

Translating Discourses of Enlightenment – Trans-cultural Language Skills and Cross-references between Swedish and German Educated Journals in the 18th century

Dr. Andreas Önnerfors

*När ljuset tändas skall, och spridas i ett land/
Ger Himlen faklan först uti Regentens hand.*

”When Light shall be lit and spread throughout a country/
The torch at first is placed by heaven in the hands of its sovereign”
Neueste Critische Nachrichten 1775:12

‘Hallo’s happy evening’ – transforming society through reading

In the weekly journal *Neueste Critische Nachrichten* 1783:49 we find a review of a “political and economical novel” with the somehow odd title “Hallo’s happy evening”. The critical journal with its predecessors was since 1743 edited in the university town of Greifswald, part of the Swedish dominion on German soil Swedish-Pomerania at the Baltic shore. But back to the review: according to the critic, the novel presented “important truths concerning government and agriculture”. The subsequent three pages of summary of the novel reveal a plan of total societal reform in the spirit of Enlightenment. The aging statesman Hallo turns into a philosophic and paternal consultant of the new sovereign, prince Gustaf. Hallo refuses all signs of honour and lives on his estates close to the royal residence where he in the hidden works on a reform of living-conditions of his very local subjects. He turns into “a father and friend of his peasants, he abolished the service at the estate, turned [serving] peasants into taxpayers, enlarged their fields from his own [...]” and so on. Through “arguments of reason” he succeeds in to convince the peasants to overcome prejudices and superstition. A church is established in the village, priest, physicist and midwife look after the physical and spiritual wellbeing of its inhabitants.

From time to time, prince Gustaf arrives to the estates of Hallo in order to receive advice on government. As a result, death penalty is abolished, schools are improved, and the “incomes of the idle” at court are abolished. All this is performed under the motto “wherever a sovereign grows competent and virtuous subjects, crimes are diminished and hence also punishment”. Education of clergy is reformed in accordance to “the religious science as our Lord Christ himself taught and lectured it”. Government officials are to be paid wages that cover their living expenses. Wages of workers should be balanced, insurance companies established, “further on, calls are made for free trade and the abolishment of all custom-houses” and the establishment of well organised medical care. The critic summarises the main ambitions of the work as follows: “Such sound rules of government gives our Hallo everywhere to his beloved Gustaf; and Gustaf, for his own eternal honour, listens to and follows him.” The novel followed the tradition of the so-called “Hausvaterliteratur”, a genre of literature where the psychological development of the protagonist is of minor interest. The stereotype figure “Hausvater”, “the Father of the House” perhaps best translated as “patriarch” of a home or estate, takes care of his family, servants, peasants, plans field work thoroughly and works constantly on the improvement of the conditions in his own confined space. ‘Hausvaterliteratur’ is connected to the state-novel, a similar genre established already by *Albrecht Haller* (1708-1777), and that in the same stereotyped manner treated wise statesmen and their efforts for the improvement of their country. These fictive tales of good statehood concealed moral messages with the aim to serve as a practical program of reform.¹

¹Reiner Schulze, *Policey und Gesetzgebungslehre im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin 1982) p. 64 treats the concept of “Hausvater” and its function. On p. 218 he writes about an “idea of a

Hallo performs in his microcosm – within the framework of existing political order – deep changes and improvements for those people he is responsible for. The pattern for the great ruler of the state is obvious: if he follows the plan of Hallo, society will improve. Hence, the novel is self-assuring: the aged wise man gives advice followed by the young prince and everything develops into the best imaginable. The author of the novel, *Christian Friedrich Sintenis* (1750-1820), can be counted to a group of enlightened writers that advocated moderate reform “from above” as the main model of transformation of society. Through the lecture of edifying literature in the ‘Hausvater’-tradition, they believed, changes could be promoted.

More than two years later we find a review of “Hallo’s happy evening” in the flagship of German enlightenment press *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* 1786:1. The critic stated that the novel contained a “well-meant plan of a reform of the state for the benefit of everyone, proposals of reform in the political, ecclesiastical and economical administration of an ideal country”. It treated “all favourite subjects of recent politics and state economy”, from “feeding in stables, abolishment of service at the estates and fenced grazing, to the improvement of court benches and church liturgy.” But these suggestions for improvements that a “warm fantasy promised a cosmopolitan”, were not embraced by the critic. Perhaps the proposed maxims could be performed in a novel, but “in real life they often show contrary effects”, he concluded resolutely.²

However, Sintenis novel found a warm supporter at the northern fringe of enlightened journalism. Only three weeks after its publication in *Neueste Critische Nachrichten*, we find the review translated into Swedish in the journal *Upfostrings-Sälskapets-Tidningar* 1784:1, edited in the capital Stockholm. Hence, at the end of year 1783 the news crossed the Baltic Sea between the port towns Stralsund and Ystad and perhaps also travelled around five hundred kilometres on horseback or coach, and at that time of the year rather sledge, overland on Swedish soil. This would have been the ordinary post connection between the dominion Swedish-Pomerania and its motherland. Another possibility is that a shipmaster took a box with books and journals on board and transported it directly to the port of central Stockholm, Skeppsbrokajen and that the editor of *Upfostrings-Sälskapets Tidningar* himself fetched his bundle at the office of the government censor, who was in charge to accept or reject foreign book imports. We do not know. We know however that post connection between Greifswald and Stockholm at ideal conditions during summertime took at minimum ten and sea travel between fourteen days and three weeks. Between November and March of the following year the post boat between Stralsund and Ystad (established already in regular traffic during the 1680-ies) was cancelled often and for long periods. At least it went very irregular due to ice formation and drift-ice. Such was the situation across the Baltic Sea at whole. Hence, the review of “Hallo’s happy evening” reached the Swedish reading public in incredible speed. How was that possible? This article tries to explore cross-connections between German and Swedish press during the Enlightenment and how certain topics connected to its intellectual history were communicated. The development of press and book-market during the 18th century contributed to the formation of an all-European public space, where information could be shared mutually. One central prerequisite in this process was the competence to

planned society ruled by bureaucrats” in a form of literature that moves between “concreteness and utopia”, which is a good characterisation of Hausvaterliteratur.

