

Research on Pentecostalism in Sweden

This article aims to orientate and introduce potential researchers into Swedish Pentecostal movements, or those who wish to provide an overview of Scandinavian Christianity, by giving a brief summary of the history of Pentecostalism in Sweden and an overview of the main academic monographs that have been produced on this particular branch of Christianity. The idea is to highlight areas where we find relevant research and to point to areas into which there has been little or no investigation. Following, by way of introduction, a brief historical sketch, there is a note on spirituality before we are given a review of some thirty major academic works on the subject that a potential researcher would need to take into consideration.

Historical background

Pentecostalism¹ arrived in Sweden in November 1906 with the first missionary to depart from the Azusa Street movement of Los Angeles, a Swedish citizen named Andrew G. Johnson. He began his work in his home town of Skövde in south western Sweden, where the 'Upper Room' of the Elim Church gradually became a centre for the revival. Through close contacts with the Baptist pastor John Ongman, and Methodist pastor T. B. Barratt (whom he had already met and inspired in New York before leav-

ing for Europe), Johnson from the start attracted sympathetic and well-known representatives to his cause. The evangelist Johnson, like other emissaries from Azusa Street, travelled indefatigably from place to place and in a few months had spread the 'Pentecostal fire' from Skövde to Örebro, Stockholm, Gothenburg and a number of other places. When a colleague named Barratt visited Sweden in May 1907 he confirmed what Johnson and others from the Azusa Street movement had proclaimed.

Even though Stockholm had already been reached by the 'New Movement' (Den nya rörelsen)² in January 1907, south western Sweden became a centre of activity during the early years. Besides the prayer group which met in the Skövde Elim Church, John Ongman and O. L. Björk in Örebro, as well as Johnson himself in Gothenburg, gathered new believers within this movement, and the first Pentecostal periodical *Glöd från altaret* ('Embers from the Altar'), for example, was published in Gothenburg.³

Nevertheless, in the year 1910, the Seventh Baptist Congregation, also called the Philadelphia Church (Filadelfiakyrkan), was founded in the capital. In succession to their first pastor, E. W. Olsson, they engaged a young pastor named Lewi Pethrus.⁴ He

1 In this article I distinguish between 'Pentecostalism' in general (Swe. *pingstväckelsen*), a broad, ecumenical revival that was initiated in 1906 and that still may be seen as a uniting factor in Swedish church life, and the 'Swedish Pentecostal movement' (Swe. *pingströrelsen*) a particular Pentecostal denomination established as a separate entity in 1919 (see Struble 1982), which may be called a 'classical' Pentecostal movement.

2 This is what Pentecostalism was called in Sweden in the beginning, as distinct from the '[Old] Movement', which is to say, the Pietist movement, which had transformed much of Swedish church life in the nineteenth century.

3 A remnant of this south-western dominance is Nyhemsveckan – the largest annual conference of the Pentecostal movement – which is still held outside the town of Mullsjö every summer.

4 In many historical works, this man, Lewi Pethrus, appears as the 'founder' and the 'first pastor' of the



Andrew G. Johnson, the pioneer of the Swedish Pentecostal Movement, preparing a sermon around 1910.

soon established himself as a leading preacher with strong ties to the New Movement through, among other things, an increasingly strong relationship with the Norwegian leader T. B. Barratt. Pethrus soon also presented a challenge to the other six established Baptist congregations in Stockholm and in 1913 he and the Philadelphia congregation were expelled from the Baptist Association, on rather weak

Philadelphia Church (Filadelfiakyrkan). But even though Pethrus is the most important person in the history of this congregation, he is not 'the first'. These 'facts' form part of the hagiographical, almost mythological, descriptions of Pethrus. He arrived in Stockholm only in 1911 and at that time he replaced the first pastor, the evangelist Eric Emil Valdemar Olsson (1881–1959), who was later a pastor and missionary within the Örebro Mission. In practice, it was Albert Engzell, a wholesale dealer, who acted as the first president. (He was also the one who, together with his wife Selma, founded the congregation.) In due course, that is, in 1911, Pethrus came to be the first person to combine the roles of pastor and president (*föreståndare*).

grounds. The congregation had practised 'open communion' which in practice meant that they had celebrated Holy Communion with other baptized believers, regardless of their membership. As a result of the expulsions, the Stockholm congregation became a symbol of 'the persecuted believers in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit' and stronger ties with other 'free' congregations, such as the ones in Adelöv or Skövde, were established.

Through a series of other expulsions and splits, a new identity naming themselves 'Pentecostals' emerged and served to unite free congregations within the New Movement, which in due course were also identified by others collectively as the 'Pentecostal movement'.⁵ In a few years, the original leader-

5 The first author to refer to this denomination as 'the Pentecostal movement' (*pingströrelsen*) was probably Emanuel Linderholm (1925). Pethrus, among others, long insisted that the movement should be called *pingstväckelsen* ('the Pentecostal revival'). Today, they identify themselves as Pingst FFS (Free Churches of the Pentecost in Cooperation).

ship of this New Movement (the Pentecostal revival) was entirely replaced and Pastor Pethrus unofficially became the pre-eminent leader of the growing denomination.

The excommunication of the Stockholm Philadelphia Church promoted a radicalization of the Baptist congregationalist dogma and from this time it is possible to see the rise of the creed of 'the free congregation' in the Pentecostal movement. During the annual summer conference of 1919 the participants published a declaration that can easily be regarded as a declaration of independence and at the same time of establishment of an alternative church organization.⁶

From the 1920s and onwards, the Pentecostal movement quickly established itself as the fastest-growing free church of Sweden (from the mid-twentieth century it was also the largest one). During that decade the movement also attracted several new preachers and apologists, the two most well known being the poet and writer Sven Lidman and former Lutheran vicar G. E. Söderholm. They were well received because during this decade the Pentecostal movement, and in particular the Philadelphia congregation in Stockholm, was exposed to severe persecution and bad press. This led to several groundless accusations from, as well as raids by, the authorities. Scandal headlines included 'New victims of the Pentecostal movement'.⁷ The newspapers' critique focussed on a healing campaign involving the British preacher Smith Wigglesworth in 1921. The veracity of declared faith-healings was questioned and the organizers of the healings were accused of fraud. In spite of – or perhaps thanks to – this, the number of Pentecostal adherents increased sixfold during this decade, from around 5,000 to around 30,000.⁸

The 1920s culminated in a fateful clash between Lewi Pethrus and the leader of the recently-founded

Swedish Free Mission, A. P. Franklin. The conflict was not really based on ideology, but power. Franklin had become too influential and Pethrus dethroned him.⁹

By contrast, the 1930s began with the grandiose inauguration of what was the largest church in northern Europe; the new Stockholm Philadelphia Church, with a seating capacity of more than 3,000 people. This modernist church building came to symbolize the establishment of the Pentecostal movement and its increasing acceptance in wider society. It also represented the rise of the Stockholm Philadelphia congregation as the centre of the national Pentecostal movement.

