



Translated Autobiographies in an Interconnected World

A Cross-Linguistic Study of Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Religious Memoirs

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Abstract

This article compares German, English, and Swedish versions of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century religious memoirs. We study four Moravian memoirs with two key dimensions in view: firstly, the tension between individuality and community, and secondly, the effects of global interconnectedness. By analysing how these traits were negotiated when the memoirs were translated, we demonstrate how gender, class, and colonial relationships affected autobiographical writing around the turn of the nineteenth century. We identify an inherent tension in the Moravian memoirs between hierarchy and egalitarianism. European ambitions for world dominance were growing, and in their missions abroad, the Moravians had to fit their religious agenda into colonial frameworks. But regional inequalities within Europe also put their mark on the memoirs. Theologically, the Moravians regarded the world as divided into core settlements, diaspora, and missionary areas. The division mirrored a general pattern of dependence on German culture in the Nordics. The negotiation of meaning playing out when texts were transferred between languages illustrates the secondary status of Swedish Moravians compared to the German core, as well as

European colonial notions of non-European people. Also, women and women's agency were toned down or removed entirely in the process of editing and translation.

Keywords: translation, Moravian diaspora, gender, colonialism

The end of the eighteenth century saw an increase in autobiographical writing, which would last more or less uninterrupted until the present day. This form of self-expression has often been interpreted as an expression of individualisation, not least in research on women's writing.¹ Other scholars have criticised the idea of autobiographical writing as reflecting the development of the modern individual for being Eurocentric, pointing out that individual expression and a sense of self are by no means unique for European writers from the late eighteenth century onward.²

The growing volume of diaries, journals, letters, biographies, and memoirs in the late eighteenth century no doubt signifies increasing opportunities for self-expression. But this development did not play out in a monolithic Europe isolated from the rest of the world. Technological developments, expanding networks, and growing literacy accelerated the global circulation of ideas and narratives. By extension, this implies that colonial perspectives and non-European life experiences, as well as hierarchies within Europe, put their mark on the modern, autobiographical tradition.

In this article, we analyse a particular kind of autobiographical writing, namely religious memoirs by members of the Moravian Church, in the light of increasing transnational interconnectedness, 1770–1830. We address the debate about individualisation by asking how individuality was expressed in the memoirs, and more specifically, how the memoirs were adapted and individuality re-negotiated when the texts moved between different linguistic and cultural contexts. While previous researchers have studied translation mostly from the perspective of large vernaculars, we depart from the northern European periphery, comparing Swedish, German, and English versions of Moravian memoirs. By taking Sweden as our starting point, we hope to provide a novel aspect to the research on life writing in translation.

The Moravian memoirs are particularly useful for studying the relationship between individuality and communality. As Tobias Heinrich points out, around the turn of the nineteenth century, autobiographies in general related to the collective dimension of a person's life.³ Moravian memoirs, essentially an offshoot of Pietist autobiographical tradition, were no exceptions. According to Peter Vogt, their aim was to confirm the group identity of the Moravian community, but they did so by narrating collective beliefs and values with the help of deeply personal life experiences.⁴

As stated by Ian Watt as long ago as 1957, Pietist autobiographies had individualistic features that, in hindsight, make them remarkably modern in outlook. In some respects, these autobiographies pointed towards the emergence of the novel.⁵ However, cultural impulses travel both ways, and the Moravian memoirs display an interplay between new literary forms and older genres. As will be demonstrated, some Moravian memoirs did indeed incorporate novel-like features, but also combined their subjectivity with an ambition for religious exemplarity, similar to what John Fleming and others have observed concerning pre-Reformation traditions.⁶

A close relationship between community and individuality, then, is the first of two key dimensions that invite analysis of the Moravian memoirs. The second key dimension lies in the fact that cultural differentiation affected editing and translation. The Moravians aimed at connecting different Protestant churches and confessions. This ambition to build a “global community”, in the expression of Gisela Mettele, somewhat paradoxically reflected in an organisation that separated between Moravian core settlements, “diasporas”, and missionary areas.⁷ The spiritual hierarchy overlapped both with patterns of colonial dominance in America and with traditional divisions between European centres and peripheries.⁸

The Moravian Church and its Memoirs

The Moravian church was inspired by the Czech reformation movement known as the *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of Brethren), but developed a character of its own under Count Nicolas Ludwig von Zinzendorf in early eighteenth-century Saxony. He offered refuge to a group of Moravian dissenters at his Berthelsdorf estate, integrated them with the congregation already attached to the castle chapel, and granted the newcomers a lease to establish a new settlement, Herrnhut. Under Zinzendorf’s leadership, the Moravian Church began to pursue interconfessional ideals to an extent unique to the early modern context. The movement rapidly spread across Protestant Northern Europe and also to North and South America, Greenland, and Africa.⁹

The Moravian Church was a variety of Pietism, albeit with eclectic theological ideas. It rested on the Lutheran core idea that faith in the redeeming power of Christ’s sacrifice matters far more than any set model for human behaviour in the temporal world. Blood-and-wounds theology became typical of Moravianism, together with pre-Reformation marital mysticism and, at least for a period of time, controversial ideas about sexuality and equality between genders. Women and men alike were the Brides of Christ, and women played an active role as spiritual leaders.¹⁰

