. The hymnal from 1697 had several problems. One was that every church had just one copy and that this book was reserved for the altar. The hymnal also had the wrong format to be placed on an organ music stand. It was far too clumsy and heavy. The hymns also became outdated very quickly and many local variants in melody and rhythm were introduced. I tried to find the old hymnbook by Georg Londicer, but it is still missing, even though it has left traces.<sup>35</sup> When it was not possible to find I tried to look for other handwritten hymnbooks at the Royal Library in Stockholm. However, most of the handwritten books that you can find today are copies of a few original sources. One is the hymnbook by Ferdinand Zellbell the elder, who was an organist in Stockholm Cathedral. In 1741 Zellbell wrote a dedication and presented it for the Swedish parliament. In it he stated that the hymnal from 1697 was not usable, because if you played from it the congregation sang differently. In his article Göransson shows that most of the handwritten hymnals in the northern and middle part of Sweden follows Zellbell very closely, which means that they are transcriptions and that this can be an indication that this was common practice.

## 4.7 Hymn playing in the diocese of Strängnäs

In eighteenth-century Sweden few churches had organs and therefore it was not common to have accompanied singing. In the diocese of Strängnäs however many organs were built during mid-eighteenth century. It was a clearly expressed wish from the diocese that led to this development. Already in 1620 the synod of Strängnäs Diocese stated: "that it is called for a unity, especially regarding the singing".<sup>36</sup>

We can see that the influences from Germany were strong in the early church music in Sweden and many organists came directly from Germany and educated new pupils. In the case of Överselö this is

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<sup>34</sup> Harald Göransson, "Det gåtfulla 1700-talet: Studier kring upplysningstidens svenska koralrevolution," *Svensk tidskrift för musikkforskning* 81 (1999): 11–32.

<sup>35</sup> Torvald Johansson, the Strängnäs Cathedral organist, has this information on his website. Accessed May 5, 2018, <http://datorvald.com/organister%20under%20seklen.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Göransson, *Koralpsalmboken 1697*, 17: "att the nu skola conformes blifwa per totam regnum och besynnerligh medh cantu."

very clear since the organist in the cathedral in Strängnäs, Georg Londicer was a German himself and probably was taught by his father and David Kellner. We can therefore assume that the organist in Överselö, Olof Dufberg was strongly influenced by the German tradition from around and especially by David Kellner.

## 4.8 Tempo

A common view is that the hymn tempi were faster in the seventeenth century and then were made slower and slower during the eighteenth century. Harald Göransson writes in his article “*Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*”:

The rhythmical equalization of the classical choral during the eighteenth century is since long known and written about [...] The old differentiated rhythm were replaced with a more isometric rhythm. Even if bars and bar lines had been used earlier in some musical genres – even in chorales, but not in the 1697 hymnal – this became dominating during eighteenth century. In addition the chorales became written in quarter notes instead of the half notes that were more common earlier. Apparently it were sung and played more with the beat on every note instead of every other as before, which leads to a slower tempo than in the seventeenth century.<sup>37</sup>

Many sources from the eighteenth century indicate that an ordinary tempo “tempo ordinare” was about 2 seconds per quarter note, sometimes even slower. There are also written sources from many different parts of Europe that tells us that the singers improvised ornaments on the hymn melody during services. Anders Dillmar writes:

There are a large number of Swedish examples for an older - here meaning before the chorale books of 1820-21 - individualized way of singing chorales. From earlier research its characteristics can be summarized as powerful, slow, rhythmically and

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<sup>37</sup> Göransson, *Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*, 11. “Den rytmiska utjämningen av den klassiska koralen under 1700-talet är sedan länge välkänd och omskriven.[...]Den gamla mångskiftande rytmen fick alltså på 1700-talet ge vika för en isometrisk avfattning. Även om taktindelning och taktstreck hade förekommit långt tidigare i vissa genrer – även i koralhandskrifter, dock inte i koralpsalmboken av år 1697 – blev detta regel på 1700-talet. Dessutom skrevs koralerna nu med fjärdedelsnoter i stället för de förr mycket vanliga halvnoterna som grundvärde. Uppenbarligen sjöngs de och spelades mer och mer med taktslaget på varje grundvärde i stället för som förr på vartannat, vilket innebär ett betydligt långsammare koraltempo än på 1600-talet.”

melodically heterophonic, abundantly ornamented, sometimes with glissandi and vibrating of the voice. Intonation has built on older opinions of tonality. The freedom in the singing situation resulted in a very sonorous but also discordant sound.

The spread of this singing style can be confirmed in many geographical parts of Sweden and in different types of parishes - not only in rural parts but also in cities. Chronologically examples exist from the whole lifetime of Hæffner, roughly from the end of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. Then a new unison ideal was established consisting of elevated simplicity and devotion in a dignified manner. That the older way of singing would have lacked these features - it is often accused of disturbing the devotion - is contradicted by the original sources. Instead there seems to have been a conflict between two different aesthetical systems, with different social roots. For these there were also different theologies of music.<sup>38</sup>

In Stockholm the more individualized way of singing was common practice as well. It was thought by the common Swede to be spiritual to be able to make diminutions and trills in the songs and some very talented and trained singers were admired and imitated by others. From the Överselö perspective however the hymnal of 1697 seems to have been the normative book of music, since the other copies of hymnals seemed untouched by time and dust. The diocese of Strängnäs also has a long tradition of strong bishops and conscious work with the liturgy. From that background I chose to use the 1697 hymnal as the main material for my study.

When working with the organ in the acoustics of the Överselö Church I made decisions about tempos for the experiment. The room asked for steadiness and the organ had a direct speech from the pipes that did not hinder the tempo. Therefore, I chose to have tempos from about 40 bpm to 60 bpm. It might be fast tempos according to the sources, but for the participants in the study it seemed very slow compared to the tempos they were used to.

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<sup>38</sup> Anders Dillmar, *Dödshugget mot vår nationella tonkonst* (Stockholm: Elanders Gotab, 2001), 504.

## 5 THE EXPERIMENT

For the process I have found it to be necessary also to include the interaction with the singing congregation, and that is why I choose to make an experiment, in order to reflect back ideas to the interpretation of the sources as well as of the actual music. For that reason the experiment with a singing congregation is central for my study. The aim is that the recordings and the reflections from the participants will further develop the process in the next stage. The idea of the experiment was to get input from modern singers that could develop the artistic process. Therefore the survey needed to be open to enable reflecting answers. The answers are not the result of the experiment, but the answers are an important tool, together with recordings and my own reflections in the process of formulating a conclusion.

