

HEMLIGHETERNAS VÄRLD

Bror Gadelius och psykiatrins
genombrott i det tidiga
1900-talets Sverige

Patrik Möller

Akademisk avhandling i Idé- och lärdomshistoria,
som med vederbörligt tillstånd av Humanistiska fakultetsnämnden
vid Göteborgs universitet för avläggande av filosofie doktorexamen,
kommer att offentligen försvaras fredagen den 17 november 2017,
klockan 13.15 i Hörsal 2150, Eklandagatan 86.

*

Institutionen för litteratur, idéhistoria och religion



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

Abstract

Patrik Möller, *Hemligbeternas värld: Bror Gadelius och psykiatriens genombrott i det tidiga 1900-talets Sverige* [*A world of secrets: Bror Gadelius and the establishment of psychiatry in early 20th century Sweden*], Ph. D. Dissertation, Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion, University of Gothenburg, 2017, ISBN 978-91-88348-87-6.

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the transformation of psychiatry in Sweden in the early 20th century. At the turn of the century, 1800–1900, a form of psychiatry appeared that in many aspects sought to differentiate itself from the discipline as it had emerged during the previous century. Theoretically there was a shift in attention from the brain to the mind and measures were taken to make the care for the mentally ill more humanitarian. To a great extent this was a result of the writings and actions of Bror Gadelius, Sweden's leading psychiatrist at the time.

This phase in the history of psychiatry is analyzed from the perspective of two intertwined processes, the medicalization of madness and deviance and scientific specialization; as well as the nexus of power and humanism characteristic for psychiatric discourse. It is suggested that the professed new identity of psychiatry formed an essential part of Gadelius' strategies to spread a psychiatric view on human mentality in society and to safeguard the discipline's borders against other medical specialties. The humanitarian aspects are investigated in patient records and the narrative representation of patients in case stories. One conclusion is that power in the asylum on the one hand was a condition for the humanitarian treatment of the mentally ill, but that on the other hand inherent norms and discipline put a limit to the free expression of the patient as well as the therapeutic potential in the patient-doctor relationship.

Key words: History of psychiatry, history of science, psychiatry, mentally ill, asylum, social deviance, patient records, case stories, medicalization, scientific specialization, border work, humanism, narrative medicine, medical humanities, M. Foucault.