During this decade the number of members in the Pentecostal movement grew from around 30,000 to almost 70,000. At the same time, the most hostile critics in the newspapers were silenced and the movement came to be more and more accepted by both the public at large and the authorities – not the least because of its extensive social projects which were implemented during the severe economic crisis which occurred during this decade.

While the Pentecostal movement was the only independent Pentecostal branch in Sweden, there were Pentecostalized sections in some of the other churches; for example the Pingstbetonade (which translates roughly as the 'Pentecostally-emphasized') within the Swedish Covenant Church (Svenska Missionsförbundet)¹⁰, which exerted a considerable influence on the Free Baptists,¹¹ and a short-lived revival within the Methodist Church.¹² In 1937, however, the remaining Pentecostal section within the Baptist Church split off and founded a denomin-

6 The declaration was published in the Pentecostal periodical *Evangelii Härold* on 31 July 1919 (p. 116). The title was 'Varför vi taga bestämt avstånd från samfundsorganisationerna?' ('Why we firmly distance ourselves from the denominational organizations'). A facsimile of the article and a photograph of the conference participants are found in the work *Pingströrelsen* (Waern *et al.* 2007b: 304–5).

7 Swe. 'Nya dödsoffer för pingströrelsen'. See Stävare 2010: 71ff.

8 These, and the following statistics concerning the Pentecostal movement are found in the yearbook of the movement, entitled *Pingströrelsens Årsbok* 2010.

9 For further discussion, see Gäreskog and Gäreskog 2010.

10 Leading Pentecostal figures within the Swedish Covenant Church were, for example, Ludvig Gustafsson, who initiated the Pentecostal Summer Conferences at Hönö, and Frank Mangs, a Finnish-Swedish preacher who emerged as a great leader during the Second World War and who led major evangelistic campaigns in the 1950s and 1960s. During the 1970s he also appeared on state television and became increasingly influential in most Christian circles in the Nordic countries.

11 Swe. Fribaptistsamfundet.

12 Leading figures in the first phase were Fredrik Ågren in Uppsala and Eric Schütz in Gothenburg. The revival erupted in 1907 but was soon suppressed and the second phase was more or less over in 1922. See Gäreskog 2013.

ation called the Örebro Mission (Örebromissionen). The name and the phenomenon had already been established in 1891 as a supportive agency for overseas missionary work, led by John Ongman, who in 1906 and 1907 had been so instrumental in establishing Pentecostalism as such in Sweden.

When the main branch of Pentecostalism was officially cut off from the Baptist movement in 1913, Ongman tried to heal the wounds and reunite the branches, but without success. Therefore, the Baptist section of Pentecostalism, led by Ongman, remained faithful to the Baptist denomination for the rest of Ongman's life. However, after Ongman's death in 1931, his legacy of faithfulness to the denomination weakened rapidly and after a few years of crisis, the Örebro Mission was established as an independent Pentecostal denomination.¹³

If the 1930s were characterized by growth, the 1940s were characterized by decline. In spite of the crisis (often seen as the basis for an emergence of revivalism) caused by the Second World War the increase in membership halted. The Swedish Pentecostal movement acquired only 10,000 new members – just a quarter of the size of the uptake of the previous decade. In the midst of this stagnation some important steps were taken, however; a new folk high school was started and a new daily newspaper, *Dagen*, was founded.

From the beginning of the 1950s there was a clear and publicly-expressed longing for a revival. This decade saw the emergence three different waves of revivals starting in Stockholm. Preachers from the USA, William Freeman and William Branham, brought the 'Healing Revival' to Sweden and Finland. A smaller branch was the Latter Rain revival, which began in the Östermalm Free Church congregation – in opposition to the Stockholm Philadelphia Church. A third branch, called the 'Renewal Revival' (*förnyelseväckelsen*) was initially very powerful, with leaders such as Algot Niklasson and Georg Johansson. It had a tremendous impact on some Pentecostal

congregations, including the ones in Jönköping and Gothenburg, but had less impact on the central Philadelphia Church, in part because Niklasson was subsequently rejected by Lewi Pethrus.¹⁴

Something that coincided with and probably reinforced these revivals was the emergence of an eschatological renaissance in the Pentecostal movement. The proclamation of the state of Israel in 1947 had given the Jews a nation of their own, a 'promised land', as it was interpreted by the Pentecostals – a clear sign of the imminent return of Jesus. The partitioning of Europe and the expansion of the communist Soviet Union, which took it almost all the way up to the borders of Sweden, revived a century-old fear of a Russian invasion. A recurrent question was on the lips of many: 'Is this the initiation of the Tribulation?' The Pentecostal pastor Birger Claesson had a vision, wrote down its contents and published this in a slim volume called *Dom över Sverige* ('Judgement on Sweden') in 1951. It was published in 14 editions and sold hundreds of thousands of copies.

In the 1950s, the Pentecostal movement received several proofs of recognition from the state authorities. For the first time services from the Philadelphia Church were broadcast on the national Swedish radio station. Furthermore, the Pentecostal movement was authorised to conduct marriage ceremonies in 1952. Another acknowledgment, this time from international Pentecostalism, came in 1955 when Lewi Pethrus, as a *grand finale* to his presidency of the Stockholm Philadelphia Church, was asked to arrange the World Pentecostal Conference in Stockholm.