The practice of writing religious memoirs was well-established among both Catholics and Protestants. The Moravians, though, collected them systematically from the late 1740s onward, when Zinzendorf declared that all members of the church should write or dictate an account of their lives. In Anglophone research, these ego-documents are described as memoirs, although the texts are usually a mix of autobiographical and biographical material. Zinzendorf's intention was that the memoir should be read aloud at the member's funeral, to inspire and edify fellow believers. Selected memoirs were copied and distributed across the globe.¹¹

According to researchers like Christine Lost and Katie Faull, the memoirs typically follow a distinct pattern. First, the childhood, upbringing, and occupation of the main character are described. Then follows the first encounter with the Moravian Church and its teachings, and the subsequent integration with the Moravian community. Spiritual experience and life-changing temporal events interact in an oscillating pattern typical of the Moravian memoirs. The final illness and death of the subject are presented in a concluding section.¹²

The Lutheran tradition of funeral sermons was one source of inspiration for the Moravian memoirs, but, as Thomas McCullough points out, historians have so far been unable to recover any written instructions for what the memoir texts should include. However, he suggests that a 1752 memorandum by Matthaëus Hehl, bishop of the Moravian communities in Pennsylvania, might have played a role. Indeed, the guidelines penned by Hehl closely follow the pattern identified by Lost.¹³ But above all, the model for the autobiographies appears to have been embedded in contemporaneous sociocultural and religious practice. This opens up questions about intertextual aspects and translation.

The memoirs were collected in Herrnhut, initially as a part of the so-called Congregational Accounts. Later on, after the death of Zinzendorf in 1760, copies of selected memoirs were included in the *Gemeinnachrichten*.¹⁴ Originally, these were a hand-copied newsletter that was distributed among Moravian communities across the world. In 1817, memoirs also appeared in print, in the periodical *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* (later renamed *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine*, the last issue of which was published in 1894). However, at the local level, the practice of hand-copying continued well into the nineteenth century.

Core, Diaspora, and Mission

As mentioned earlier, the Moravians understood their world in terms of three spheres. Firstly, there were the core settlements, leading a secluded, sect-like life, mainly in the German lands but including colonies such as Christiansfeld in Denmark and Gracehill in Northern Ireland. Secondly, there was the diaspora, which encompassed most of Northern Europe, for example, Sweden and the Russian Baltic provinces. Thirdly, there were the missionary areas in America. England, as Wolfgang Breul points out, was not formally listed among the Moravian diaspora provinces when the organisation was revised after Zinzendorf's death.¹⁵ The Moravian Church had been granted status by the British parliament in 1749 as an Ancient Episcopalian Church, based on the argument that the roots of Moravianism stretched all the way back to the Czech Reformation. This confirmation ran contrary to Zinzendorf's own ideas about the autonomy of the diaspora communities, but guaranteed the English Moravians the right to worship.¹⁶

The main difference between life in the Moravian core settlements and in the diaspora was spiritual, and reflected in the religious practice of the followers. In Herrnhut, the Moravians lived together in communes, housed in separate dwellings according to gender, age, and marital status. By contrast, the Moravian followers in the diaspora organised themselves as chartered Societies, a form of association emblematic of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This type of organisation made it easier to fit into the framework of established Lutheran churches and was also in line with the Moravian ambition to respect confessional differences within the diaspora.¹⁷ Even so, some of the Moravian Societies emulated Herrnhut practices. In Stockholm, for example, the division according to gender was applied.¹⁸

Memoirs from the Swedish diaspora were typically written or dictated by members affiliated with the Societies in Stockholm or Gothenburg, with the archive of the Stockholm Society functioning as the main depository for the Swedish versions of the texts. Together, the Stockholm and Gothenburg societies probably counted about one thousand members in total, from the mid-1750s up to the early 1800s. The majority of Moravians in Sweden, though, most likely lived in the countryside and were only to a lesser extent familiar with Moravian teachings.¹⁹

There were close contacts between the Nordic diaspora and the German-speaking lands, but the network operated on an unequal footing. Sweden's status as a military great power had ended in crushing defeat in 1718, and the country was always culturally subordinate to its southern neighbours, with their prominent cities and

universities. In the terminology of Peter Burke, Germany was the ‘dominant cultural model’ in Sweden.²⁰ In high society, French culture and language also played a significant role during the eighteenth century.

Among contemporaneous European observers, Sweden was regarded with varying degrees of understanding. Friedrich Wilhelm von Schubert, theologian at Greifswald University, travelled the Nordic countries extensively and in 1820–1821 published a history of the Swedish Lutheran Church. He claimed that the spirit of the Reformation era had survived virtually undiluted in Sweden: for him, traditionalism and authenticity went hand in hand. Schubert also estimated that Moravians made up the most numerous Lutheran minority in the country.²¹

To a German-born woman such as Maximiliane Auguste Bellwitz, on the other hand, Sweden was uncharted territory. As wife of one of the Moravian pastors stationed in Sweden some years after Schubert’s travels, she remembered that it was with “dread” that she received news in 1829 that she was not only supposed to marry an unknown man (the new pastor), but also to leave the comfort of the Moravian community at Dutch Zeist and take up a position in a country about which she knew absolutely nothing.²² Cultural differentiation of the kind indicated here also left an imprint on the accounts given of non-European and colonized regions when the Moravian memoirs were translated.