² Review of the novel „Hallos glücklicher Abend“, 1r und 2r Theil in *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*. 1765-96. 1786, 69.Bd., 1.St., p. 109 – 111.

translate information from one language to another, may it be short political news, exhaustive scientific and historical works or travel literature. Our knowledge of the practical organisation of this translation machinery so crucial for the success of Enlightenment is rather limited. For the case of Sweden, its continental connections to the German-speaking sphere was one of the most important channels in order to get Swedish news/articles/works translated to German or German equivalents translated to Swedish and hence to be a part of the European exchange of ideas. It is within the hubs and nodes of the large network of European intellectuals of the time we find people that were skilled to translate from one language to another, sometimes in amazing speed and that thus severely question our preconceptions on centre and periphery.³

The formation of a Swedish-German public sphere

Since 1648 the province Swedish Pomerania at the Baltic shore belonged to the Swedish crown as a compensation for Swedish participation in the protestant coalition during the 30-years war. Swedish possessions on German soil however were constantly diminished, primarily in competition with the neighbouring and expanding state of Brandenburg-Prussia. During the last century of Swedish dominion 1720-1815, the political importance of Sweden as one of the signatory powers of the peace of Westphalia had declined dramatically. Instead, the century of Enlightenment developed encounters of great importance for the reciprocal transfer of culture. The political and juridical construction of Swedish dominion on German soil was complicated. When Sweden was granted compensation during the negotiations that led to the peace of Westphalia in 1648, the Swedish monarch did not simply take over German lands. Instead, the quality of Duke of Pomerania was added to his titles and it was in this quality he governed his possession. Pomerania hence did not face a “Swedification” like it was the case with those provinces conquered from Denmark during the 17th century (Scania, Halland and Blekinge). German was kept as official language, jurisdiction and political order remained unchanged.

Under such circumstances it surprises that a cultural identification process took place that encouraged a surely privileged group to acquire double cultural competences allowing them to profit from the situation of Swedish-Pomerania as an intermediate between German and Swedish zones of interests, a transcultural region. For some groups in society this position was most obvious. Such is the case for shipbrokers, shipmasters and merchants in general. Another group was the nobility. Both established throughout the time of Swedish dominion double branches, acquired estates or built up offices and enterprises on both sides of the Baltic Sea. It was of course also in the interest of the state to raise a class of loyal state officials that not only were able to speak both languages, but also to commute between two cultures. The Swedish king could indirectly influence religious development of the province through the publication of ‘intercession day bills’ (in Swedish “Bönedagsplakat”) that were translated from Swedish to German from the middle of the 17th century on. Those bills had to be read from the pulpits throughout the country and nailed onto the church door. Their content was of

³ The main source for this article is the dissertation of the author Andreas Önnorfors, *Svenska Pommern-kulturmöten och identification 1720-1815* (Lund 2003) online available at <www.lub.lu.se/luft/diss/hum_250/hum_250_transit.html> and sources quoted herein. The episode on *Hallo's glücklicher Abend* is also treated in the forthcoming article Andreas Önnorfors, ”Aspekte der Nutzarmachung der Natur in der Berichterstattung der schwedischen aufgeklärten Presse” in *Landschaften agrarisch-ökonomischen Wissens. Regionale Fallstudien zu landwirtschaftlichen und gewerblichen Themen in Zeitschriften und Sozietäten des 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Marcus Popplow, (Münster 2007)