Throughout the existence of the Pentecostal movement, Lewi Pethrus had been its gatekeeper and its the most prominent leader. In 1958, however, he retired from his post as the principal pastor of Stockholm Philadelphia Church and was replaced by Willis Säwe. This, of course weakened his position as the unofficial leader of the movement and sparked a form of power struggle between him and his successor. To retain his power, Pethrus remained as the chief editor of *Dagen* and, when he felt marginalized

13 In practice, the split was led by individual members of the Örebro Mission who left the Baptist denomination but remained within the Mission. The Örebro Mission also experimented with great success in the decades to come and had roughly 23,000 members in 1995. In 1996 its members decided to merge with two other denominations and found the Evangelical Free Church (Evangeliska Frikyrkan).

14 The growth in the congregations that opened up in the wake of the 'Renewal revival' was very obvious. While the Stockholm Philadelphia congregation, which rejected the renewal, only grew by 4.9% during the 1950s, the congregation in Jönköping grew by 19.4%, Lycksele by 94% and Avesta by an impressive 105%. See *Pingströrelsen* (2007a: 194).



Arne Imsen, leader of Maranata at an open-air service in the 1960s.

by Säwe, he started his own journal and publishing firm.

During the 1960s there was a new period of unrest and upheaval within the Pentecostal movement. A young pastor, Arne Imsen, challenged Pethrus and the establishment and started a free Pentecostal movement of his own, named Maranata.¹⁵ Imsen and his followers wanted to return to the roots of Pentecostalism and Pentecostal fire. With the help of foreign preachers, as well as singers such as Målle Lindberg and Donald Bergagård, this movement experienced an initial success, attracting followers that were disaffected with the new establishment and political correctness of the Pentecostal movement and the Örebro Mission.

This was not enough, however. To the astonishment of many, church discipline within the classical Pentecostal movements declined. Pentecostals became increasingly 'modern'. At the end of the decade, young people were allowed more space for

15 The Maranata movement had already been founded in 1956 by a small group of Pentecostals who had left the Pentecostal Elim congregation in Örebro, and in 1960 they founded a prayer group called Christian Fellowship (Kristen Gemenskap), inspired by the Latter Rain revival which had been initiated in the Stockholm-based Östermalms fria församling. Imsen became the pastor of the Christian Fellowship in 1960 and in 1962, inspired by Norwegian pastor Aage Samuelsen, he adopted the name Maranata.

modern, popular music. They also experienced a new freedom as regards style and fashion with the arrival of followers of the Jesus movement – invited by ageing pastor Pethrus. In 1969, the healing evangelist Kathryn Kulman visited Sweden, officially invited as a speaker at large conferences, and she appeared in the mode of a Hollywood film star, shocking the majority of the Pentecostal membership, but providing an innovative role model for many women who, up until then, had suppressed their longings for a different style.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Charismatic movement in the mainline churches was the talk of the town within Pentecostal circles. Lewi Pethrus' final initiative was to open up to this ecumenical wave – contrary to what he had previously preached for decades. As editor-in-chief for *Dagen*, a post he retained until his death in 1974, he embraced ecumenical cooperation as well as political engagement. In 1964 he founded the Christian Democratic Party (Kristdemokraterna) which brought about a leap forward in the political involvement of many Pentecostal pastors and ordinary members. Some of them even left congregational work to enter politics.

After the Pethrus' death, there was a palpable insecurity about how the Swedish Pentecostal movement should be organized and led. Up until then, the movement had been structured along informal networks and by the charismatic leadership of Pethrus. Theological issues had been settled at so-called 'Bible Study Weeks' and up until 2002 most decisions of national interest had been taken at such conferences. However the Örebro Mission had a more structured organization – the Torp Conference – which was the most prominent conference within this movement, and also the most influential.

In spite of, or maybe thanks to, this informal organization, the Swedish Pentecostal movement surpassed 100,000 members in 1985. These were distributed across 530 congregations and in turn these had more than 800 missionaries in more than 40 countries. Furthermore, the Örebro Mission had almost 23,000 members (in 1995) while the membership of Maranata had declined to just a few hundred after its initial boom and the leadership crisis that the movement had experienced in 1967 and 1968.

In 1983 a new Pentecostal movement, Word of Life (Livets Ord), was founded by a former Lutheran priest, Ulf Ekman. A congregation was started in Uppsala and a Bible school was established on the premises.

Through the Bible school, Livets Ord reached out to much of Scandinavia, especially to Norway, and a sister church was later also established in that country. The movement had neo-Pentecostal traits and bore evidence of the North American prosperity gospel, which was attractive to many Pentecostals and thus caused unrest in a great number of classical Pentecostal congregations throughout Sweden and Norway. A heated theological debate followed and quite a number of Pentecostals left their congregations to join Livets Ord. The movement spread to some other cities, for example to Jönköping, Sävsjö, Gävle and Gothenburg. The major effects were perhaps seen in Livets Ord's missionary work, carried out in Eastern Europe and Russia.

After many years of discussions and debates, the Swedish Pentecostal movement decided to abandon its ideology of radical congregationalism and non-organization. In 2002 the decision was taken to form an official, denominational-style organization called Pingst – fria församlingar i samverkan ('Pentecost: Free Congregations in Cooperation'), abbreviated as Pingst FFS. In this organization all entities within the movement are supposed to be successively incorporated. The first spokesman and director of the reformed denomination came to be Sten-Gunnar Hedin, the former pastor of Philadelphia Stockholm.¹⁶

All Pentecostal denominations have retained an interest in overseas missions. Up until the 1980s, missionary work expanded until around 100 countries were reached by over 1,000 Swedish Pentecostal missionaries. Since then, the character of the movement's activities has changed, however, from being missionary-centred to that of a cooperative enterprise, building relations with Pentecostal churches all over the world. While the number of traditional missionaries has declined significantly, the number of direct contacts, through pastors and ordinary members, has increased.

Pentecostal initiatives

The creativity of the Pentecostal churches in Sweden is well documented and recognized. As already noted, Lewi Pethrus was the man behind several of

16 Sten-Gunnar Hedin was later replaced by Pelle Hörnmark, the former principal pastor of the Pentecostal Church in Jönköping.

these initiatives. In 1912 he instituted the editorial imprint Förlaget Filadelfia, which became the largest Christian publishing house in Sweden. In 1915, he founded the periodical *Evangelii Häreld* ('The Gospel Herald'). Its most famous editor-in-chief was Sven Lidman, from 1922 to 1948. In 1942 he instigated the activities that brought about the the Kaggeholm folk high school and three years later, in 1945, the daily newspaper *Dagen*.