Our Sources: Four Lives

German was the working language of the Moravian Church, but roughly one hundred memoirs in Swedish survive in the archive collections of the Moravian Societies in Stockholm and Gothenburg. A majority of the texts belong to the Stockholm archive. In addition, a large number of foreign memoirs are inserted into the diaries of the two Societies.

Since our intention is to capture how individuality, community, and global interconnectedness were affected as memoirs travelled across linguistic borders, our chosen sources are memoirs preserved in more than one language. Using the Swedish collections as a starting point and comparing them, manually, with digitalised Moravian memoirs and with Åberg’s personal copies of Swedish Moravians’ memoirs in the Unity Archives in Herrnhut, we have found four such multi-lingual “sets” of memoirs.²³ The lives of the Swedes Anna Bagge (1720–1771) and Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke (1745–1812) were documented in Swedish and German;²⁴ the lives of Swedish-born Peter Jacob Planta (1721–1815) and the Englishman James Liley (1773–

1827) in English, Swedish, and German.²⁵ All in all, our material consists of 13 texts. Bagge's memoirs are the shortest by far, comprising only 250–2000 words, while the memoirs of Lagerbjelke, Planta, and Liley differ between 3600 and 6800 words in length.

Anna Bagge: A Life Abridged

Our oldest memoir is that of Anna Bagge, née Bundy. Anna was the daughter of a Lutheran vicar on the West coast of Sweden. When she was seventeen, her father died, and the family fell on hard times.²⁶ Regardless of social standing, the risk of misfortune was always present in eighteenth-century society. Stories of the trials and tribulations that faced middling-sort families in penury are retold not only in religious memoirs, but also became a topic for the emerging, modern novel. In Anna's case, a parallel would be Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766); in Anna's memoir, though, the tone is matter-of-fact rather than amused. After the split-up of the family, Anna lodged in the house of an aunt in the port city of Gothenburg. In the mid-1740s, she was introduced to the local Moravian community.²⁷

A Swedish version of Anna's memoir is kept in the archive of the Stockholm Moravian Society, while two German versions are stored in Herrnhut: one approaching the Swedish memoir in length and one of them a shortened, official version that was circulated in the *Gemeinnachrichten*.²⁸

According to a postscript attached to the longer of the two German versions, it was Anna's husband, the merchant Benjamin Bagge, who compiled the first version of the memoir (This manuscript has apparently been lost, so whether he wrote in German or Swedish remains unclear.) The writer of the post-script informed that he had been allowed to shorten this text somewhat – to “erase and add” as deemed “suitable” – but the widower had resisted abridging the text, resulting in a text that was ‘still too extensive’:

Dieser Personalia hat Hr. Bagge selber aufgesetzt, u. es war erstl. ein ganser Bogen voll geschrieben, er bat mir den ich wolte aufstreichen, u. zusätzen wies sich schickt. Da habe ich zwar alles gelaßen, aber nur Kürzer zusammen gezogen, es ist aber noch zu weitleuftig, ich dürfte es aber nicht kürtzer machen um seintwillen.²⁹

In other words, Benjamin Bagge deferred to the tacit knowledge of the anonymous editor on the matter of the composition, but not the length, of his wife's memoir. The

negotiation between the widower and editor reflects a view of authorship and authenticity that was common to the period: Texts were there to be copied and adapted freely.³⁰ But whereas the author of the post-script felt empowered to trim the text only to some extent, the editors in Herrnhut took more drastic measures, cutting down the memoir by some 85 percent. Still, the shortened *Gemeinnachrichten* version is in keeping with Matthaeus Hehl's memorandum: all topics that were supposed to be included were retained, but boiled down to key aspects, dates, and place names.³¹

The authority to craft the final versions of Moravian memoirs clearly rested in Herrnhut. In that sense, the editing process reflects the relationship between the core of the Moravian Church and its diaspora communities. The dominant role of the German language and culture in the Baltic Sea region fundamentally corresponded with the Moravian division between core and diaspora.

In comparison to the official version in the *Gemeinnachrichten*, the more extensive memoirs in Swedish and in German provide an illustration of the role of Moravian theology on marriage. The fuller versions of the texts state that Anna was "married off" (Swedish *giftes*, German *wurde verheyraht*) after counselling by the elders of the Moravian community in Gothenburg.³² Marriage was not about individual choice and affection, but was considered exclusively as a reminder of the coming marriage with the heavenly bridegroom, Christ.³³ As such, it was a matter of importance to the entire religious community. This view differs from the emerging modern novel, in which family connections and economic factors decided the appropriateness of a potential liaison.

As noted, women were allowed an active role in the Moravian awakening, although Öhrberg has identified a tendency towards more stereotypical gender relations at the turn of the eighteenth century, at least among Swedish Moravians.³⁴ The editing of Anna Bagge's memoir confirms this pattern. The omissions made in connection with the initial editing of the memoir disproportionately targeted sections describing women. This tendency is even more pronounced in the official version in the *Gemeinnachrichten*. For example, the Moravian woman who paved the way for Anna Bagge's spiritual awakening – an important feature of Moravian religious life – as well as a visit by a female friend and her little daughter during Bagge's final illness, were removed.³⁵ In other words, the individuality of Anna Bagge was adjusted according to gender norms when her memoir was transferred from the periphery to the centre.