religious nature, but addressed also theological values that changed over time and that can be read as comments on the current political development in the Swedish realm. Hence, they contributed to the establishment of the first public space and ‘imagined community’ of a larger ‘Swedish’ collective.⁴ The same applied for bills that were issued at the occasion of royal births or deceases. The most intimate connection between material communication and communication of cultural competence was however established through the post boat line between the port town of Stralsund in Swedish-Pomerania and Ystad in Southern Sweden during the 1680-ies. Post boats sailed the line up to three times a week, depending on weather and wind conditions and the above-mentioned winter break. These boats not only were used in order to ensure administration of the province, but also for transport of people, goods and prints. The hub of communication was the post-office in Stralsund, where passengers had to register for their travel to Sweden and incoming post, goods and people entered the province. It was most probably in the circles around the post-office Pomerania received its first newspaper ever, *Stralsundischer Relations-Courier*, a paper that existed at least in two periods 1689-1702 and 1747-1754.⁵ The main content of the paper published during the first period was news and rumours from European courts, vast descriptions of warfare throughout the continent, physical abnormalities of different kinds, disastrous diseases, bitter catastrophes and brutal crime, interpreted as results of Gods revenge and punishment. But we see also a clear trend that news from Sweden was presented not only regularly but also on a privileged spot. Somebody must have received and translated it. And it is rather obvious that the Swedish crown saw this publication as a means to spread counter-propaganda against news published in the hostile press of Hamburg and Altona (that belonged to the Swedish arch-enemy Denmark). It was the post-officer of Stralsund, Daniel Joachim Vatky, who in 1703 edited a mixture between a Swedish-German travel guide, parlour and currency converter, *Schwedischer und Teutscher Wegweiser*.⁶ The publication clearly proofs deep knowledge in both cultures and it is most probable that Vatky also was one of the brains behind the first newspaper in Swedish-Pomerania. This early development of public space through the establishment of press lasted for the rest of Swedish dominion. The access to political and economical news on Sweden and Scandinavia was crucial to merchants and governmental officials that inhabited Stralsund to where the capital of Swedish-Pomerania moved after the loss of Stettin in 1720. In the university town of Greifswald, the situation was quite different. The university printing office served largely internal purposes: academic theses – the majority still in Latin – and occasional poetry made out its main products. The first signs of a new era in educated press culture are to be found at the end of the 1720-ies, when professor of law *Christian von Nettelbladt* (1696-1775) edited his journal *Schwedische Bibliothec* 1728-1735.⁷ Due to the low quality offered by the university printing office, Nettelbladt printed his periodical that was issued irregularly in five volumes in Stockholm and Leipzig (the metropolis of German book market). But there might also have been other reasons. Nettelbladts intention was to proof the superiority of Swedish culture, history and religious

⁴ Joachim Östlund, *Lyckolandet: maktens legitimering i officiell retorik från stormaktstid till demokratins genombrott* (Lund 2007). The dissertation has also a summary in English with the title ”The land of bliss: the legitimisation of power in public rhetoric from Sweden's period as a great power to the full emergence of democracy”.

⁵ Press history in Swedish-Pomerania with further references to earlier works is presented in the article Andreas Önnersfors, ”Svenska nyheter på tyska – Svenska Pommerns presshistoria” in *Svensk Presshistorisk årsbok* (2004), p. 25-50.

⁶ Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 26 and “Svenska nyheter på tyska”, p. 34.

⁷ Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 79-84, and other works on Nettelbladt (mainly by Nils Jörn) quoted herein as well as Önnersfors, “Svenska nyheter på tyska”, p. 39-40.

tradition. Hence, he attacked judgements of popular German writers on the intellectual capacity of Northern people (early forms of climate theory questioned that a cold climate could foster intelligence), the development of pietism and the dominance of Roman law in German territories. Nettelbladt also translated Swedish works into German and Latin and thus made them accessible for a – probably hostile – reading public. His life is representative for the kind of cultural mediators that we find in the Swedish realm of this period. Nettelbladts father was a merchant from the German port town of Rostock, immigrated to Stockholm and together with his relatives in German lands, established one of the largest and successful import-export businesses between Sweden and the continent. However born in Stockholm, his youngest son Christian never needed to learn Swedish. He went to the German school and was a member of the German parish and studied abroad, in the Netherlands and Leipzig. But when appointed professor of law in Greifswald in 1725, Nettelbladt turned out to be a true Swedish patriot who devoted the vast majority of his academic writings to defend Swedish traditions in jurisdiction, law history and culture. *Schwedische Bibliothec* is of a very one-sided nature, miles away from the critical deliberation that was the leitmotif of the enlightened press. However, Nettelbladts periodical was the first in the province to discuss educated matters in public. Through the edition of original documents, he believed, the reader could make up his own mind. Moreover, he translated educated news from Swedish to German. These elements unite him with the enlightened educated press that from the 1740-ies on made its connection to Sweden a main feature.

The rise of enlightened press

In 1739, the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences was established in Stockholm. This event marked a dramatic turn in scientific culture of Sweden as the academy mainly promoted “useful” sciences and published its quarterly communications in Swedish. From the middle of the century on, the academy received a privilege to edit an official almanac mainly based upon astronomic observations from the observatory of the academy in Stockholm. But the almanac also contained several articles that may be characterised as ‘popular enlightenment’: recipes against cow diseases, practical advice for new ploughing techniques, hygiene, clothing, heating, historical accounts with a clear moral message and so on. Being situated in the capital was also a programmatic choice for the academy. Science was now in the centre of cultural, political and economical life and did not take place in isolated perfection such as in the university towns of Uppsala (north of Stockholm), Åbo (in Finland that until 1809 was an integrated part of Sweden) and Lund (in Southern Sweden). The situation in the German province was however different. It is among a new generation of university teachers in Greifswald we find initiatives to create educated societies. The first of it, *Königliche Deutsche Gesellschaft* (KDG), was inaugurated already in September 1739.⁸ In its letter to the Swedish king, where the society applied for royal protection and privileges, KDG mentioned the Swedish Royal Academy as an example to follow. And it was in the circles of the KDG the closest connection to its sister in Stockholm grew, a connection that during the decades to come provided Greifswald with first hand information and news on Swedish scientific culture. At the occasion of its inauguration, the chairman of KDG Augustin von Balthasar formulated the ambitions of the society: sciences should serve the benefit of all, and hence communicated in the language of the country. In accordance to its contemporary German counterparts, one main ambition of the society was the improvement of German language. Only a refined language could promote science in its most optimal way and in order to discuss these topics, the society founded an educated journal, *Critische Versuche zur Aufnahme der deutschen Sprache* (1741-1746). Editor was the secretary of KDG, *Johann Carl Dähnert*

⁸ Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 121-135.