In 1952 Pethrus founded a banking and insurance company, Spar- och Kreditkassan (later called Samspar) to serve the Swedish congregations when building churches and other buildings. In 1954, as Pethrus celebrated his 70th birthday, the collection in his honour was dedicated to the Lewi Pethrus Stiftelse för Filantropisk verksamhet ('The Lewi Pethrus Foundation for Philanthropic Works') which, under the leadership of a former alcoholic Erik Edin, gained wide recognition for surprisingly good results in rehabilitating alcoholics and drug addicts. In 1955, Pethrus broke the Swedish state monopoly on radio broadcasting, founding IBRA Radio and thus instituting Christian broadcasting across Sweden. In 1964 he was, as stated above, instrumental in founding the Christian Democratic Party. In 1965, Pingstmissionens U-landshjälp (later PMU InterLife) was founded to initiate global development and relief work. The first director and main organizer of this project was Petrus Hammarberg, a former missionary to Africa.

Following Pethrus's death, this entrepreneurial spirit has continued in the foundation of three more folk high schools (Mariannelund, Viebäck and Dalkarlså), a private TV company (TV Inter) in 1983; a missionary research institute (MissionsInstitutet PMU) in 1985 and a university college (Pingstförsamlingarnas Teologiska Seminarium, PTS) in 1999.¹⁷

Early in Pentecostal history, and at the behest of young women evangelists, the founder of the Örebro Mission, John Ongman, started the Örebro Mission School (Örebro Missionskola, ÖMS) in 1908. This school provided an alternative to the more conservative Baptist Seminary in Stockholm and probably

17 In 2012, PTS was discontinued and replaced by the Academy for Leadership and Theology, a joint venture by the Evangelical Free Church (Evangeliska Frikyrkan), the Swedish Alliance Mission (Svenska Alliansmissionen), and the Pentecostal movement.

became the first Pentecostal school of higher education ever. Today the ÖMS hosts the Örebro Theological University College (Örebro Teologiska Högskola) and is recognized by the Swedish authorities as an establishment of higher theological education.

Just like the Pentecostal movement, the Örebro Mission has been a pioneer in making use of printed material. In 1917, Ongman founded the publishing house Örebro Missionsförenings förlag, usually abbreviated to ÖMs förlag. In 1921 he took the initiative to the weekly magazine *Missionbaneret* ('The Missionary Banner'). Later, the publishing house was renamed Libris.

The major contribution by Maranata, the periodical *Midnattsropet* ('The Midnight Call'), was founded by its leader Arne Imsen in 1960.

In the twenty-first century, Livets Ord has probably been the major actor in publishing with the closely related periodicals *Magazinet*, *Trons värld* ('World of Faith') and *Världen idag* ('The World Today'). The Livets Ords förlag (Word of Life publications) has been most active in publishing books by the movement's former leader Ulf Ekman as well on as theology and church history and, interestingly enough, old books by Lewi Pethrus.

Pentecostal spirituality

Pentecostalism in Sweden has maintained many of its typical traits up until the present day: including an emphasis on spiritual experience, faith healing, speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*), adult baptism and a delight in all kinds of musical expression. In comparison with the 1950s and the 1960s, however, the dividing line between Pentecostals and the 'world' has been considerably weakened. This has, among other things, led to the abolishment of excommunication and a considerable shortening of the list of 'sinful acts' (which some call 'internal secularization').

On the other hand, a great many novelties can be found in present-day Pentecostalism: hours of worship standing up; dancing; artificial smoke; coloured lights, etc. As regards some other aspects, Pentecostals have returned to views held by their early predecessors, such as viewing women preachers very positively and espousing boundless ecumenism. An example of the latter may be seen in the fusion of small congregations from different denominations. Local ecumenism seems in fact to be far less

problematic than it is in the context of regional and national initiatives.

Academic research on Pentecostalism in Sweden

The body of academic research on Pentecostalism in Sweden is notable, but far from exhaustive. In comparison with the profusion of works on, for example, the Swedish Lutheran Church (Svenska kyrkan), research on Pentecostalism is in fact very limited. However, in comparison with the state of research on Pentecostalism in neighbouring countries such as Denmark or Finland, it is considerably more comprehensive.

Thus, in a brief overview it is impossible to cover all the articles and contributions that have been produced on the subject, so in what follows I have chosen to briefly comment upon around thirty academic monographs on Swedish Pentecostalism; almost all of them in Swedish. I have chosen to do so because, in my personal opinion, they represent most of what has been produced that is of academic interest.¹⁸ My comments are ordered chronologically, not thematically, so that the reader will be aware of the works that have preceded – and possibly influenced – the others.

The first scholar in Sweden – and perhaps in the world – to take an interest in the New Movement (Pentecostalism) was the Uppsala Professor of Church History Emanuel Linderholm. As early as 1924 he published 'The Pentecostal Movement: Its Preconditions and Origin. Ecstasy, Miracles and Apocalypse in the Bible and in Contemporary Folk-religiosity.'¹⁹ This was the first part of a two-volume work. In the following year he published the sequel: 'The Pentecostal Movement in Sweden: Ecstasy, Miracles and Apocalypse in Contemporary Swedish Folk-religiosity'.

Linderholm, who formed part of the liberal movement within the Swedish Lutheran Church, obviously intended to write a well-founded and well-researched

18 There are of course a number of articles that could have been included, but I have limited myself to monographs as most of the scholars reviewed have produced their main findings in that form. Most of the articles are in fact excerpts of the research presented in the monographs.

19 Please note that most of the titles provided in the text are translations into English done by the author. The original titles in Swedish are all found in the bibliography.

warning about the new Charismatic movement, which had reached Sweden only 19 years earlier. This means that, for an academic text, the two books are surprisingly loaded with negative value judgements. To achieve his goal, however, Linderholm presents ample facts and some logical conclusions that provide the critical reader with important information about the history, the leaders, as well as the characteristics of early Scandinavian Pentecostalism.

In 1925, Efraim Briem, who had a doctorate from Lund University, published *The Modern Pentecostal Movement*, a book that in many ways is similar to Professor Linderholm's studies, but intended to be complementary to them. Briem's work has less historical accuracy but shares the same type of prejudice that we find in his colleague's works. Nevertheless, there is some food for thought for the critical scholar here, as there is ample information about attitudes and events in the early Pentecostalist revival.