### 5.1 How to Make a Questionnaire for the Participants

When you want to make a survey among the participants of the study the wording of the questions are important. How will the questions be understood and what kind of answers will you get from that question? Since the answers on the questionnaire are not the main study, but more of an input to develop the study, the focus was not to make the questions measurable. Therefore I chose the method of an open-ended survey so that the participants had the possibility to fill them with their own impressions. The questionnaire together with recordings and my own artistic reflections can be seen as the result of the experiment.

### 5.2 Selection of Hymns and Settings for the Experiment

#### **5.2.1 HYMN 1: “Then blomstertid nu kommer” Number 317 in the 1697 hymnal.** <sup>39</sup>

Four hymns were selected out of the material in the 1697 hymnal. The first hymn was the very well-known hymn “Then blomstertid,” which is still much used in Sweden in the summertime. It has its origins in a Swedish folk tune. In the 1697 hymnal the melody is number 412. In making a setting for this hymn I chose to be inspired by a Swedish handwritten bass line from 1731 by an organist in

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<sup>39</sup> Appendix B: 3, 9, 10 and 12 Recordings.

Härnösand, Olof Westman, partially realized by Jan Håkan Åberg.<sup>40</sup> I have tried to find the original score for this setting, but it is now privately owned and not accessible.

I played the introduction before both the verses. The sixteenth notes in the bass line provide a natural upper limit for the tempo. In the second part of the hymn I used the setting from the hymnal and added improvised interludes in four parts inspired by those in the written example. After two versus the congregation had to answer the following questions:

- 1) Describe your impression of the tempo
- 2) How did it affect you to have the interludes between the phrases. Did it hinder or did it help you? Any reflection is important.
- 3) What did the organ sound like? Did it help your singing?



When you listen to the recording from this hymn you can hear that the singing became naturally flowing after a while. When the participants got used to the slow tempo and the interludes, they accepted this new way of singing well. The hymn is very common in Sweden and most people really know it by heart. This made it easy to accept a change in performance. You can hear that the organ is registered with 8 and 4 foets in the first stanza. In the second stanza the 2 foot was added. The hymn was played in G Major as it is written in the 1697 hymnal. This in addition to the tuning of the organ in Neidhardt on  $a'=455$  makes the pitch of the hymn unusually high for a modern singer. As showed

<sup>40</sup> Göransson, *Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*, 27.

earlier however, this was the pitch that the chorale books were written for. It is interesting to notice in the recording how the participants change their way of using the voice in response to the organ sound. In the recording you can hear that the voices becomes clear and with a lot of overtones. This is not as common in everyday hymn singing as we do it today in church of Sweden and is maybe worth to be further examined in another type of study.

### 5.2.2 HYMN 2: Nun freut uns lieber Christen g´mein Number 219 in the 1697 hymnal <sup>41</sup>

For the second hymn I used a tune by Martin Luther, “Hwar man må nu väl glädja sig” (Nun freut uns lieber Christen g´mein). In this hymn setting, I chose a combination of interludes inspired by G F Kauffman (Seelenlust, 1736), and ornamentation in the hymn inspired by Zellbell (1749). I also chose this hymn to be sung in a very slow tempo; about 40 bpm on the quarter note.



(Zellbell –an example of ornamentation, but for a different hymn) <sup>42</sup>

After introducing the hymn and singing two verses, the audience got three questions to answer, especially written for this hymn:

- 1) Was it hard to sing in the slow tempo?
- 2) Have you ever sung in such a slow tempo before?
- 3) The organist played lots of ornaments. Did you hear them? Did they affect your singing?

The main response to this specific hymn was that it was hard to sing in the slow tempo. The more highly educated participants, and those with very little experience of hymn singing, found the ornaments interesting and thought that they made the singing more solemn. The more common Church singers though, found this way of playing a hindrance. They even commented with quotes like: “I am so grateful that we don´t sing like this today.”

<sup>41</sup> Appendix B: 4,11 and 13 Recordings.

<sup>42</sup> Appendix C: 13 Author’s picture from the Royal Library, Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm.

In the recording of the second hymn, the most striking discovery concerns the anacrusis, and the problem with performing this in the slow tempo. The upbeat tends to be sung as a quarter note, instead of as an eighth note, as it is written in the 1697 hymnal. For me as a performer, this was initially very annoying, and my response was to try to play more clearly in the rhythm. But that did not help, so the recording shows mercilessly how the anacrusis disappears. Later I read what Robin Leaver writes in his book on hymn playing.

There is reason to believe that the early sixteenth-century Lutheran chorales were originally sung in a somewhat lively manner, given the rhythmical nature of the melodies that had a propensity to begin with an anacrusis. But by the end of the century the basic tempo had slowed down significantly, eliminating the rhythmic features and creating isometric forms. <sup>43</sup>

It is fascinating that the experiment showed what the history had accomplished over a long time: That the smoothing out of the rhythmical patterns in the chorales is a matter of the chosen tempo. The slower the pace, the more the hymns need to be adjusted to a straight rhythm.

The interludes in this hymn were copied from Kauffman's *Harmonische seelenlust* and were conducted in only one part. This way of making interludes was the most common way in both Sweden and Germany. From the experiment we could see that it did not cause any troubles for the singing. This might explain why this type of interludes became so commonly used during the eighteenth century.

### 5.2.3 HYMN 3: Vater unser Number 9 in the 1697 hymnal <sup>44</sup>

For the third hymn I used another hymn by Martin Luther, "Vår fader" (Vater unser) with a modern Swedish text<sup>45</sup>. In this hymn I used the hymn setting from the 1697 hymnal and filled the harmonies with rhythmical patterns inspired by J. S. Bach's *Orgelbüchlein*. In this hymn I chose not to use



<sup>43</sup> Leaver and Zager *Organ accompaniment*, 11.

<sup>44</sup> Appendix B: 5,6 and 7 recordings.