(1719-1785), one of the central figures of Swedish-Pomeranian enlightenment. Apparently, Dähnerts ambitions reached further. In 1743, he started to edit the twice-weekly appearing journal *Pommersche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen* (1743-1748) in a quiet complicated octavo format. The same year, more pietistic circles edited *Greifswaldisches Wochenblatt* that has a clearly religious profile and that was discontinued only the following year. Without doubt, the new generation wrote for *Pommersche Nachrichten*. Regarding the view upon Spinoza (who by rational circles was rehabilitated during the 18th century) for example, we can see signs of an educated debate, where the two journals represented opposite positions. But Dähnert made also reports on Swedish intellectual life a constituent element of his journal that was decorated with the Swedish national coat of arms as title vignette.

Swedish science: a master topic of educated press

During the so-called Age of Freedom, 1720-1772, Sweden had to face a severe process of transformation and reform. Nearly twenty years of warfare by Charles XII, killed 1718 in the trenches outside the Norwegian town of Fredrikshald, had disastrous consequences for Swedish economy and population. All trans-Baltic provinces were lost to Russia, the territory of Finland reduced and parts of the German territories only reconstructed after long peace negotiations. Approximately one generation of men was lost during wartime and Swedish population diminished due to plague and starvation. The new rulers of the state reduced the power of the king to a minimum; a council of the realm and a parliamentary assembly that represented the four estates of the realm governed Sweden. During the 1730-ies, political life in Sweden changed as two political parties emerged, 'caps' and 'hats'. The 'caps' promoted an agricultural basis of economy and sought to regain lost territories. The 'hat' party launched a program based more on manufacture and commerce. In foreign policy they advocated a strong alliance with, or rather almost complete dependence from France. At the parliamentary assembly of 1738, the 'hats' gained nearly total majority in parliamentary committees and dominated the political scene in Sweden for the next three decades to come. The establishment of the Royal Academy of Sciences was part of the 'hat' reform plan, science, in particular natural and applied sciences should be used in order to reform the country's economy and boost its productivity. It was now Swedish science reached its heydays, with the botanist Linné and the nowadays forgotten mathematician Polhem, mineralogist Wallerius, astronomers Celsius and Wargentin and chemist Scheele. Those names were however familiar to the European reading public.

Swedish science could serve as an example not only based on its achievements as such, but in combination with the concept of good governance that for a long time was attributed the Swedish state. Dähnert started already in 1744 to write in his *Pommersche Nachrichten* on the Swedish Academy of Science (in the following KVA). No other topic during the six decades to follow was covered as intensive in the educated press of Swedish Pomerania.⁹ Approximately ten percent of the total news coverage during this period treated Swedish

⁹ The journal *Hamburgische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Gelehrten Historie und der Wissenschaften* was a pioneer concerning reports on the KVA. Already in its first edition in 1740 the establishment of the academy was described. *Pommersche Nachrichten* has not yet been paid attention to in this regard, although it three years previous to *Göttingische Zeitungen* started to report on KVA. Compare with Arne Holmberg, "Kungl. Vetenskapsakademiens äldre skrifter i utländska översättningar och referat" in *K. Vetenskapsakademiens Årsbok för år 1939 – Bilaga* (Uppsala 1939) p. 1-20.

topics, a vast majority of them KVA or Swedish science in general.¹⁰ With the establishment of his *Critische Nachrichten* in 1750, Dähnert made the reports on the KVA a cornerstone. His journal and its successors would contribute to the spread of accounts in German and translations of the proceedings and orations of the academy. To the largest extent, the journal published summaries of the quarterly transactions in German and hence, *Critische Nachrichten*, turned into a major channel of communication with the German-speaking educated world. The transactions reached the German province first of all (both the university library – in 1748 Dähnert was installed as librarian – and single professors subscribed to them). With a delay of sometimes several years counted from the date of publication, between 1749 and 1792, professor Abraham Gotthelf Kaestner in Göttingen (that belonged to the British crown through the house of Hanover) translated the transactions to German. This translation was however criticised by Dähnert for its insufficient quality. In its German version, the publication had lost much of its “beauty”, according to Dähnert. And those who were competent in the different sciences covered by the transactions had even more reasons to be critical. You did not even need to be Swedish to reveal “errors and errors in the smallest details” as he wrote in CN 1751:10. It was only in Greifswald the German reader could find the first and most reliable notices on the achievements of Swedish science, he concluded. Descriptions and reviews of the orations and publications of the academy however also contained programmatic values. The connection between natural history and the reform projects in Sweden were well known in Swedish-Pomerania. In February 1750 (CN 1750:7), as a preface to a review of a mineralogical work by Wallerius we can read:

“The educated of the North have (mainly during the last ten years) dealt with natural sciences with such a success that they now share the attention that previously only was paid to France and England. Without doubt, natural science is the science one can expect a continuous increase, a continuous improvement and a continuous extension from, because in no other science real influence of improvement upon the state is as visible as here. Sweden is in the position to experience this very well and it is a special honour for the realm that men of highest descent are united with educated and artisans in order to open up treasures for the fatherland and make them useful for the same.”

