

# Nådens ordning

En studie av västsvensk pietism  
omkring 1730–1760

with an English Summary

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## Abstract.

von Wachenfeldt, P. *Nådens ordning – En studie av västsvensk pietism omkring 1730–1760*. [*The State of Grace – A study of pietism in western Sweden ca. 1730–1760*] 174 pages. Avhandling från Institutionen för historiska studier, Göteborgs universitet. Written in Swedish with an English summary. ISBN 978-91-633-9061-6

The topic of this dissertation is the wave of pietist revivals, or ‘awakenings’, that swept across western Sweden during the first half of the eighteenth century. Originating in Saxony, in the previous century, the pietist movement and its various expressions left a lasting impression on the social and cultural environment of northern Germany and large parts of Scandinavia. Indeed, as has been highlighted by previous research, because of the stress put on the immediate and personal relation between man and God without the intervention of the Church, pietism promoted the rise of modern individualism. Yet, despite extensive research into the origins, spread, and effects of pietism, one vital problem has remained largely unexplored, i.e. considering the variation between different expressions of pietism, what were the actual core values of pietism and how were these reflected in the values and actions expressed by people touched by the revival? For the purpose of analyzing this problem I have studied three, rural parishes in western Sweden in the 1730–1760 period, Främmestad, Stora Bjurum and Skärv.

The thesis includes six chapters. In the introduction I provide an outline of the problem, my theoretical model and the research design. Chapter two includes an in-depth presentation of David Hollatz’ work and his structure of *The State of Grace*. Chapters three through five consist of the case studies, Främmestad, Stora Bjurum, and Skärv. They detail the local awakenings in relation to Hollatz and my model based on van Gennep and Turner. Chapter six is a concluding assessment and summary of my findings. I argue that the structure of pietism, as based on the teachings of Hollatz, promoted individualization in early modern rural society. My study demonstrates that pietism became the foundation of new, albeit temporary, communities in local society and also, as a more long term effect, new modes of subjectivity and individualized ways of relating to society.

Keywords:

Sweden, pietist, revivals, awakenings, eighteenth century, modern individualism, core values of pietism, David Hollatz, *The State of Grace*, Turner, Främmestad, Stora Bjurum, Skärv