Following Linderholm and Briem, almost half a century passed before the next academic work on Swedish Pentecostalism was produced. In 1976, Nils G. Holm presented his doctoral dissertation in the psychology of religions at Uppsala University: 'Speaking in Tongues and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: An Investigation of Glossolalia among Finnish-Swedish Pentecostals from the Perspective of the Psychology of Religion'. This became the first 'modern' study of Swedish Pentecostalism.

Holm was a pioneer in exploring the use, importance, and character of glossolalia among Pentecostals. His research was based on extensive interviews with Pentecostals from the Swedish-speaking areas of Finland, and thus is not, strictly speaking, on Swedish Pentecostalism. The relationship and historical interconnections between the two movements has been so strong, however, that his results are easily applicable also on Swedish Pentecostalism (and furthermore, the dissertation was presented in Swedish at a Swedish university).

Only a year later, in 1977, the Lutheran priest Carl-Erik Sahlberg defended his doctoral thesis in church history at Uppsala University: 'The Pentecostal Movement and the *Dagen* Newspaper: From Sect to Christian Society 1907–63', also at Uppsala University. Sahlberg's focus is on Lewi Pethrus and the Christian newspaper, *Dagen*, founded by this leader in 1949. However, in doing so, he also provides the reader with information on the Swedish Pentecostal movement in general. Even though there are obvious flaws

in his description (e.g. the use of the term 'sect'), this is the first work to include what had happened in the movement, subsequent to Linderholm's books and up until 1963. The strength of this work is the rendering of the history of *Dagen*, an account of its impact on Swedish society and how it reflects the internal changes within the movement.

Two years after his analysis of glossolalia, in 1978, Nils G. Holm published a companion volume. 'The Pentecostal Movement: A Study of Pentecostalism in Swedish-speaking Finland within the Field of Comparative Religion'. In contrast to his previous work, this book was considerably more of a descriptive and historical character. The author discusses Pentecostal history and spirituality from a perspective taken from the behavioural sciences. This work is, to date, the only comprehensive academic publication on this aspect of the Pentecostal movement.

In 1982, Curt Dahlgren published the only monograph to date on the Maranata movement. His work was presented as a doctoral thesis in the sociology of religion at Lund University. Its full title was 'Maranata: A Sociological Study of the Origin and Development of a Sectarian Movement'. This is basically a sociological study but it also contains elements of the movement's history, spirituality and theology. He regards Maranata as a 'schismatic sect' and studies it as a counter-culture in relation to its 'mother church', the Swedish Pentecostal movement, which is why there is also ample information about that movement.

In the same year, 1982, and at the same university, a former Pentecostal missionary Rhode Struble, presented his doctoral thesis in church history at Lund University: 'The Denominationless Congregation and the Charismatic Gifts and Offices: The Ecclesiology of the Swedish Pentecostal Movement from 1907 to 1947'. Struble examines how the 'denominationless' vision of this movement developed, how it was defended and applied in the Swedish Pentecostal movement. He explores the 'joint companies' (*gemensamma företag*), centred around Lewi Pethrus and the Philadelphia Church in Stockholm, which created the conditions for the emergence of a church-like organization called 'the Pentecostal movement' – in spite of the official ideology of 'free congregations' (*fria församlingar*).

Struble's main contribution is his critical rendition of the contradictions between the implicit and the explicit ecclesiology of the Pentecostal movement. He

is also the first academic to distinguish between the Pentecostal revival (*pingstväckelsen*) and the Swedish Pentecostal movement (*pingströrelsen*), however, and he is also the first in establishing the '1919 Kölingared Declaration' (Kölingaredsdeklarationen) as the decisive step in establishing the Swedish Pentecostal movement as an independent denomination.

In 1983, the following year, Lars Samuelsson published a valuable regional study of the development of the Swedish Pentecostal movement. This work was presented as his doctoral thesis in church history at the Department of Theology, Uppsala University: 'Ways of the Revival: the Genesis of the Pentecostal Movement in Lycksele and Arvidsjaur up until 1940'. Samuelsson studies the origins, development and diffusion of Pentecostalism in one of the most Pentecostalized areas of Sweden, Lycksele, a river valley region in northern Sweden, north west of the city of Umeå, as well as in Arvidsjaur, north west of the city of Skellefteå, where Pentecostalism had had very limited success – in spite of the fact that the two regions are very similar. His comparative research helps us understand where and why Pentecostalism provided an attractive alternative in the early twentieth century.

In 1986, Hans Sundberg, presented his doctoral thesis in systematic theology at Uppsala University on the well-known writer and preacher Sven Lidman. The title of the dissertation was 'Sven Lidman on the Human Being and God: An Analytical Study of the Works'. This is the first study that deals with the theological orientation of Sven Lidman. It focuses on his idea of God and his view of man as expressed in his writings and sermons, but there is also background information about Lidman's origin and world of ideas.

Two years later, in 1988, Torbjörn Lengborn produced a companion volume on the same preacher, presented as a doctoral dissertation in the psychology of religion at Uppsala University: 'The Conversion of Sven Lidman: the Experience of Salvation and the Process of Conversion 1915–21'. The author concentrated on the spiritual experience of Lidman and its expressions in his writings during a very limited period, discussed from a psychological perspective.

In 1990 Carl-Gustav Carlsson presented his doctoral thesis at Lund University on the Pentecostal preacher Lewi Pethrus: 'The Human Being, Society and God: Basic Traits in the Theology of Lewi Pethrus'. This was the first major work dedicated to the man who was undisputed leader of the Swedish

Pentecostal movement over 55 years, analysing Pethrus' theological positions on a series of issues. It is an attempt to produce a holistic view of the life and theology of this leader.

In the same year, 1990, the political scientist and church historian Torbjörn Aronson, produced a condensed overview of the Pentecostal revivals that have reached Sweden from 1945 to 1990: 'Fire from God over Sweden: Swedish Revival History after 1945'. This was an ambitious attempt to synthesize Pentecostal and charismatic currents in Swedish churches after the Second World War. It is a condensed work that summarizes the main events of most Pentecostal or Pentecostalized churches in Sweden and provides a brief international background to these events.²⁰

In 1991, folk high school teacher, Alf Lindberg, presented his doctoral thesis on church history at Lund University: 'The Preachers and Their Education: The Issue of Education, the Ideological Role of Lewi Pethrus and the Situation of Women Preachers'. Lindberg presents a fairly critical view of Pethrus' leadership and the paradoxical contradiction in the movement on these issues by means of a thorough reading of the documents. Regrettably, his analysis is somewhat shallow.