Peter Jacob Planta: Silences in a Globalizing World

Peter Planta was born the year after Anna Bagge, in 1721, in the Swedish town of Jönköping. We have accessed four versions of Planta's memoir. One manuscript, penned in English circa 1815, is kept in the Moravian archive in Fulneck, and another, a slightly abridged English version, is archived in Herrnhut.³⁶ A German version, shorter by almost a half than the Fulneck manuscript, was published in the very first issue of the printed *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* in 1817.³⁷ Finally, we have at our disposal a copy in Swedish.³⁸ This version was most likely based on the printed German text, but judging from the penmanship and paper quality, it was probably copied down sometime in the third quarter of the nineteenth century – a witness to the power of tradition among the Moravians. The Swedish translation follows the German text almost word by word.

Peter Planta's mother intended for him to become a "Minister of the Gospel", according to the two English versions of the memoir. In German and Swedish, this expression was rendered as a "preacher of the Gospel" (*Prediger des Evangelii/evangelii predikant*); "preacher" being less associated with any specific Protestant confession or formal, clerical position. The plans for an ecclesiastical career were cut short by the death of Planta's father, and he became the apprentice of an apothecary and surgeon in Gothenburg instead.³⁹

From that point onwards, Planta would travel extensively. He lived in Gothenburg, in Stockholm, in "various settlements of the Brethren on the Continent", in Fulneck, Yorkshire, on the island of Jamaica, and, during the final decades of his life, in Ockbrook, Derbyshire.⁴⁰

Planta's memoir is the work of several authors, one of them being his daughter, Benigna. It was compiled sometime after Planta died in 1815, and it is an artefact of literary Romanticism as much as a genre-typical Moravian memoir. Planta's encounter with the Moravian Church could form part of the plot in any *Bildungsroman*. A "certain Brother", a gardener who provided the apothecary with medicinal herbs, approached him, opening what would become a new direction in life:

one Sunday, [the gardener] called before service time, on purpose to be with me alone. When all were gone to the Church, he said to me: My dear Friend, I believe (you H.E.) to be a person who loves our Saviour, and I am another, would it not be well if we were better acquainted?⁴¹

The narrative brings to mind Goethe's description of how Wilhelm gets acquainted with the mysterious Tower Society in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795–1796). There, it is Jarno, an officer and a member of the secret association, who approaches the protagonist: "One evening Jarno said to him: 'We can now consider you as ours, with such security, that it were unjust if we did not introduce you deeper into our mysteries.'" ⁴²

In Planta's memoir, as well as in the typical contemporary *Bildungsroman*, the hero of the story is a troubled, middle-class man in search of purpose and meaning. In the case of the Moravian Church, individuality and the meaning of life were likewise supposed to evolve gradually, albeit preferably within a closed community cut off from the outside world. In Planta's memoir, the process towards increased self-awareness is told through the introduction of collective secretiveness into the narrative. Contact between the main character and the gardener is made tentatively and, as in Goethe's novel, on the assumption of shared values and beliefs rather than in open and deliberate agreement.

Planta made himself useful to the Moravian church, first in Germany and then in England, and in his late thirties, he and his wife were called upon to become missionaries. They left their small children in the care of the congregation and embarked for Jamaica in January 1759. They would not return for two decades. ⁴³

In the memoir, Planta's arrival in Jamaica coincides with a shift in the style of writing. The sections leading up to the arrival in Jamaica are written in first person and form a carefully crafted narrative, in which God's miraculous protection and Planta's yearning to become "a child of God" are recurring themes. The section dealing with Planta's mission in Jamaica, however, was compiled by an unknown editor. According to the Fulneck copy of the text, the editor's work was based on excerpts from Planta's diary. ⁴⁴

Historian Vincent Brown has described the British colony of Jamaica as a militarized society built on the brutal exploitation of over one hundred thousand slaves. Violence was part of the fabric of society. ⁴⁵ Supported by two absentee plantation owners in England, the small Moravian community on the island tried to strike a balance between Christian compassion and compliance with the colonial system. What had begun as a rather successful mission in the early 1750s soon ended in open conflict between the first missionary, Georg Caries, and a new arrival from Herrnhut, Christian Heinrich Rauch. Rauch did not approve of Caries' flexible attitude towards West African religious practices, and in 1759, Caries was sent home in disgrace. ⁴⁶ That same year, Planta arrived, most likely as a replacement. By then, the influx of new believers had dried up, probably since the Moravian mission proved

unable to protect their enslaved followers from starvation and abuse.⁴⁷ In 1760–1761, a massive slave rebellion, known as “Tacky’s revolt”, broke out in Jamaica. It was defeated with difficulty, and the Black leaders were killed in sadistic, public executions.⁴⁸

Neither the conflicts within the Moravian group nor the brutality of Jamaican slavery were acknowledged in Planta’s memoir. Whereas the story of Planta’s childhood and youth contains occasional sensory clues (glistening drops of water, lonely prayers in frosty nights, a hogshead of turpentine), the physical environment of Jamaica has left no trace in the text.