An early peak of coverage on the KVA is to be found during the years of 1751-1753. The second volume of CN was dedicated to the academy. In the preface, Dähnert declared publicly his adoration of the academy's work. It represented perfectly well “science in its relation towards the well-being of the state, the citizen, the human being.” It was hence important to remain updated on the development of science in Sweden: “My office [that of professor in *historia litteraria* that he had received in 1750] I am happy to carry on a royal Swedish university forces me to make a weekly summary of news in the educated world and the situation of science. Those, my papers [...] are a proof of this zeal.” Dähnert asks KVA in accordance to “the desire of my fellow citizens” to receive continuous news on “the successful attempts within Swedish sciences” that are “so precious for the world and so advantageous for the state.” He and his readers will then admire “the felicity of a realm in which sciences under the auspices under the most perfect sovereign has the wisest and most righteous promoters.”

At that time, Sweden had no educated journal itself. Dähnert received his news from Swedish

¹⁰ For a quantitative approach see Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 226. A qualitative approach based upon a hitherto unpublished database with 750 notices exceeding 15 lines needs to be refined further.

correspondents, but due to the loss of his correspondence, we unfortunately are unable to reconstruct these connections. Educated journals ceased to appear for a period of about seven years, coinciding with the Seven-Years-War during which Sweden had entered a French anti-Prussian coalition. However, in the middle of wartime, in 1760 a new political newspaper was edited in Stralsund, *Auszug der Neuesten Weltbegebenheiten*. Between 1772 and 1935, the newspaper continued under the name *Stralsundische Zeitung* (abbreviated SZ), the reason why I will use that name from 1760 on. SZ was similar to its predecessors as it mainly communicated (three times a week at least and with many special editions) a mixture of political news from different European countries, presumably mostly taken from the Hamburg press. An innovation was the start of a kind of local journalism, with reports on events in the Masonic lodge, concerts or theatre performances. The introduction of classified ads tells us a lot on the diversity of urban 18th century every day life and Swedish-German connections on micro-level. Run-away servants, stolen watches, new books, fresh wine from France, arriving passengers from Sweden are crowded on a small space. Swedish news in SZ was most probably taken from the newspaper *Inrikes-Tidningar* that was established in the very same year of 1760. Nearly every copy of SZ was introduced with news from Stockholm. The newspaper received a semi-official status as it was issued a privilege to publish new bills of the provincial government as well as court judgements. One can also see that the Swedish government used the paper in order to spread counter-propaganda such as during the Swedish-Russian war 1788-1790 or the Napoleonic wars. It was in need of a loyal channel of communication towards the German-speaking public. Hence, double language and translation competence was a prerequisite for governance.¹¹

The Gjørwell-network: connections grow tighter

In Greifswald, edition of educated journals was resumed in 1763 with *Urtheile über gelehrte Sachen*. In 1765 Dähnert also edited a translation of a Swedish journal *Schwedisches Oeconomisches Wochenblatt*. *Urtheile* from 1765 on was re-edited under its old title *Neue Critische Nachrichten*. Apparently, Dähnert for some reason had handed over his editorship to the newly installed professor of history *Johann Georg Peter Möller* (1729-1807). Möller had been private tutor in a noble and influential Swedish-German family that had spent the war years in Sweden. Here, Möller had acquired profound knowledge of Swedish language and history. His patron's contacts to the 'right circles' in Stockholm paved the way for Möllers position in Greifswald. At that time, *Carl Christoffer Gjørwell* (1731-1811) had entered the scene as one of the most important figure in Swedish enlightenment press.

Since the 1750-ies, Gjørwell dedicated himself to a restless journalistic activity. In the lately published work on Swedish press history *Den svenska pressens historia* a selection of Gjørwells publications between 1754 and 1799 is listed that counts no less than 34 titles.¹² Between 1745 and 1748, Gjørwell had studied in Greifswald, a time heavily idealised by himself. According to his own accounts, he had learned his journalistic skills from Dähnert. In a marginal annotation to one of the letter concepts to his former teacher Dähnert Gjørwell noted that his time in Swedish-Pomerania had laid "the foundation stone to Mercurius [Gjørwells first paper] and all its children and grand children".¹³ The spectre covered by Gjørwells journals and papers reached from pure political news, review journals, historical

¹¹ On the Stralsund press see Önnersfors, "Svenska nyheter på tyska", p. 31-39 and further references quoted herein.

¹² Karl-Erik Gustafsson, Per Rydén (Eds.), *Den svenska pressens historia I, i begynnelsen (före 1830)* (Stockholm 2000) p. 112-16.

¹³ Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 214 and the quoted source.

source editions to education journals for special groups of readers. Gjörwell edited for example the first journals directed towards women and another towards youth. Most of those projects were however short-lived and Gjörwell permanently threatened by bankruptcy. One of his projects with the longest life span became “News from the Educational Society”, *Upfostrings-Sällskapets Tidningar*, edited between 1781 and 1788. Its title suggests that it was an edition by a typical 18th century society. However, Gjörwell himself was initiator, secretary and only member of that ‘society’. Through subscription to the journal he managed nevertheless to engage a substantial number of important representatives of Sweden’s economical, political and cultural sphere. “News from the Educational Society” covered a broad range of topics, article series on the political organisation of single countries and parts of the Swedish realm, reviews of academic works, news from intellectual life, curiosities with a merely global span: already in its first volume we find references to St. Petersburg, Paris, Berlin, Brussels, Boston, Mannheim, Munich, Kaiserslautern, Padua, Sorö, Harlem, Batavia and Norway. The register lists the headword “dung“, “gödsel”, immediately before “Goethe“, which in a drastic way illustrates the breadth of the publication.