<sup>45</sup> Appendix A: 3.

interludes between the phrases, but to let the song have the rhythm of the hymnal as written. In the first verse I used a rhythmic pattern with sixteenth notes: <sup>46</sup>

In the second verse I wanted to make use of the divided reed stops to make a solo part possible. Therefore I made a setting with the melody in the bass line and a pattern of triads on top. <sup>47</sup>

Vår Fa - der som i him - len är

For the third variation I made a joyful bass line inspired by “Herr Christ, der einigen Gottes Sohn” from the *Orgelbüchlein*. <sup>48</sup>

Vår Fa - der som i him - len

The questions written for this hymn were:

- 1) Did you find it hard or easy to find the pulse in the song?
- 2) In the second verse the organ played in triplets. Was that harder or easier to follow?
- 3) How did it feel like to sing from these Bach-inspired settings?

In the recordings of this hymn<sup>49</sup> you can hear that this was the hardest hymn to follow. The hymn tune is not often sung in Sweden and the text is totally new. The combination has not been used in Sweden since before the 1937 hymnal came out, where it was excluded. Still, what caused the most challenging problems for the participants were the hymn settings inspired by Bach’s *Orgelbüchlein*. And this was a watershed in the experiment. The musicians and the educated choir singers did not have problems, but actually found it fun and inspiring to sing with these settings. Amateur singers

<sup>46</sup> Appendix A: 7.

<sup>47</sup> Appendix A: 6.

<sup>48</sup> Appendix A: 8.

<sup>49</sup> Appendix B: 5, 6 and 7 recordings.



could not follow when many tones were added to the hymn setting. I found that very interesting since many sources witness about the problems the congregation had to follow the organists when they made too complex settings.

#### 5.2.4 Hymn 4: Allein Gott Number 192 in the 1697 hymnal<sup>50</sup>

In the last hymn I wanted to try out a way of playing with a mix of different time signatures between hymn and interludes. I have found support for this practice in musical literature by Samuel Scheidt. I selected the hymn “Allena Gud I Himmelrik” (Allein Gott), which is a hymn that has not changed much from when it was first sung in Sweden.<sup>51</sup>



The questions asked were:

- 1) You were not handed the sheet music, only the text. Did that make it harder or easier to sing?
- 2) You got to read a font that was pretty close to the font of the hymnal of the eighteenth century. How did you feel about the reading?
- 3) Did the interludes help you while you read the next phrase?

The fourth hymn is commonly sung in Sweden ever since the first hymnals in the sixteenth century. Therefore, the hymn was experienced as easy to sing and the mixed time signatures were in many cases not even noticed. None of the survey respondents had problems with not having the music to look at during the singing.

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<sup>50</sup> Appendix B: 8.

<sup>51</sup> Appendix A: 9.

### 5.3 Analyzing the Experiment

On the day of the experiment, on May 10, 2017, thirty people participated in the singing, among them professional organists, musicians and amateurs. The session was recorded with 5 different recording devices. Everything worked as planned. 23 of the participants filled out the forms. In the appendix<sup>52</sup> you can find the answers that the participants gave. The answers differ widely on most questions. You can divide the participants in three different groups.

- 1) An older generation who are used to singing hymns and have spent a lot of time in church.
- 2) Educated singers and church musicians
- 3) People with a strong interest in history.
- 4) People not used to sing that came out of curiosity.

When examining the answers you can see the following that formed a pattern.

The older singers who were used to sing hymns were most critical of the organ playing and the tempo. They found it disturbing. The educated musicians and accustomed choir singers found it much easier to find the pulse of the song. This was most evident in the third hymn “Vater unser,” which was also unknown to most. Most of participants found the organ’s sound positive, but some found it strong, disturbing and “challenging.” The latter response was most common from participants from group 4. The interludes were experienced positively by most, and those who were negative were mostly from the group number 1. The drills were perceived as disturbing to the rhythm by many from all groups, but some in group 2 and 3 thought that they raised the experience of singing as a whole.

### 5.4 Comparisons with the eighteenth-century congregation

If we look at the participants in the experiment and compare them to a fictive congregation in Överselö by 1755 or so, we can make some assumptions. First we can assume that there were many people gathered on a normal service in 1755 than we had at the experiment. As we can see in the picture on page 14 there were benches throughout the whole church and they were probably filled, since there was a law requiring church attendance in Sweden. That would make the

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<sup>52</sup> Appendix A: 1(Swedish) and 2 (English translations).

congregation at least a hundred people. We were only 30 on the day of the experiment. Probably very few in the 1755 congregation had a hymnal, or could even read in it. In nineteenth-century Sweden a personal hymnal was a common gift for confirmation and the schools were working well, but in the eighteenth century this movement were only started. Hymns were taught by heart. This is very different from the participants in the study, who came totally unprepared and had good abilities to read both text and music.

We can also assume that the tempo and the holding out of the fermatas was a well-established habit in the eighteenth century and that most of the congregation went to the mass every Sunday, since this was the most common in Sweden at this time. The introduction of the organ in Överselö Church may not have changed the way the hymn was sung that much, but only gradually. When we conducted the experiment the church was warm and lightened. Of course that was not the case in 1755. The only lights there were in church were candlelight.

The minister led the congregation from the altar. In our experiment we had an organist that was instructed to lead the singing by her voice. Sometimes she used conducting to “get people onboard.”

## 6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter I want to develop and discuss some of the central questions that arise from both the study of the sources, the artistic process and the experiment, with the aim to deepen the field of knowledge about the eighteenth-century hymn playing tradition.

### 6.1 Who was leading the hymn singing?

An important thought that arises from the experiments and the study was the question of who was leading the singing. Today it is a common practice that the organist is also the leader of the singers. But the study of the sources gives clues to that this was not the practice in the eighteenth-century Sweden. First, only one copy of the hymnal was sent to each church in Sweden. And it was clearly written that the book was meant for the altar.<sup>53</sup> It is too clumsy to be used as a music book at the instrument and in some hymns the bass and the melody are not even in line. As Harald Göransson writes:

“Holding the hymnal in one,s hands, one cannot help wondering in what way it was used in practice. After all, it was really too cumbersome to be put up on the organ or, at home, on the harpsichord or clavichord. Besides it was so inconveniently organized that playing from it must have been very tricky – for example, when a tune starts at the bottom of a right-hand page and continues on to the next left-hand page.”<sup>54</sup>

Therefore, it was the custom that every organist had to write their own chorale book with settings for their needs. However as Harald Göransson has shown in his article *Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*, most of these handwritings emanated from very few original sources, which were copied and afterwards added to with ornamentations.<sup>55</sup> These handwritten examples have no lyrics included. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the organist did not sing and therefore did not lead the congregational singing but rather accompanied it. In 1670 the bishop of Strängnäs Erik Emporagrius states:

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<sup>53</sup> Göransson, *Koralpsalmboken 1697*, 204.