It is impossible to tell if this silence derived from Planta himself, or if it is the work of the unknown editor. Alexander Lasch has suggested that the Moravian missionaries wavered between colonial and “native” expressions (such as, for example, *weiße Leute*, or “white people”), and that this indicated the Moravian commitment to a global and spiritual, rather than ethnic and national community.⁴⁹ However, in Planta’s memoir, the colonial narrative dominates. When the 1760–1761 slave uprising is mentioned, it is with reference to the killing of whites, and with the purpose of illustrating that God protected Planta’s life. The Fulneck version from 1815 reads:

In the time of Rebellions among the Negroes, when many white people lost their lives, I never took any weapons of defence with me when I rode out, altho advised by many to do so, & yet I always escaped unhurt to my own astonishment.⁵⁰

In the German and Swedish versions of the memoir, there is a subtle difference regarding how colonial relations between individuals are described. The 1815 Fulneck version continues with a scene in which Planta unknowingly travels right behind the insurgents:

[F]eeling very happy I rode slowly, singing some edifying hymns. My servant rode up to me saying, Master is truly happy, to which I replied, I am; but I was not aware of the great danger to which I was exposed, as several runaway slaves, who had turned robbers, were just before us, in pursuit of an Officer.⁵¹

In the German and subsequent Swedish version, “my servant” has transformed into “the negro” (*der Neger*, Sw. *neger*).⁵² The meaning of being a “servant” in a British colonial context was not clearly defined – the concept could include white indentured labour as well as black slaves.⁵³ The German translator decided that the servant was

black. In the process some brand new information was also added: The servant “immediately” (*auf einmal*) rode up to Planta since he “might have sensed danger” (*Gefahr bemerken mochte*).⁵⁴ This fleshing out may have been an attempt to make the story even more thrilling but, as a result, the racialized servant is ascribed a somewhat uncanny ability to sense dangers that Planta himself were happily unaware of. The Swedish translation follows the German version indiscriminately, even rendering the English “Master”, via the German “Meister”, as “Mästaren”. This is a form of address not normally used in colloquial Swedish at the time.⁵⁵ The translator was apparently unfamiliar with the colonial terminology of the British Empire, or at least unable to translate it into Swedish that made sense.⁵⁶

The concluding description of Planta’s old age, illness, and death in Ockbrook is written entirely in the third person, and it was dramatically shortened when translated into German – from some 800 words in the Fulneck manuscript to less than 200 in the official, printed version. As in Bagge’s case, domestic scenes and similar aspects of temporal life that, in other contexts, would have been considered important autobiographical elements, were deleted. Several parts of the text involving female characters likewise disappeared or was radically shortened, for example sections concerning Planta’s wife and his daughter Benigna, who kept house for him after he was widowed.

Conventionally the Moravian awakening has been attributed with emancipatory traits, but this view has also been challenged. Christina Petterson has suggested that the principle of gender separation, which was applied in Herrnhut, was actually part of a strategy to defuse socioeconomic tensions and class conflicts between commoners and aristocracy among the followers.⁵⁷ It remains for future research to determine the precise extent to which this interpretation is valid for Moravian communities outside the setting of semi-feudal Saxony, but it casts a shadow of doubt over the idea of Moravian gender equality. In any event it is clear that, in the process of adapting memoirs texts for dissemination among Moravian communities, translations into German and Swedish accentuated the hierarchy between blacks and whites and between men and women. Apparently, German and Swedish Moravians had a similar understanding of the missionary areas in the New World. In both languages, individuality was depicted against the backdrop of colonialism.

Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke: Man of the World and Bride of Christ

Baron Lagerbjelke was Planta's junior by twenty-four years. Whereas Planta was a commoner from the aspiring middle strata of society, Lagerbjelke was born into the nobility; a caste to which a transnational outlook was endowed by tradition. Lagerbjelke made a career as a naval officer and civil servant, rising in 1809 to the rank of admiral and count. He sailed with the Swedish East India Company to China, served in the Swedish navy, and was sent on diplomatic missions to northern Africa.⁵⁸

We have accessed three versions of Lagerbjelke's memoir. The first, in Swedish, is kept by the Moravian Society in Stockholm.⁵⁹ According to this version, Lagerbjelke completed his account in 1779; a section describing his final illness and death was later added by someone else. Then there are two German versions. One of them looks very much like a raw translation of the Swedish manuscript (or of a copy of it). In this working document, an authoritative hand has crossed out unwanted text, corrected the occasional grammatical error, and filled in new wordings.⁶⁰ The second version, the official German version included in the *Gemeinnachrichten*, follows these revisions to the letter.⁶¹

As in Bagge's and Planta's cases, temporal and spiritual aspects are intertwined in the memoir's narrative of the deceased's journey through life. In spiritual terms, Lagerbjelke wavers between heartfelt blessing and anxiety in a manner recognizable from Bagge's and Planta's texts, and indeed Moravian memoirs generally. This trait can be described as an oscillation between the love for Jesus and the entrapments of the temporal world. But, as we shall see, there are interesting variations within this theme between the different text versions.

In her analysis of the composition and themes of Moravian memoirs, Christina Mettele has noted that details that were considered superfluous or offensive were edited out.⁶² However, she does not touch upon the question of how the process of translation might have affected this. In Lagerbjelke's case, it is clear that many of his personal reflections, as well as information about his worldly career, were downplayed in the process of translation. Significantly, Lagerbjelke's penchant for reading "philosophy, literature and poetry" did not make it into the official version in the *Gemeinnachrichten*.⁶³ But the translation also shifted positions on matters of theological importance.