In 1994, Anders Gustavsson, Professor of Ethnology at Uppsala University, published a field study of Pentecostalism on an island community located in the Gothenburg archipelago: 'Pentecostalism on Åstol'. This is a rare, solid, ethnographical case study of a Pentecostal church in a fishing district in south western Sweden where it has attained majority status. The effects and other consequences of this remarkable situation are presented and discussed. The study is almost the only one of its kind in Sweden.

In 1996, Owe Kennerberg presented his doctoral thesis in systematic theology at Uppsala University, called 'Inside or Outside: A Study of Church Discipline in Nine Swedish Free Churches'. This is a pioneering, comparative study of the rise and fall of church discipline in various denominations, including the Pentecostal movement.

In the same year, Carl-Erik Sahlberg published the sequel to his doctoral dissertation: 'The Pentecostal Movement, the Churches and Society: A Study of the

20 In a second edition published in 2005, the author adds information on several recent developments within the Pentecostal sector, for example the birth and growth of Livets Ord (Word of Life) movement.

Dagen Newspaper 1964–74'. The material consisted of a revision of the 'leftovers' from Sahlberg's doctoral dissertation of 1977. It brings the story of *Dagen* up to the point when Lewi Pethrus' death brings to a close his time as editor-in-chief. Sahlberg claims that the Pentecostal movement was subsequently transformed from an 'apolitical' movement to a society-oriented one. He mentions the foundation of the Christian Democratic Party (Kristen Demokratisk Samling) as an example. But *Dagen* was also used by Lewi Pethrus to consolidate – and to influence – the Pentecostal movement after he had left his post as leader of the Stockholm Philadelphia Church. Issues mentioned are the organization of overseas missionary activity, education of pastors, the birth of the Maranata movement and the charismatic renewal.

In 1996 we find the first academic work on the Swedish Pentecostal movement to be published abroad when Nils-Olov Nilsson presents his *Contextualization and Literalism in the Female Debate in the Swedish and the Norwegian Pentecostal Movements 1978–1995* at the University of Alabama in the USA. This is an unpublished essay, available as an e-book, that roughly corresponds to a licentiate thesis in Sweden. It may be considered a systematic follow-up of Lindberg's thesis on women's issues in the Swedish Pentecostal movement.

In the following year, in 1997, Göran Johansson, a social anthropologist from Stockholm University produced the first anthropological study of a major Swedish Pentecostal activity (in this case the treatment of addicts): 'Too Much of Me, Too Little of Jesus: The LP Foundation for Treatment of Addicts from a Social Anthropological Perspective'. This is an innovative and interesting study of a Pentecostal treatment programme, consisting of thick ethnography and theoretical clarity. It is, in fact, a prominent anthropological work on a Swedish phenomenon.

In 1998, Ulla Moberg presented her doctoral thesis in linguistics at Uppsala University on: 'The Use of Language and Interaction in a Swedish Pentecostal Church: An Ethnographic Study of Communication'. Based on fieldwork among Pentecostals in a 'medium-sized Swedish town', Moberg's work demonstrates how language plays a decisive role in the creation of identity, but also how it may define different categories: elderly Pentecostals, young Pentecostals and new converts. To date, this is the only study of language use in the Swedish Pentecostal movement.

In the year 2000, we find the first contribution to

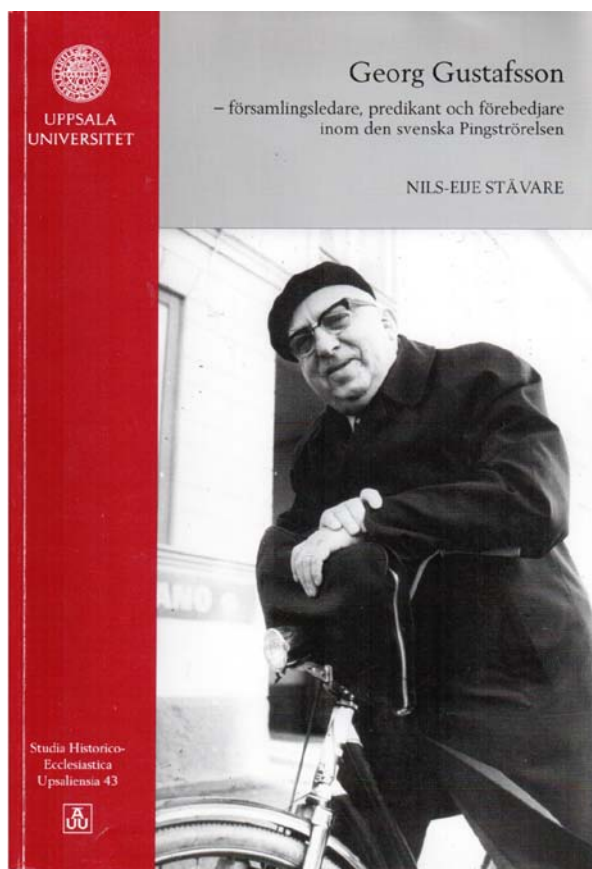
the study of Pentecostalism in Sweden by an expatriate scholar. This occurs when Simon Coleman, currently a professor of cultural anthropology at Toronto University, published a book based on his fieldwork in Uppsala and the subsequent dissertation, presented at Cambridge in 1989 entitled²¹ *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity*. This is the first comprehensive study of the Word of Life (Livets Ord) in Uppsala to be undertaken by an English scholar. It analyses the Word of Life as an example of globalization, demonstrating this through an account of, for example, how language and mass media are used to propagate the message. This book, as well as his subsequent articles, have attracted much international attention and have made the Swedish charismatic scene also known to researchers in the English speaking areas of the world.

In 2001 Nils-Olov Nilsson published his second academic thesis, this time on *The Swedish Pentecostal Movement 1913–2000: The Tension between Radical Congregationalism, Restorationism and Denominationalism*. It was presented as a doctoral dissertation at Columbia Evangelical Seminary (Longview, Washington, USA). It is a study of ecclesiology and theology, especially the tension between radical congregationalism, restorationism and denominationalism in the Swedish Pentecostal movement from its exclusion from the Baptist movement in 1913 up until the year 2000.