<sup>54</sup> Göransson, *Koralpsalmboken 1697*, 204.

<sup>55</sup> Göransson, *Det gåtfulla 1700-talet*, 22.

In the cities, where the trivial or the children's schools are, the Schoolmaster with the clerk, the listeners and the deacons shall keep the singing in church alive... but in the countryside it is dependent on the vicar, the chaplain and the sexton. There [in the countryside] the sexton shall also stand in the middle of the church during the singing to keep the silly and unlearned on the right pitch, so that the congregation in the choir and outside it shall be held together, so that no noise and contrariness may appear.<sup>56</sup>

In my experiment I tried very hard to do exactly that: to just be a follower and to let the congregation be led by a cantor. But in the recordings you can clearly hear the complexity that emerges in a musical interplay. What the organ does affects both the cantor and the congregation. A good guess would be that the same effect occurred also in the eighteenth century and that the organist became more and more the leader of the hymn singing.

## 6.2 Basso continuo in hymn playing

As shown above in the text, the custom was that every organist had to write their own hymnal from which they had to improvise the accompaniment. The hymnals were mostly written in two parts, a melody and a bass line. From a German perspective the task for an organ student was to make several different bass lines for every hymn in order to make variations in the different stanzas. Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach writes, as quoted in Leaver/Zager:

In composition he [JS Bach] started his pupils right in with what was practical, and omitted all the dry species of counterpoint that are given in Fux and others, His pupils had to begin their studies by learning pure four-part thorough-bass. From this he went to chorales: first he added the basses to them himself, and they had to invent the alto and tenor. Then he taught them to devise the basses themselves. He particularly insisted on the writing out of the thorough bass in [four real] parts.

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<sup>56</sup> Göransson, *Koralpsalmboken 1697*, 26: "Uthi städerna, hwarest Trivial eller Barna Scholar äro, skola Scholemästaren genom Hörare, Notarios och Dieknar hålla kyrkiosången widh macht, och ther uppå hafwa itt noga upseende, att han gudeligen och skickeligen föreståås [...] Men på landzbygden wårde thet samma Kyrkioherden, Capellanen och Klockaren. Ther skal och Klockaren under siungandet stå på någon ort mitt uti Kyrkian, och hålle den enfaldige och olärde hopen rätt widh tonen, att församlingen i Choren och uthan före, må stämman väl öfwerens, så att sigh icke yppar något oliud och förargeligh mootsträfwigheet."

In Sweden we can read in a source from the end of the eighteenth century in a text for the diocese of Linköping in 1795 that the organists in the bigger cities had to know all the techniques, but in the countryside only a and b (see below) were necessary and for a rural musician it was only necessary to be able to play the chords with three notes in the right hand and the bass in the left.<sup>57</sup>

a city organist had to have the full knowledge of “Hymnal Theori,” executed in 3 ways:

- a. with usual figured bass accompaniment
- b. with the chords in the left hand and the melody in the right hand.
- c. with chords in both hands; to know the art of prelude in all keys ex tempore after a given theme, and play pieces for prelude and postlude, both in the old fugal style and in the modern mixed style”

In support of that we can find the following statement in Kellner’s “*Traurich underrecht im General-Basen*”:

The one who wants to learn the figured bass deeply, must initially learn to play in four parts, as you can in the most common way play three parts in the right hand, but in the left hand only the bass, which mostly move in octaves, should not be hindered if not too fast in movement or if the hands are too small. It is a more sophisticated art to make the four part setting, than it is to play 5, 6, 7 or more parts. But if you can also take all the notes the hand can reach in order to make a fuller accompaniment, especially if the music is richly written, although it is important not to leave a vacuum between the both hands; and even though it does not come through as clean as a four part arrangement, it still covers as much liveliness, to make the ear satisfied with it.

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<sup>57</sup> Högberg, *Orgelsång och psalmspel*, 92: “1:0 Stads-organister skola äga en fullkomlig kännedom af Psalm-theorin, exequerad på 3 sätt: a) med vanligt General-Bas Accompagnement. b) med accorden af vänstra och melodien af högra handen. c) med accorden af bägge händerne; item kunna preludiera i alla toner ex tempore efter givet thema, och spela stycken til in- och utgång, både i den gamla fugerade och i den moderna blandade stilen.”

Be careful though that the outer parts, the lowest and the highest do not go in parallels.  
That kind of settings only fits the string instruments not the pipes.<sup>58</sup>

We have two contemporaneous methods to learn the music. The old polyphonic style was still important and was, as we can see, demanded as a skill for a city organist in Sweden. For the rural organists knowledge of counterpoint was not necessary. The knowledge of figured bass was more spread and was seen as the basis for playing hymns and to improvise the preludes and the postludes. The figured bass was an invention that revolutionized the musical art and it was the presumption to be able to fill the churches with organs and organists when the organs became more widespread in the churches. In his book "*The musical guide*" Niedt starts with a moral tale about Tacitus, who after several years trying to learn music in the traditional way with tablatures has failed. After just one year he becomes a fantastic keyboard player and a Kappelmeister with the help of Prudentius, who teaches him in figured bass.