In the Swedish manuscript as well as in the preliminary German version, Lagerbjelke twice refers to Jesus as his "blood-bridegroom" (Sw. *Blodbrudgumme*, German *Blutbräutigam*).⁶⁴ Before publication, the editor removed these references,

changing “Blutbräutigam” to “Erbarmer” (“the Merciful [God]”), with the result that the identification of a male believer with the bride of Christ was deleted.⁶⁵ The reason for these changes is difficult to determine. Possibly, the expression “blood-bridegroom” reminded the editors of the symbolism typical of the controversial so called “Sifting Time” in the 1740s. This conflict concerned the manner in which redemption and salvation should be interpreted. During the Sifting Time, sexual intercourse became a focal point of religious practice since it was considered a confirmation of the heavenly marriage with Christ. Through this radical interpretation, the Moravians acquired an ill repute from which it took a long time to recover.⁶⁶ Scholars have suggested that the symbolism of the Sifting Time survived longer in Sweden than elsewhere.⁶⁷ Perhaps the use of a notion such as “blood-bridegroom” was a remnant of this conflict and, consequently, deemed inappropriate by the editors in Herrnhut.

The editing of the text also made sure that Lagerbjelke’s life was presented as a story about redemption on masculine terms. Matters relating to women were disproportionately edited out, just as in Bagge’s and Planta’s memoirs. A stepmother, an aunt, a female cousin, a mother-in-law, and a lady friend were all erased from the German version of the text, and so was Lagerbjelke’s assertion that his fiancé developed a singular “attachement” to him after the match had been decided on.⁶⁸ The resulting text is frugal in its description of “others” – women and foreigners alike. Incidentally, one of the few mentions of non-white men concerns white men being pursued by men of colour, just as in Planta’s memoir: During a difficult journey on a Genovese ship, Lagerbjelke was chased by Tunisian corsairs.⁶⁹ The incident is briefly related in the Swedish version but absent in the abridged *Gemeinnachrichten* version.

The Mediterranean was not to Sweden what the Caribbean was to the British, and unlike Planta, Lagerbjelke’s relationship with foreigners did not primarily, or at all, play out within a colonial framework. The Swedish Crown wielded no power whatsoever over the Barbary states of northern Africa, and the only other appearance of foreign men in Lagerbjelke’s memoir concerns men of high status. As the son of a royal councillor, Lagerbjelke was allowed entrance to the highest circles of society in Stockholm, where foreign diplomats were on a par with the royal court. According to all three versions of the memoir, Lagerbjelke ‘was introduced at the royal court, to all the royal councillors & foreign envoys’.⁷⁰

Among aristocratic circles in late eighteenth-century Sweden, the cultural and political clout of France was more than equal to that of Saxony or Prussia. Consequently, Lagerbjelke’s Swedish memoir is laced with French loanwords.⁷¹ In the

German version, though, the French was promptly edited out, for example by exchanging *Fête* for *Fest*.⁷²

The use of French in the Swedish version of Lagerbjelke's memoir is an example of cultural emulation, typical to a periphery such as the Swedish diaspora. But it can also be understood as a sign of aristocratic self-confidence. As such, it disrupted the narrative structure typical of Moravian memoirs. We suggest that the removal of French expressions was made to promote a common, Moravian understanding of how memoirs ought to be composed – and, possibly, to tone down the aristocratic identity betrayed by Lagerbjelke's choice of words.

James Liley: Moravian Teachings in an Age of Steam Engines

James Liley was born in Fulneck in England and spent most of his adult life in the service of the Moravian Church. As a teacher and preacher, he lived in several Moravian settlements around England and Northern Ireland at the turn of the nineteenth century. In line with the idea of Moravianism as a global spiritual community, his life story was translated into Swedish, copied down by hand, and included in the 1828 diary of the Moravian Society in Gothenburg.⁷³ This version conforms in almost every aspect with the official German version circulated in the *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine* in 1827, the year of Liley's death.⁷⁴ The German version was probably based on an English memoir, a version of which survives in the Unity Archives.⁷⁵ Except for a five-page section allegedly extracted from Liley's diary, the thirty-nine pages of the English manuscript are written in the third person.⁷⁶

Although the Swedish manuscript follows the German version closely, a difference is that the Swedish version provides phonetic guidelines on how to properly pronounce Liley's name (*Dschäms Lili*) and two of the English place names, Littleton (*Litteltavn*) and Scarborough (*Sirbrå*).⁷⁷ This is an unusual feature: we have neither seen it in any other Moravian memoir nor in the Swedish context in general. It is a surprisingly early example of the usage of phonetic guidelines and quite likely tied to the Moravian practice of collectively reading out memoirs aloud. The strong Anglophone presence in Gothenburg might also have had something to do with it: the port city earned the nickname "Little London" in the early nineteenth century, in acknowledgement of the influx of British (or more precisely, Scottish) merchants.⁷⁸