At the end of the 1760-ies, when it became clear that Dähnert had transferred his active editorship, Gjörwell in Stockholm opened correspondence with Möller in Greifswald:

“First I want to tell you with what great joy I read N. Crit. Nachr. that now are one of the best educated journals appearing. An especially good scrutiny and concerning taste, correctness in all articles. From your historical reviews, sir, I conclude easily your skilfulness to put the pen to the paper yourself. Therefore I wonder if you have something under your hands?”¹⁴

With those lines, one of the most intense correspondences between Gjörwell and a German intellectual was initiated. For the period between 1776 and 1787, I have found about fifty major cross-references between *Stockholms Lärda Tidningar*, *Upfostrings-Sällskapets Tidningar* (both edited by Gjörwell) and *Neueste Critische Nachrichten* (edited by Möller).¹⁵ Gjörwell also frequently quoted from Stralsund-press, a connection however unexplored due to the vast material of the Stralsund newspaper. The relations between the journals are not only about multiple positive mentions but reveal a rich exchange of news material, filtered through the process of translation. Swedish news was published in German translation in Greifswald and German news translated to Swedish in Stockholm. This contact was even intensified when in 1785 the Swede *Jacob Wallenius* (1761-1817) arrived to Greifswald and became Möllers assistant. Wallenius had made Gjörwells acquaintance prior to his departure to Swedish-Pomerania and had promised him to communicate news to Stockholm, which he did from the beginning. Around one hundred letters from Wallenius to Gjörwell are preserved and resulted in about thirty notices or articles in Gjörwells publications. Wallenius was also engaged in a project launched by Möller that was substantial to all exchange of information across language barriers, a Swedish-German dictionary appearing in three volumes between 1782 and 1790 (and in a second edition between 1801-1808 initiated by Gjörwell). Möllers dictionary was for a long time the standard source for translations between Swedish and German and vice versa and is without doubt a major contribution to the cultural exchange between Sweden and the German cultural sphere.¹⁶

¹⁴ Önnerfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 219 and the quoted source.

¹⁵ Unpublished table of cross-references made by the author.

¹⁶ Regarding the position of Swedish language in the province of Swedish-Pomerania see also Andreas Önnerfors, ”Svenska språkets ställning i Östersjöprovinsen Pommern 1648-1815” in ”Svenska språkets historia i Östersjöområdet”, eds. Lagman/Ohlsson/Voodla, (Tartu 2002)

Gjörwell's correspondence that is kept at the Royal Library in Stockholm covers several thousand letters. Of course he also had several other German contacts besides those in Greifswald, such as *August Ludwig von Schlözer* (1735-1809) who edited the important magazine *Stats-Anzeigen* in Göttingen. From different references and mentions, we can conclude that Möller, Gjörwell and Schlözer exchanged information in a triangular way that needs to be explored further. But newcomers who wanted to use their cultural competence and to profit from Gjörwells Swedish sources also approached him.

Such was the case with *Daniel Heinrich Thomas* (1739-1808). Thomas, a secretary in the provincial government of Swedish-Pomerania and one of its translators, was engaged in the edition of a weekly journal of predominantly moral nature, *Stralsundisches Wochenblatt* that occasionally published educating episodes from Swedish history. Gjörwell mentioned the journal in his *Stockholms Lärda Tidningar* 1780:47: "Sweden is of course described in it from a pleasant side and several excellent traits [of Sweden] are communicated with a happy devotion [...]" It is no doubt that the press in the Pomeranian province contributed to the spread of a positive image of Sweden to a German reading public. In the same year, Gjörwell and Thomas opened correspondence. Thomas planned to edit a "Schwedisches Magazin" containing Swedish history, political organisation, art and literature as well as biographies on illustrious Swedes and he asked Gjörwell to use his journals *Samlaren* and *Swenska Mercurius* as a source and obviously his intention was to translate parts of them to German.¹⁷

"In the centre of Swedish and German literature": a generation of translators

Within the frame of a mutual transfer of culture, Sweden's possession of Swedish Pomerania promoted the development of a certain language competence. During the last phase of Swedish dominion a whole group of translators emerged. In Stockholm circles around the German parish worked with translations, priests and teachers like Lütkemann, Erichson, Lüdecke, Hachenburg and later the romanticists Lappe and Nernst. Most of them had connections to Swedish Pomerania as well as Klein who tried to establish a German journal in Stockholm that to the largest extent translated Swedish material. In the port town of Wismar on German soil (where the highest court for the Swedish possessions was placed), the brethren Gröning translated works related to the editions of KVA, orations and memorial speeches, but also philological works. In Greifswald a whole group of translators emerged within the academic staff. One could start with Nettelbladt who translated historical works, followed by the Swede Benzeltierna. Dähnert expanded the field to law, politics, economy and press. Möller continued the tradition and also worked with travel literature. During his time as editor of the educated journal dozens of articles and notices were translated from Swedish. His assistant Wallenius translated a work within military history and was as late as in 1810 appointed official governmental translator. Möller and Wallenius and the group involved in the edition of the Swedish-German dictionary, made a major contribution in order to facilitate the translation process. Rüks translated Swedish literature from the gustavian époque such as Kellgren, Oxenstierna, Leopold and Gustav III himself. Also Arndt devoted himself to literary translation and received a main position when Swedish law was translated to German due to the dissolution of the Old German Empire in 1806. The law professor Schildener assisted in this cause and was one of the first who translated old Germanic law from Nordic sources to German. His colleague Hagemeister translated Swedish naval jurisdiction. Within natural sciences and medicine, Weigel, Kölpin and Rudolphi were loyal

translators of Swedish contributions. In Stralsund, the rector of the local gymnasium Groskurd specialised in the translation of Swedish topographic literature. And the already mentioned secretary Thomas tried his fortune with literary publications within Swedish drama. He transferred his office to his own son who also was engaged in the translation of Swedish law to German after 1806. The 'literary' priest Kosegarten (who corresponded with Goethe) on the island of Rügen translated a Swedish catechism to German, a colleague Gerken a topographical work on Stockholm (he had spent several years there).