He instructed me forthwith in the thorough bass, averring that it contained the entire foundation of practical music and composition, and that he commenced with this subject with all his pupils. The benefit of this approach was that they needed not toil with the precious Tabulatur (those who know only this remain paper organists even with many years of practice); rather they became well-grounded musicians in a short time.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Kellner, *Underrättelse*, 29: "Den som grundligen will lära General-Basen, måste först beflita sig om, at spela honom fyrstämmigt, då man på det wanligaste sättet merendels kan föra tre stämmor i den högra handen, men i den vänstra Basen allena, hwilken mästedels plägar gå octav-wijs, så framt icke Noternas geschwindigkeit, eller ock hos dem som ännu intet äro wurna alt för små händer förofala något hinder: En det hörer mera konst til en utadelbar partiernas inrättning i fyrstämmigt Accompagnement, än då man tillika slår an 5, 6 7 och flera stämmor. Imilertid kan man ock sitt Accompagnement, om nödigt wore, ock i synnerhet wid en fullstämmig Musique, förstärka och gripa alt det, som man med bägge händerna kan fatta, dock så, att det intet blifwer alt för stort vacuum emellan bägge händerna; ock fast än det icke kommer så rent fram, som wid fyrstämmigt accompagnement; så betäcker dock Partiernas myckenhet vitia således, at örat därmed kan wara tilfreds. Imilertid skal man hafwa afs eende däruppå, at de yttersta stämmorna, nemligen den aldra nedersta och den aldra öfwersta icke gå vitidst emot hwarandra. En sådan fullstämmig General-Bas är allenast til at förstå på sträng-instrumenter, men intet på Pip-wärk."

<sup>59</sup> Friederich Erhardt Niedt, *The Musical Guide*, trans. Pamela Poulin and Irmgard Taylor (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 23.

And in Johan Helmich Roman's translation of the book by Francesco Gasparini,<sup>60</sup> Gasparini writes in the introduction "To cunning organists" that it is not his purpose to decrease their status, but he thinks that spreading the knowledge will be for the good of everyone.<sup>61</sup>

The eighteenth century is the century of the figured bass. But as I will show in my next chapter, it does not mean that an organist just could press the chords in any manner. Polyphony and counterpoint were still an important ingredient in the way figured bass were taught. The instruments for practice and the organs demanded a clear counterpoint.

### 6.3 Registration and tone

The organ in Överselö church is a positive organ type with one manual and a pull-down pedal. The organ is based on a 4 foot Principal and has only a Gedakt and reeds in the 8 foot register. On the top there are both a Quinta for the 8 foot, an Oktava 2 and a bright Scharff. The Trumpet 4 is only for the bass register and probably meant to support the bass in a plenum, a typical feature for the organs of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Many of the registers are divided. This opens the possibility to make solo registrations on a very small organ. The splitting point is at h/c'.

I had the possibility within my artistic process to examine different types of historical organs. The Morlanda organ from 1604, the Jonsered organ from 1783, as well as the large Cahman organ in Löfsta bruk and the old positive from the seventeenth-century organ from Stockholm cathedral that is placed in Bälinge, Uppsala. On each organ I tried to play hymns and make recordings to analyze the differences. I have here made a comparison to set the light on the Överselö organ. If you put the Överselö organ in a timeline with similar historical instruments in Sweden you get a picture of the development towards lower ranges and deeper tone color.<sup>62</sup> As a comparison I included the organ in Gustavs, Dalarna, which is a typical nineteenth-century organ, made for hymn playing.

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<sup>60</sup> The Swedish translation was never edited, but written by Roman with the purpose of printing it.

<sup>61</sup> Francesco Gasparini, *En uti Harmonie öfvad på Clav-cymbal*, trans. Johan Helmich Roman (Stockholm: Musikaliska akademiens bibliotek, 1994), 3.

<sup>62</sup> "Morlanda," accessed April 14, 2018 <https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/orust/orglarna-i-morlanda-kyrka>  
"Jonsered," accessed April 14, 2018 <https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/Partille%20f%C3%B6rsamling/jonsered-orgel>  
"Gustavs," accessed April 14, 2018 <https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/default.aspx?id=1446222>



<b>Morlanda 1604</b>	<b>Överselö 1754</b>	<b>Jonsered 1783</b>	<b>Gustavs 1847</b>
<i>Okänd troligen Holland</i>	<i>Gren och Stråhle</i>	<i>Pehr Schiörlin</i>	<i>Gustav Andersson</i>
Principal 8 disc	Gedakt 8	Principal 8	Borduna 16
Gedacht 8	Principal 4	Gedakt 8	Principal 8
Principal 4	Spitzfleut 4	Principal 4	Dubbelflöjt 8
Flögt 4	Quinta 3	Spetsflöjt 4	Fugara 8
Oktava 2	Octava 2	Rörflöjt 4	Oktava 4
Gemshorn 2	Scharf 3 ch	Qvinta 3	Flöjt 4
Rörflögt 1 bas	Trompet 8	Oktava 2	Quinta 3
Quinta 3	Trompet 4 bas	Trumpet 8	Octava 2
Sexqvaltera	Vox virginea 8	Vox humana 8	Trumpet 8

The organ in Morlanda, Bohuslän that were built in 1604 had pipes with more narrow mensuration and lot of color in the tone. Every pipe in that type of organ has its own character. When trying to use that organ for accompaniment you could clearly feel that something was missing. The organ did not carry the singing and probably it was never meant to be an instrument for accompaniment. The Jonsered organ was the total opposite. An organ clearly built to accompany the hymns. The tone was powerful and supported the singing perfectly in the room. A nineteenth-century organ, like the one in Gustavs, are made to play the four part settings from the 1820 hymnal and therefore have a powerful bottom with 8-foot and 16-foot stops as the foundation of the organ.

It was an interesting question to try to figure out why two instruments with the same type of disposition and footings could create so different tonal landscapes. By comparing with both older instruments and instruments built later in the eighteenth century by for example Swahn and Schörlin, I could cast light on the specific instrument in Överselö. In the artistic process and the meeting with the organ you could clearly feel that this type of organ is a transition from the older instruments built for contrapuntal music and not very suitable for hymn playing and leading forward to the more homophone instruments from the nineteenth century.

The four-part chorale is not what the Överselö organ strives for. The contrapuntal striving is still present and therefore you need to put much more effort in the polyphony and on the horizontal lines of the music when playing it. This was also very important in the figured bass tradition. It is easy for us to think vertical about chords in our modern perspective of both chorales, modern chords and a figured bass line. In the eighteenth century though, the figured bass was a help to build complete settings, but not at the cost for the horizontal progress in the different parts. In his biography on

Johann Sebastian Bach, Forkel writes:

Harmony, therefore, is not to be considered as a mere accompaniment of a simple melody, but a real means of increasing the stock of the expressions of the art, or the riches of musical language. But to do this, it must consist not in mere accompaniment, but in the interweaving of several real melodies, each of which may be, and is, heard sometimes in the upper part, sometimes in the middle, and sometimes below.<sup>63</sup>

Therefore, it was necessary to work actively to do good settings for the hymns that the Gren and Strähle organ would approve and even appreciate. The room itself also gave better response in slower tempi. And the slower tempi gave opportunity and incitement to color the settings with passing notes and rhythmical features.