During Liley's lifetime, modernity with all its worldly, technological innovations began to unfold. Still, tradition was upheld by the Swedish diaspora, at least as far as the memoir texts are concerned. All three versions of Liley's memoir centre around the credo that the sacrifice of Jesus has bought salvation for all. The different

grammatical structure of English, German and Swedish often made word-by-word translation difficult, but the translators did their best to keep the theological message consistent. The reference to Christ's "precious blood" in the English version, for example, has a literal translation in both German and Swedish (*kostbares Blut/kostbara blod*).⁷⁹ Differences between the versions are of a minor character, such as when the English expression "blood bought" (in "the spotless robe of the blood bought righteousness of Christ") was translated into "bloody" (*blutig/blodiga*) instead of the more literal *blutgekauft* (Sw. *blodköpt*).⁸⁰

Omissions made in connection to the preparation of the official version of the memoir reduced the role of women, in line with the pattern previously observed. Whereas the concluding section of the English version of the memoir consists of a testimony claimed to be written by Liley's wife, this part of the text – circa 1100 words – was shortened by 80 percent. Also, most of Liley's last conversation with his wife, and all of his address to a female servant, were removed from the final account.

Interestingly one particular aspect relating to the worldly context of Liley's life was left intact by the German editor of the official version of the memoir. This was the account of a stormy sea voyage undertaken by Liley in 1825. The journey marked the beginning of the end of Liley's life, but also introduced a technical novelty to the presumptive readers – travel by steamboat. The English version reads:

On the voyage, in the steam packet from Liverpool to Dublin, they encountered so severe a gale of wind, that the passengers & crew almost despaired of reaching the land. This produced most violent sea sickness, which together with the mental anxiety he had suffered, gave a severe shock to his constitution.⁸¹

By the time of Liley's death in 1827, steamboats had been frequenting German and Swedish waters for only ten years. On the one hand, temporal elements such as this were unimportant from a spiritual point of view. On the other hand, new means of communication, such as steamboats and railways, added to the opportunities for dissemination of texts and information among members of the global, Moravian community.⁸² The story about Liley's ordeal on board the steamboat might therefore mirror the Moravian interest in new technology as a means to communicate religious ideas, while at the same time illustrating the willingness of a devoted follower to make personal sacrifices in order to proselytize.

Unlike Bagge, Lagerbjelke and Planta, Liley was not a person who gradually developed into a follower of the Moravian Church. He was born into it, and this reflects in his memoir. All versions of the text indicate that Liley was blessed by God

from a very early age. Consequently, they lack the wavering between doubt and grace that is otherwise a typical trait in Moravian memoirs. But there might also be another explanation for this difference. As John R. Weinlick put it in the 1950s, Moravianism in its English context can be perceived “as a sort of half-way house between the Anglican and the free churches”.⁸³ As these new free churches expanded in the nineteenth century and eventually overtook the Anglican Church in terms of numbers, the English Moravians might have felt a need to stress the trust in the all-sufficient grace of God as a hallmark of their church in order to distinguish themselves more clearly from the theology of the competing denominations.

Conclusion

Like many other strands of autobiographical writing in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Moravian memoirs were copied, edited, and communicated across linguistic and cultural borders. Although the Moravian memoirs were part of an interconfessional strategy to create a spiritual community worldwide, local context intervened with the translation of the texts. Expressions of individuality and communality were engaged in a complex negotiation, which became even more intricate when the memoirs and the Moravians themselves travelled an increasingly interconnected world. However, the negotiation was not aimless – there are tendencies and patterns in the texts we have studied.

The memoirs of Anna Bagge, Peter Jacob Planta, Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke and James Liley are intensely preoccupied with the individual: the progressive development of singular human souls towards religious self-awareness and the paths taken by them towards divine grace. In the fuller text versions, the personality of the deceased comes through loud and clear. Among our four Moravians, this is especially true regarding Lagerbjelke, who wrote large parts of his memoir himself, with a curious mixture of aristocratic self-confidence and existential anxiety. But the editors who prepared the memoirs for distribution consistently weeded out particularities and quirks, including those relating to the specific Swedish context, creating narratives of salvation more consistent with the established Moravian autobiographical tradition. In contrast to conventional wisdom on Moravian gender relations, the trimming disproportionately targeted women and women’s agency, often systematically erasing female protagonists from the memoirs. This standardisation of individual traits and removal of women have not been noticed in previous research, and is a phenomenon that might well be worth keeping in mind for scholars of life writing generally.

The translated memoirs we have studied inhabit a peculiar position in the history of life writing around the turn of the nineteenth century. The memoirs were created during a period in which European ambitions for world dominance were growing, and there is an inherent tension in the Moravian memoirs between the egalitarian principles of the religious teachings of the Church and the views and outlooks actually expressed in the texts. This is particularly obvious considering the memoir of Peter Jacob Planta. In their missions abroad, the Moravians had to fit their religious agenda into colonial frameworks of power and hierarchy. In the case of Planta, the lacunae in the memoir demonstrate the impossibility of reconciling missionary work with the underpinnings of colonialism. But there were regional inequalities within Europe as well. The layering of the Moravian world into core settlements, diaspora, and missionary areas mirrored a traditional, general pattern of dependence on German language and culture in the Nordics, and the editing strategies applied when texts were transferred between languages illustrate the dependency of Swedish memoir translations upon German terminology and language use. Whereas middlemen in direct contact with the diaspora, such as the scribe who grudgingly let Anna Bagge's memoir remain "too extensive", might respect the peculiarities and wishes of the individual, the editors in Herrnhut would abridge and standardize memoirs without hesitation.