It is easy to expand this list of titles and names during the last hundred years of Swedish dominion in Swedish Pomerania. Such a list proves that translation was an important ingredient in a living cultural exchange during the Enlightenment. Wallenius considered himself living "in the middle of German and Swedish literature, every day I frequented books and educated people."¹⁸

Energy versus Elegance: a debate on translation

At the end of the Swedish period, cultural competence had grown to such an extent that we find an independent treatment of Swedish language and the style of its translation. The following example is taken from the popular field of commemorating occasional poetry and literature.¹⁹ In March 1792, the Swedish king Gustav III was assassinated in the Stockholm opera. This event triggered vast media coverage in European press; around hundred articles in German journals of the time were devoted to the murder, the subsequent trial and different conspiracy theories. Already since 1788, the image of Sweden as a vanguard of Enlightenment had changed. Instead, media focussed upon the disastrous warfare against Russia (that lasted until 1790), the uprising of parts of the Finnish army and claims for Finland's cession from Sweden. Also Swedish domestic politics was made a major subject in German newspapers, as the king more and more lost control over an ardent opposition from the side of the nobles. The country was divided into "Gustavians" and "Anti-Gustavians". To the former group belonged the above-mentioned Wallenius and the town commander of Stralsund and his son, Franz Georg and Carl Georg Pollett. They had made acquaintance within the masonic lodge. Father and son Pollett had served in the army during the war and witnessed the raise of the opposition. After the Swedish-Russian war, Carl Georg Pollett quit military service and studied philosophy and languages in Göttingen. However, a few months after his registration, he died of an infectious fever. In deep sorrow, Wallenius wrote a poem with the title *Äreminne öfver framledne majoren CGPollett* ("Panegyric upon deceased major CG Pollett") reviewed positively in *Neueste Critische Nachrichten* 1793:48. Wallenius' text started off with a quotation from *The Songs of Ossian*: "Happy are they who die in youth, when their renown is around them." Pollett's life is described as the life of an innocent and brave hero. He fights with fortitude and never gives up loyalty to his king; he is the leader who inspires his troops to reach glorious results, even with sacrifices. The content of such poems is quite predictable. Pollett's popularity resulted in a German translation, carried out by the above-mentioned clergyman and poet *Ludwig Theobul Kosegarten* (1758-1818) in 1794.

¹⁸ In his self-biography quoted in Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, p. 299.

¹⁹ A somewhat different version of the subsequent part in Andreas Önnersfors, "The Idea and the Text – a Note on transcultural Historical Text Analysis" in *Perspectives on Text and Context*, eds. Ohlson/Zilmer (Tartu 2003) p. 145-57. See also Önnersfors, *Svenska Pommern*, 410-11.

Kosegarten not only was devoted to enlightened nature theology: he also wrote several books and poetic dramas, deeply inspired by the aesthetics of his time, the Storm-and-Stress. Besides this, he translated English works such as Milton or Adam Smith into German. In 1794, Kosegarten published a collection of smaller texts, *Rhapsodien*. Here we find the translation of Wallenius' panegyric, re-titled as *Mnemonion*. Kosegarten claimed in the preface that he had to adapt the text to the "taste of the German readers". To reach that goal, he gave it more "energy" and more "simplicity". Kosegarten also claimed that the French "Eloge" influenced the Swedish Genre of *Äreminne*. The French Academy used the *Eloge*, based on old antique rhetoric traditions in honouring its members or historical persons.

According to Kosegarten, French *Eloges* contained "many phrases", "elegance", and "brightness", but lacked a real message. They contained simply nothing. It was therefore difficult to translate these texts into the more "sensible" and "rough" idiom of German. Kosegarten said that he wanted to make the text more living: he added some notes, clarified some passages and "painted" some situations in his own way with the result of a "disparate totality". Kosegarten's ambition is to make a clear distinction between the German idiom and the Swedish, which he claims is influenced by the French. The rejection of French style in poetry and literature was a general subject in German-speaking countries already since the 1740-ies. But under the influence of Storm-and-Stress and pre-romantic ideology, this development accelerated. Indirectly, Kosegarten blames Swedish literature of copying French patterns.

In the following quotations of two different parts of Wallenius' text we can follow how Kosegarten creates this atmosphere:

Wallenius 1793
Äreminne... (p. 8)

"Min Läsare, hvem Du ock är, stanna några ögonblick inför denna tafla. – Må en röst tränga till dit öra, förgänglighetens son! här föll den raske ynglingen midt uti sitt lopp. Krigsman! här vilar en ung hjelte. Lärde! här ett af de sällan upgående snillen, som tidigt visade sig och tidigt försvann. Medborgare! här, redan här, den redlige undersåten, som alltid tänkte väl, som blottade sitt bröst åt faran och öfvervann hänne, som hedrade det ärefulla namn han bar, och i alla afseenden öfverträffade sin tid och sina år."