In 2005, Göran Johansson published yet another major work on Pentecostalism in Sweden: 'The Time of the Latter Rain: Fragments and Images from Bethany. A Pentecostal Congregation in and out of Time'. This is another descriptive and reflective study by Johansson, who in this work describes and analyses his childhood experiences in a rural Pentecostal church.

During the same year, the theologian and educationalist Ulrik Josefsson presented his doctoral thesis in church history at Lund University, called: 'Life and Abundance: The Spirituality of the Early Pentecostal Movement'. In this work, Josefsson describes and analyses early Pentecostal spirituality as it is reflected in the journal *Evangelii Härold* ('Gospel Herald'). Josefsson employs the concept of 'spirituality' as

21 The original title of the dissertation presented in Cambridge was *Controversy and the Social Order: Responses to a Religious Group in Sweden*.



introduced by the ecclesiologist Alf Härdelin as an analytical tool. The frequent use of case material from the *Evangelii Härold* provides us with a valuable cross-section of the official or 'accepted' theology and praxis of early Swedish Pentecostalism.

In 2006, Sune Fahlgren presented his doctoral thesis in systematic theology at Uppsala University, called 'The Office of Preaching and the Congregation: Six Case Studies of Ecclesiastical Basic Practice within the Swedish Free Churches up until the 1960s'. Through an analysis of six examples of free church sermons by well-known preachers²² in Sweden, among them some from the Pentecostal branch of Christianity, Fahlgren provides us with a most comprehensive view of ecclesiology within the Swedish churches.

In 2007, a two-volume work on the Swedish Pentecostal movement was published by a group of

22 The preachers analysed in this thesis are the Baptist pioneer F. O. Nilsson; the Covenant Church leader P. P. Waldenström; the travelling preacher Nelly Hall; the Baptist preacher Hjalmar Danielsson; the Pentecostal pastor Lewi Pethrus and the 'national colporteur' C. G. Hjelm.

Swedish scholars and writers, the executive editor being Claes Waern. The subtitle of the first volume is 'Events and Development during the 1900s' (Waern *et al.* 2007a). This volume is chronological and goes through the main features of Swedish Pentecostal history, decade by decade, from the 1910s to the 1990s. The chapters are written by different authors. The second volume is called 'Activities and Characteristics during the 1900s' (Waern *et al.* 2007b). This part is thematic, dealing with the Swedish Pentecostal movement and its activities in Sweden and abroad. It begins with articles about faith and doctrine, continues with chapters on activities such as worship services, Sunday school, overseas missionary practices, social involvement and education. In the third part, a sociological analysis is followed by descriptions of political involvement, spirituality and major conferences. The chapters of this volume are also written by different authors.

The first major work on the Örebro Mission was produced in 2008 when Göran Janzon presented his doctoral thesis in missiology at Uppsala University. The title is: "'The Second Conversion": From Swedish Missionary Activities to African Denominations at the Mission Field of the Örebro Mission in the Central African Republic from 1914 to 1962'. Nominally, this is a study of missionary work in Africa. Nevertheless, the study also provides a generous historical background of the Örebro Mission and its undisputed leader for many years, John Ongman. It represents Ongman as a faithful Baptist, but also as an early actor in the formation of Swedish Pentecostals; as well as his efforts to promote women evangelists ('the Ongman sisters', Swe. Ongmansystarna) and to introduce theological education for both sexes (Örebro Mission School).

During the same year, Nils-Eije Stävare, presented his doctoral thesis in church history at Uppsala University on 'Georg Gustafsson: Church Leader, Preacher and Intercessor in the Swedish Pentecostal Movement'. This is the first study of the Lutheran-oriented, Pentecostal healing preacher who exerted a great deal of influence on the Swedish Pentecostal movement for decades. It provides us with insights on the theological debate and the changing circumstances of the Pentecostal movement during a good part of the twentieth century.

In 2010, the church historian Joel Halldorf published "'Rain, Rain Journey above Us": Algot Niklasson and the Renewal Revival in the Swedish

Pentecostal Movement from 1950 to 1951'. This was originally an essay written on church history at Lund University that was revised and published as a book. It focuses on a decisive moment in Swedish Pentecostal history, one of the major revival movements in the 1950s and the leading figure Algot Niklasson who had a mere year or two in the limelight before he was ostracized.

In 2011, David Thurffjell, a researcher at Södertörn University College, published *Faith and Revivalism in a Nordic Romani Community: Pentecostalism among the Kaale Roma*. Based on an extended fieldwork among the Finnish Kaale Roma minority in Sweden and Finland, the author discusses the role of the religious rites in the lives of a number of informants. He claims, for instance, that the Pentecostal church has become a meeting place where the demands of integration from the majority culture and the group's own demands on cultural integrity can be mediated. This is the first major study of Pentecostalism among the Romani in Sweden.

In 2012, Joel Halldorf presented his doctoral thesis in church history at Uppsala University: 'Of this World? Emil Gustafson, Modernity and the Evangelical Revival'. This is the first academic work on Emil Gustafsson, a prominent figure in the Swedish Holiness movement, but also most important as a mystic, songwriter and inspirational force in a major portion of the free church movement. Apart from an ample description and analysis of Gustafsson's spirituality, Halldorf discusses the interrelationship between the revival movements and modernity. Using Charles Taylor's definition of modernity as a point of departure, Halldorf concludes that the revival movements in fact are 'a kind of modernity'.

Also in 2012, Tommy Davidsson presented his doctoral thesis in theology at the University of Birmingham: *Lewi Pethrus' Ecclesiological Thought 1911-1974: A Transdenominational Pentecostal Ecclesiology*. This thesis is based on thorough archival research, especially in the archive of the newspaper *Dagen*, and focuses on the pragmatic and adaptive ecclesiology of the Pentecostal leader Lewi Pethrus. In a most critical way, it examines the expressions of these turns and changes through, for example, a study of the numerous editorials of *Dagen* written by Pethrus.