## 6.4 Interludes

The discussion in chapter 4.8 about tempo and singing practices give clues for the use of the fermatas. In all probability, the congregation had a tempo and a habit of resting at the fermatas. As a result of these rests, the common practice of interludes between the phrases appeared. It also gave the organist a greater sense of freedom in the accompaniment. The common use of trills and diminutions was probably a way to find a steady tempo in the slow pace that congregations were used to. Robin Leaver states from the German perspective:

When the organ became the customary instrument for accompanying the congregation, the tempo remained slow.[...] The generally slow tempi created lengthy pauses at the end of each melodic line. Silence was not really an option, nor was an extended chord on the organ. The solution was the *Zwischenspiel*, a linear interlude, described by Kauffman as “a graceful passage... between each melodic phrase.”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Cited from Pamela Ruiten-Feenstra, *Bach and the Art of Improvisation* vol. 1 (Ann Arbor: Chi Press, 2011), 106.

<sup>64</sup> Leaver and Zager, *Organ Accompaniment* vol. 13, 11.



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There are also several written examples of the interlude tradition. Georg Kauffman's *Seelenlust* is the most prominent with a whole chorale book in alphabetical order, in which all chorales have written *Zwischenspiel*. J. S. Bach left a few chorales with interludes, among them BWV 715, 726 and 729. Even in the nineteenth century we can still find this tradition in musical sources. In the foreword to Kauffman's *Harmonische seelenlust* we can read, as quoted from Leaver/Zager:

To complete this, a graceful passage [i.e *Zwischenspiel*, interlude] should be inserted between each melodic phrase. Music lovers, as they are described here, may not be able to fashion something between phrases. Just to remain silent, however, would be awkward. That's why I hope to gain a few merits through these comments. Especially since I remember that there are quite a number [of amateur musicians] who earlier asked for such a discussion.<sup>66</sup>

In some of the written sources from Swedish handwritten hymnals you can find fragments of written down interludes in between the phrases of the hymn. The challenge with the interludes is to make them natural in the breathing of the congregation. One hypothesis that I have been working on is that the congregation had a habit to rest on the fermata at every phrase and that the organist adopted to that natural breathing and just filled in the pause and then joined for the next phrase. This hypothesis is supported by the quote that is cited above. This hypothesis raised new questions in whether the interludes should stay in tempo. This leads us into the next question of big importance.

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<sup>65</sup> Appendix C: 17: Kauffman, "Ein feste burg," from *Harmonischen Seelenlust*.

<sup>66</sup> Leaver and Zager, *Organ Accompaniment*, 20.

## 6.5 Trills and ornamentation

In the Zellbell handwritten source you can find a lot of ornamentation written into the hymn melody.



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We can assume that this was a common habit in accompanying hymns. In the introduction of the 1811 hymnal we can read:

In most churches the tiring habit to play the chorales so extremely slow, as if this was part of the very excellence, so that the congregation that has to sing it, even with the best of lungs, can't manage these recurring suspensions. Therefore, you can hear, mostly in rural congregations, first the women finish the phrase. A bit later the men's voices follow – and finally the organist comes unhurried after with his drills and roulades.<sup>68</sup>

In the artistic work with the hymns it felt more and more natural to regard the trills and the diminutions of the chorale melody as appoggiaturas to the next note. In that way the playing led the hymn forward steadily and the trills became almost helpful in keeping the slow tempo flowing. This could have been the true intent with the ornamentation of hymn tunes. But it takes a skilled musician

<sup>67</sup> Appendix C: 10 Zellbell's chorale book, author's photo.

<sup>68</sup> "Så råder t.ex. i de flesta Kyrkor den tröttande vanan, att spela Choralerna så utomordentligt långsamt, liksom hörde detta till sjelfva förträffligheten, så att Församlingen, som dock skall sjunga dem, äfven med bästa lungor, icke uthärdar med dessa eviga uthållningar. Hvarföre man ock, särdeles i Landsförsamlingar, oftast får höra Qvinfolken först utsjunga och sluta sin rad i versen. Något derefter kommer Karlrösterna – slutligen kommer Organisten makligen efter med sina drillar och löpningar."

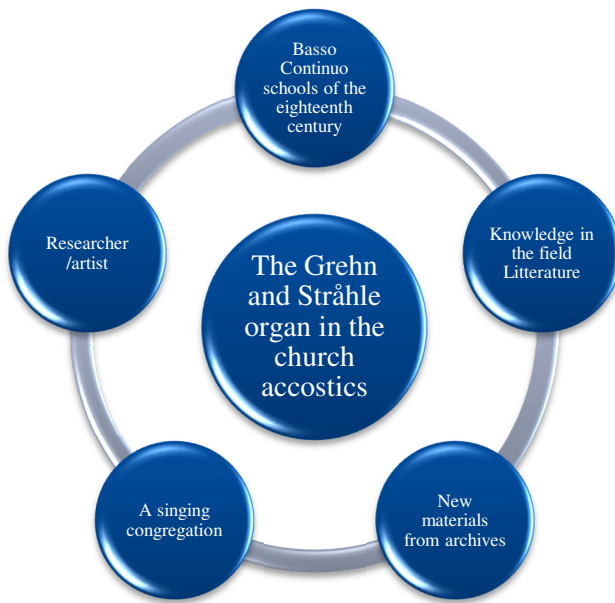
to make the purpose possible. I guess not every church in Sweden had such musicians, and it could have been a cause to more and more leave the ornamentation in hymn playing and in the nineteenth century go towards a more straightforward four-part chorale.

## 6.6 Temperament

The organ in Överselö Church was tuned as close to an equal temperament as possible. In the readings about Gren and Stråhle we could see that this was not a coincidence, but a natural consequence of working together with the established researchers at Uppsala University and especially Christoffer Polhem. In Kellner's theory book on figured bass we could also see that it was striving toward a major/minor tonality and that the old church modes were taken away in central Sweden for a time. When the 1820 hymnal came it was criticized for the fact that the church modes came back.