Kosegarten 1794
Mnemonion (p. 240 in *Rhapsodien*)

"Wer Du auch seyst, o Wanderer, verweile einige stille Augenblicke vor diesem Mahle – Sohn der Vergänglichkeit, hier erlosch ein Jüngling in seinem vollsten Lodern! Krieger, hier fiel ein Held! Weiser, hier ruht ein Liebling Uraniens! Bürger, hier schläft unsrer Brüder Einer. der treuern, der biedern, der redlichen und tapfern Einer!"

In the first part of the text, Wallenius asks the reader to think about the monument raised to the glory of Pollett. Probably the "son of vanity" – he who fell in the middle of his run – then will hear the voice. In Pollett's life warriors, learned and patriots will find a pattern of heroism, intelligence and loyalty. In Kosegarten's translation, the reader is turned into a wanderer. The youngster did not fall: he was "extinguished" in the midst of his most ardent glow. No learned are addressed, but "the wise", the "righteous subject" is replaced by the "brother".

Another passage deals with the sea battle of Svensksund, interpreted by the Swedish side as a victory. A scene is described when Pollett junior and his brother, their father, and king

Gustav III meet shortly after the battle.

Wallenius 1793

Äreminne... (p. 23-24)

Kosegarten 1794

Mnemonion (p. 254-255 in *Rhapsodien*)

”Det är GUSTAF DEN TREDJE som så full af odödlighetens hopp, med stillhet i sin blick, står på förödelsens spilra och tänker på sitt folks räddning; då var POLLETT nalkas denne Konung, alltid stor, men störst i olyckan. Närmast vid hans sida en Fältherre prydd med silfverhår. Eller se din like, i hvars ansikte ungdomen ännu rodnar! Du känner dessa krigsmän kommande ur Vesuven? Tacka Försynens nåd, känslofulle Son; där Din Fader! Var tröstad; Din Broder omfamnar dig, och Din Konung skall skära en lager åt din hjessa. – Hvem förmår teckna detta möte? Hvem har färger att fullborda detta?”

”Die Schatten weichen. Der Morgen dämmert. Umgossen von seinen röthlichen Gluthen steht Gustav, ruhiggroß, voll Vorgefühls der Unsterblichkeit, entschlossen zum Siege oder zum Tode. Zu seiner Rechten steht ein grauer Feldherr. Zu seiner Linken ein frischblühender Jüngling. – Näher wallet in des Morgens lindem Hauche eine freundschaftliche Flagge. Sie führet meinen Liebling. Er erblickt die drei Krieger. Er erkennt sie... erkennt den König... seinen Vater... seinen Bruder... und sinkt in ihre Arme!

Gustav III is filled by hope of eternity: he thinks upon the salvation of his people, is always great, but “greatest in misfortune”. Pollet junior reaches the king, and by his side he finds the grey-haired father. The warriors come from the bottom of a volcano, and now embrace each other as brothers and fathers. The king cuts a branch of laurels. Wallenius exclaims: “Who is able to depict this meeting? Who has the colours to fulfil this?”

Did the German readers really perceive his translation as more according to their own idiom, as Kosegarten claims? The review of *Rhapsodien* in *Neueste Critische Nachrichten* 1794:29 shows the contrary. It does not agree with Kosegarten’s viewpoint that Wallenius had adopted French style. It blames Kosegarten that he did not understand the Swedish text properly and that he had made translation mistakes. It seems obvious that his assumptions about “cultural values” within the Swedish text and his own translation were exaggerated. Although Wallenius panegyric and Kosegartens translation cannot be counted to the sphere of ‘high literature’, the episode clearly states a great awareness and independent treatment concerning language, translation and cultural influences.

Translating the Enlightenment in Transcultural Regions

Transcultural regions are regions that transgress the borders of a specific culture through mutual influences. They promote an atmosphere of translation and transfer. Translation and transfer is a metaphor for the exchange process of ideas, but can also be studied in concrete examples. For the case of Swedish-Pomerania its transcultural setting was an important ingredient for the spread of typical elements of enlightened intellectual culture. In Swedish-Pomerania, between 1720-1815, a group of 20-25 intellectuals were engaged in the translation process from German to Swedish and vice versa. Through cross-references in newspapers, journals and the book market, competence in and familiarity with Swedish language and culture was established. Family and trade relations, educated networks combined with governmental interest in these matters, supported this development. Life careers in Swedish service was an attractive way to follow for many Pomeranians. Together, this all constituted a

very special atmosphere of cultural encounters. If we want to point out its elements, we could isolate at least four:

- 1) *Instant transfer*. News, reviews, academic and other works are *transferred* from the one culture to the other, which includes fast and efficient *means of translation* and creates an atmosphere of *interrelation*. The efficiency of the transfer is also dependent upon transportation.
- 2) *Contrastive reasoning*. A permanent contrast takes place between the own culture and the other. Contrastive reasoning occurs in all kinds of texts: juridical, political, economical, and poetic.
- 3) *Coexistence as a motive*. Because of the close relationship between cultures engaged in transcultural regions, organisation of coexistence is not only a political and economical task, but emerges as a relevant motive in texts.
- 4) *Authors and readers with multiple cultural competence*. Because of the transcultural setting, both authors and readers develop a multiple cultural competence, which allows them to "write" and "read" texts with their transcultural connotations.