In 2013, Jessica Moberg published her thesis *Piety, Intimacy and Mobility: A Case Study of Charismatic Christianity in Present-day Stockholm*. This was her

doctoral dissertation in comparative religion, presented at Södertörn University College, Stockholm. Moberg uses anthropological method to study piety, intimacy and mobility among young Christians in Pentecostal churches situated in greater Stockholm. Her results clearly demonstrate new trends, as, for example, increased mobility among young Pentecostals.²³

In 2014 the present author published an anthology on the Swedish Pentecostal movement: 'About the Pentecostal Movement: Essays, reviews and analyses'. This book is a collection of 13 articles on the Swedish Pentecostal movement that I have written over the years and published in different contexts. Topics include, for example, Pentecostal history, revisionism, naming practices, culture, community involvement, rituals, theology, hermeneutics and overseas missions. All chapters are preceded by a meta-text that accounts for its creation and all are followed by a postscript contributed by a leading researcher in the field addressed.

Research on Swedish Pentecostal Mission

During a brief, intensive period at the PMU Mission Institute in Stockholm, roughly from 1997 to 2002, a group of scholars and aficionados published an extended series of works about the Swedish Pentecostal Mission, accounted for below. They followed a particular, documentary style and were based on extensive archival research and joint seminars.²⁴ As becomes evident from the following presentation, there are very few scholarly works on the Swedish Pentecostal Mission before and after this period.

The first academic work on Swedish Pentecostal Mission was presented by Pétur Pétusson in 1990 as a doctoral thesis in church history at Lund University: 'From Revival to Denomination: Swedish Pentecostal Mission on the Islands of the North Atlantic Sea'. Pétusson describes the establishment of Pentecostalism in the North Atlantic region through the agency of Swedish Pentecostal missionaries.

23 The book received the 2013 Donner Prize in Turku for the best thesis of the year within religious studies treatise.

24 In the bibliography below, these works are characterized by being published in Ekerö, apart from my own work, published in Örebro in 2002.

The second, and one of the most thought-provoking works on Swedish Pentecostal Mission, was the 1992 doctoral dissertation in social anthropology at Stockholm University presented by Göran Johansson: *More Blessed to Give: A Pentecostal Mission to Bolivia in Anthropological Perspective*. Johansson does not provide a conventional church history but discusses difficulties in the relations between Swedish missionaries and Bolivian pastors and church members, not the least the issue of 'giving' and 'receiving', echoing the problems posed by Marcel Mauss in his famous work 'The Gift' (1923–4).

Five years later, Gunilla Nyberg Oskarsson produced the first overview of the various Swedish Pentecostal initiatives in Ethiopia. Her book, published in 1997 on the 'Swedish Pentecostal Mission in Ethiopia from 1959 to 1980', thus initiated the era of documentary studies from the PMU Mission Institute.

The year following, in 1998, Barbro Andreasson published a sequel, but this time on missionary work in Pakistan: 'Swedish Pentecostal Mission in Pakistan'. In 2000, Bengt Samuel Forsberg, published the first documentary study from Latin America with his 'Swedish Pentecostal Mission in Argentina'.

In 2000, Barbro Andreasson, Eric Andréasson and Billy Johansson joined forces and published 'Swedish Pentecostal Mission in India', a well documented work on the long and complex history of work in this country. A companion work on missionary activities in Tanzania, the country that has received more Swedish Pentecostal missionaries than any other country in the world, was published by Carin Holmkvist Nyström in the same year, entitled 'Swedish Pentecostal Mission in Tanzania'. A third work was published almost simultaneously, in 2001: Lennart Carlström's 'Swedish Pentecostal Mission in Liberia'. All these works are roughly of the same character. They provide us with a fairly uncensored and close reading of the sources but contain little analysis.

In 2002, my own study of the history of the missionary activities in Bolivia was published: "Unto the Indians of Bolivia": The Story of the Swedish Pentecostal Mission in "the Backwoods of South America". This work was based on archival research and a long series of interviews done by collaborators of the PMU Mission Institute. It shows how the missionary activities were based on individual agency and how the results of often fairly haphazard events and failed attempts were translated into a discourse of divine strategy.

In 2004, one of the former collaborators of this institute, Gunilla Nyberg Oskarsson presented her doctoral thesis in missiology at Uppsala University: 'The Pentecostal Movement: An Alternative Community in Southern Burundi from 1935 to 1960'.

Finally, in 2009, a most original contribution was presented as a doctoral dissertation in church history at Uppsala University by an American citizen, David Bundy: *Visions of Apostolic Mission: Scandinavian Pentecostal Mission to 1935*. In this work, Bundy describes the ideas and theology behind the early Scandinavian missionary endeavours. He dedicates ample space to an account of the life and work of T. B. Barratt, the Norwegian Pentecostal leader who also had great influence on early Pentecostalism in Sweden. He also accounts for early Swedish initiatives – and cooperation between the Nordic countries, for example in Africa.

Final comments

Considering the fact that the Swedish Pentecostal movement (*pingströrelsen*) has been the second largest church denomination in Sweden, the number of works produced on it is not surprising. However, the works on the other Pentecostal movements are scarce. We find only one major work on Maranata, the Örebro Mission and the Word of Life movement respectively.

As regards the academic origins of the studies, Uppsala University seems to be the hub of most activities: 13 doctoral dissertations and four other major works have been written by scholars from Uppsala University. The only real competitor, Lund University, has produced six doctoral theses and one major work. Stockholm University has produced one doctoral thesis and two major works. Other universities have produced a single dissertation or major work.²⁵

The main conclusion is that much further research is necessary, especially when it comes to Pentecostal movements other than the main denomination, for example the Örebro Mission, Maranata, the Word of Life and other Pentecostal branches. An area that is totally missing is Pentecostalism among immigrants

25 Above, we have also presented 13 'other works' of particular interest, *not* produced as major academic works by university professors, but nonetheless of great interest to the scholar of Pentecostal Studies.

in Sweden, including, for example, members of the African Pentecostal churches.²⁶

As regards thematic studies, ecclesiology, history, and missionary work seem to be fairly well studied. There are also important contributions in disparate fields such as language use, healing practices, the role of women, spirituality, and so forth. There are also obviously unexplored areas, however, such as international contacts, social work, internal secularization, and the negotiation of a Pentecostal identity. It is my hope that this overview will encourage future students and scholars to study these almost virgin areas. ■



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