When we made the experiments with the singing congregation you could hear that the usage of the voices changed and that the singers were forced to sing louder and clearer than they usually do. In the experiment we were only about 30 singers. In large congregations, as it probably was in Överselö in the eighteenth century, a high pitch feels much more naturally endorsing. You can imagine that the hymn-singing in Överselö Church after they got the organ was very forceful and that either the pitch or the strength of the registers was considered a problem.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS



In my method I chose to combine the micro-historic method with artistic research with the purpose of developing new knowledge in the field of hymn accompaniment in eighteenth-century central Sweden. It was an enticement to try to extract that knowledge from an ordinary rural congregation, with an ordinary organist from that time. So much research is centered on the artistic

genius. And the edge of art and science can teach us so much. But what about the common organist in Sweden? Can we learn from the broad perspectives by making a delving in a specific situation, in as specific time, in a specific place? And is there new knowledge to get from the artistic approach to this specific time and place. That was what I wanted to examine in my work.

The sources that are left from the eighteenth century are few and mostly contain only clues to what hymn accompaniment could have sounded like. Since it is mainly an art of improvisation the music is hidden in several different sources. Therefore, the musicology has left the field mainly untouched. The artistic research model gives keys to a new way of understanding. To enter this vast and unexplored field of research from a combined artistic and micro historic point of view has many advantages. The organist, the priests and the churches were filled with real historic persons with different backgrounds that contributed to the development of the Swedish hymn playing practice. In my essay below I have tried to depict a normal Sunday in the congregation where the organ just started to have an important role. The fact that I, in my research, have had the opportunity to be in the area, in the room with the right acoustics and to play on the organ that is restored to its original condition has contributed credibility to the study. With the help from the experiment with a singing congregation we could also revive the sound of the organ mixed with voices in the Church acoustics.

In my artistic meeting with the restored Överselö organ, that was still placed in the room where it was first built I had the opportunity to try to “become” that rural organist whom I could get to learn from the church archives, and to imagine his working conditions and try to recreate his basis of knowledge. In the experiment I had the opportunity to try my developments with an ordinary singing congregation and in that meeting get the feeling of how the room was responding to my choices of tempo, settings and articulation. By comparing my experience and my feelings around the hymn accompaniment with the knowledge in the field I could create a deeper understanding in how the organ, the room, the hymns and the congregation interacted. From this experience I can develop the knowledge in the field and share my findings.

One study of this kind does not cover the whole field, and further research is required to make the puzzle more complete. For this matter I can encourage other to follow my model of research, with the combination of artistic and micro-historical methods.

## 7.1 Reflections and future work

The way the hymns were sung and accompanied in the early Lutheran church is an underestimated source for knowledge about hymns and liturgy, as well as the repertoire in every specific time. The interaction that occurs in hymn singing between the educated organist and the congregation develops new musical patterns that affect the interpretation of music as well as new compositions. Most of the composers and musicians in European history have a relationship to worship and also to the hymn singing and playing. You can say that hymn playing is one of the basic musical patterns, alongside dance and reciting texts to name two other examples. The hymns are cited and imitated in composed music from the whole classical era. Therefore it is a development for the whole musical interpretational field to further work with questions like this in the field of traditions of hymn singing and playing.

The idea of how to sing and play hymns drastically changed during the nineteenth century and therefore the traditions from the eighteenth century were lost. The organs changed to have more foundational character with deep 16-foot Bourdons in the manual. Many of these organs are still in use in Sweden and this aesthetic is partly still present. The congregations were taught to sing more

unison, and also in four-part settings. The interludes and the trills were vanishing. In 2018 we are still teaching our church musicians in this nineteenth-century tradition, even if new ideas are beginning to blend in.

I hope that the research about hymnal accompaniment is only at the starting pit and that the interest in the field will increase, especially with the new implement that the artistic research offers. In every church where there is an interesting organ and documentation of elder times a project can be done. I can see that exploring earlier traditions of hymn playing can contribute to organ accompaniment in our own time: a time that, for several reasons, could be called a new Basso Continuo Era. Even though the chords are spelled with letters rather than the old bass line with figures the principles for creating functional arrangements directly at the keyboard are the same. Further studies in this area of knowledge can be a source for refinement and revival. History is not only a study of the past but also a source for new development and artistic work here and now.



## 7.2 A Sunday in May at Överselö Church Anno Domini 1755

A historical essay by Hanna Drakengren

The spring came late to Överselö this year. The lake still was blended with ice when the sun started to warm the meadows. On the old grave fields the Easter flowers were blooming when Anders Hansson started his morning. In less than half an hour he needed to be at church so that Olof Dufberg, the newly appointed organist could get the opportunity to practice the hymns for this Sunday. Anders was very interested in the new organ. Ever since the building process started and the two gentlemen from Stockholm anchored their boat by Tynnelsö wharf and started to carry the material toward the church, he had been engaged. He had helped them out and to support them he fetched his pushcart in order to make it more convenient to transport the heavy loads a thousand feet on the bumpy road to the church. And he was eagerly watching when they unpacked the material. Anders had never seen anything so beautiful. The wood was perfectly planed and so soft to touch. And all the metal nails and threads that were combined in such thoughtful manner with care in every detail. Anders had been totally caught up in the construction, amazed when the bellows were attached and the beautiful pipes were arranged in perfect symmetric order onto the facade of blue and gold. When the organ was finished Anders asked the vicar, the nobleman Eric Humbla if he could help the congregation with the organ. From that day he was appointed Bellows treader in the parish and he was very proud of his work, which also included helping the organist with the mechanics of the instrument. On the day of the inspection he had the opportunity to meet the cathedral organist, Mr. Georg Lonicer and his student Olof Dufberg. Together they went through the whole organ and the skilled organist told them how to maintain the organ so it would last for a long time. Maybe a hundred years he said and they all smiled at each other. It seemed like an eternity. But he was satisfied, Mr. Londicer, and said that Överselö could be really proud to have such a nice instrument. Built with the newest technical research and tuned in a well-tempered way. In that way, he said, the modern music could be played and that would really help the congregation in their worship. He gave his student Olof a friendly pat on the back and said to him that he was ready now to fill this church with beautiful music.

When Anders reached the church it was still cold inside and no candles were lit. Anders went up on the balcony and checked the bellows to see that no mice would have been

there during the week. He always put traps on the balcony to protect the treasure on it. After a little while Olof came hastily in and out of breath. He almost always did and Anders were used to his impulsivity. He had great respect for Olof and his knowledge in music. Olof not only knew the thorough bass and the art of preludes, he also played nice pieces that made the organ sing throughout the room, and on Friday evenings he also played the violin for the barn dance with the same elegance. Anders thought he was a great musician and Olof always blushed a little when Anders praised him after the worship. "I couldn't have managed without you, Anders. You know that," he often said and that made Anders light at heart. He felt that his role as the Bellows treader really was an important brick in the building of the Church of Christ in the diocese, as Eric Humbla said.

The church filled up with the congregation. They came from the castle of Tynnelsö, from the great farms of Tynnelsö, Ekeby and Hässelby and the peasants and servants took their places in the back of the church. There were never any questions asked about the seating. Everyone knew their place and there were lists that the church council had prepared where every house had their row of benches. The vicar got dressed for service and the bells were ringing. Anders and Olof looked at each other and on a given sign Anders started to tread the bellows and the organ sounded. Olof made a nice prelude with a solo trumpet registration on the first hymn. When the congregation started on the first stanza he changed the registers so that the congregation were supported but not drowned. Between every phrase in the old Lutheran hymn "O gläd dig Guds församling nu" Olof made elegant interludes in a single part which allowed the congregation to breathe and bring to mind the next phrase in the hymn. The interludes were always improvised and sometimes they illustrated the lyrics of the hymn. Sometimes Anders could recognize a tune he had heard on the dance the Friday before and when he heard that he laughed quietly and hoped no one else had made that connection. When singing the hymns, some people in the congregation took the lead and made new melodies on top of the common hymn as written in the hymnal or made improvisations and ornamentation while singing the slow phrases. The maid from Janslunda, Catharina was known for her beautiful voice and many admired her skills and tried to imitate her melodies. It was hard for Olof to keep the singing together sometimes, but in the end he was always the winner. The bishop in Strängnäs had strictly exhorted the parishes to bring order in the singing, in order to make the worship

more united. It was for that reason the churches needed organs and educated organists.

Eric held a long sermon with a powerful tone. Sometimes it was hard for him to make himself heard over all the chatter in the back rows. But Eric was a lettered man with many years of book reading and book writing behind him, and he was eager to speak God's word to the nobles as well as to the peasants. Meanwhile Anders counted the participants. This day he counted ninety-seven parishioners. It was his duty to keep register of the church duty, and he made notations in a book. After the sermon it was time for the hymn "Our father" to be sung. This hymn had nine stanzas and took a very long time to sing. Some people went out for a while and came back. No one really took note of that and Olof was playing on every verse. To keep from being bored, he made variations with the melody in the bass, the melody in the tenor and even the melody in the alto. And all the variations were beautiful in Anders's ears as he patiently stepped up on the levers that gave air to the bellows. For him, it was like a physical prayer to see the levers rise up and then to force them down again. It made him ready to face the weekly gossip as he called the announcements that followed the sermon. It was at church on Sundays that you got to know what was happening in the world: in the parish, in the town of Strängnäs, and even in Stockholm. Peace reigned in Sweden but it was said that King Adolf Fredrik had problems with Prussia. They all still remembered the war with the Russians and hoped that the young men in their parish would be spared from conscription.

The last hymn on this beautiful May Sunday was the popular melody "Then blomstertid," a summer hymn that had been introduced with the 1695 hymnbook. It was a nice and singable melody and the people in the benches seemed expectant when Olof introduced the hymn in a contrapuntal manner. Anders thought that it sounded like a polonaise and the congregation adopted the slightly higher tempo for this hymn and sang the four verses with great joy. After the service many from the congregation greeted the two men on the balcony as a sign of thankfulness for the music. Anders was satisfied with his work for the day and he congratulated Olof on his nice playing and they all parted for another week of work in the fields and on the lake.

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## **Appendix A – Material from the experiment**

- 1) Survey and answers in Swedish
- 2) Survey and answers in English
- 3) "Vater unser" Swedish text Translation Hanna Drakengren
- 4) Article in the local newspaper: *Strengnes tidning*
- 5) The material that was handed out – in Swedish
- 6-8) Settings for Hymn 3
- 9) Settings for Hymn 4
- 10) The BC from 1697 hymnal on Hymn 1

## **Appendix B - recordings**

If no one else is mentioned: Organ Hanna Drakengren

- 1) A first meeting with the Överselö organ. Music by Scheidemann, Scheidt and improvisations
- 2) Second meeting

- 3 – 8 ) Recordings from the experiment on May 10, 2017
- 9- 11 and 19-20) Preparations for the Uppsala seminar in the Conference on Lutheran Music Culture
- 12-14) Recordings from the Uppsala seminar in Bälinge Church
- 15) An experiment in trying to sing in the old individualized way
- 16) Scheidemann “Von himmel hoch” with singers Örgryte New Church Organ: Lars Storm
- 17) Bach Cantata “Wachet auf” Chorale with improvised interludes. Köpings Church
- 18) Hülphers on Kellner
- 19) Hülphers on Överselö organ

### **Appendix C – Pictures in reference**

Photographer if no one else is mentioned: Hanna Drakengren

- 1) A note from a song book in the Ytterselö archives.
- 2) A picture by Eric Humbla on the Överselö Church. From Roggebiblioteket. Photographer: Elin Andersson.
- 3 a-c) The inspection protocol for the organ. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.
- 4 a-c) The ordering of the organ in the protocols from Överselö Church. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.
- 5) Contract for a new organist. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.
- 6) Progression of the work. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.
- 7) Restrictions for the balcony and the seating regulations in church. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.
- 8 – 9) Restoration protocol. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.
- 10-11 and 15) Zellbell’s chorale book. From the Royal Library Stockholm
- 12) Sheet music by Londicers.
- 14) Protocol where the organist Olof Dufberg is mentioned. From the Church Archives in Uppsala.

### **Appendix D Överselö Local Archives**

From Överselö Church Archives. As reference.

### **Appendix E Handwritten Chorale Books**

From the Royal Library Stockholm. As reference.