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Notes

¹ In the words of Amy Prendergast: ‘The diary form affords multiple generations of women with a vehicle for expressing themselves, and is particularly germane to younger writers, developing a voice, and shaping a sense of self as they emerge from childhood.’ Amy Prendergast, “A Winter in Bath, 1796–97: Life Writing and the Irish Adolescent Self,” *The European Journal of Life Writing* 10 (2021): 18. <https://doi.org/10.21827/ejlw.10.37160>. According to the German scholar Sibylle Schönborn, the diary genre of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was a venue where a sense of self was constructed: However varied the motives for writing might initially seem, the authors were all driven by the same wish: to render themselves an existence through the text. Sibylle Schönborn, *Das Buch der Seele: Tagebuchliteratur zwischen Aufklärung und Kunstperiode* (De Gruyter, 1999), 1–2.

² Claudia Ulbrich and Gabriele Jancke, “From the Individual to the Person: Challenging Autobiography Theory,” in *Mapping the ‘I’: Research on Self Narratives in Germany and Switzerland*, eds. Claudia Ulbrich,

Kaspar von Greyerz and Lorenz Heiligensetzer (Brill, 2014). See also Julia Angster, “‘Sattelzeit’: The Invention of ‘Premodern History’ in the 1970s,” *History of European Ideas* (published online 9 July 2024).

³ Tobias Heinrich, *Leben lesen: Zur Theorie der Biographie um 1800* (Böhlau Verlag, 2016), 110.

⁴ Peter Vogt, “Spiritual Autobiography and Ecclesiology: The Social Dimension of Individual Life Stories in 18th-Century Pietism and the Moravian Church,” in *Moravian Memoirs: Pillars of An Invisible Church*, eds. Christer Ahlberger and Per von Wachenfeldt (Artos & Norma bokförlag, 2017). See also D. Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Evangelical Conversion Narrative: Spiritual Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Oxford university press, 2005).

⁵ Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (Penguin, 1981 [1957]), 82–91. Although the debate following Watt’s work is not our main focus, our results support the critique of his linear understanding of “the rise of the novel”. Compare e.g. Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford University Press, 1987); Margaret Anne Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (HarperCollins, 1996); Jenny Mander (ed.), *Remapping the Rise of the European Novel* (Voltaire Foundation, 2007).

⁶ John V. Fleming, “Medieval European Autobiography”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Autobiography* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 35–48; Anthony C. Spearing, *Medieval Autobiographie: The ‘I’ of the Text* (Notre Dame Press, 2012). Cf. also more recently e.g. Worawach Tungjitcharoen and Dorthe Berntsen, “Belief-related memories: Autobiographical memories of the religious self,” *Memory* 10, no. 5 (2021), 573–586.

⁷ See Gisela Mettele, *Weltbürgertum oder Gottesreich: Die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine als globale Gemeinschaft 1727–1857* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009). On the Philadelphian idea involved in the organisation of the Moravian diaspora, see Wolfgang Breul, “Herrnhuter Diasporaarbeit,” in *Pietismus Handbuch*, ed. Wolfgang Breul (Mohr Siebeck, 2021), 610–612.

⁸ On Northern Europe’s standing vis-à-vis the leading regions of the continent, see e.g. David Kirby, *The Baltic World 1772–1993: Europe’s Northern Periphery in an Age of Change* (Longman, 1995), 9; and Kekke Stadin, *The Formal Call in the Making of the Baltic Bourgeoisie* (Routledge, 2022), 4–5. Regarding the interplay between Northern Europe, the Moravian mission and the Carribean, see Louise Sebro, *Mellem afrikaner og kreol: Etnisk identitet og social navigaton i Dansk Vestindien 1730–1770* (Lunds Universitet, 2010).

⁹ Peter Zimmerling, *Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf und die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine* (Hänsler, 1999); Hartmut Beck, *Brüder in vielen Völkern: 250 Jahre Mission der Brüdergemeine* (Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission, 1981); Paul Peucker, *A Time of Sifting: Mystical Marriage and the Crisis of Moravian Piety in the Eighteenth Century* (Penn State University Press, 2015), 25–26 incl.references.

¹⁰ Peucker (2015), 32; Peter Vogt, “How Moravian Are the Moravians? The Paradox of Moravian Identity,” *Journal of Moravian History* 18, no. 1 (2018), in particular 82, 89; Martin H. Jung, “Zinzendorf und das Christentum: Sein Verständnis von Religion,” *Gradwegs: Religionen – Beziehungen – Gesellschaft* 9 (2020); Ann Öhrberg, “Den smala vägen till modernitet: Retorik och människosyn inom 1700-talets svenska herrnhutism,” *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift* 107 (2007).

¹¹ Mettele, *Weltbürgertum oder Gottesreich*; Gisela Mettele, “Scribal Culture in the Age of Print: Globalizing Religious Communication in Moravian Pietism,” in *Religious Periodicals and Publishing in Transnational Contexts: The Press and the Pulpit*, eds. Oliver Scheiding and Anja-Maria Bassimir (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017); Christine Lost, *Das Leben als Lehrtext: Lebensläufe aus der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde* (Schneider Hohengehren, 2007).

¹² Lost, *Das Leben als Lehrtext*, 29–33; Katherine M. Faull, *Moravian Women’s Memoirs: Their Related Lives, 1750–1820* (Syracuse University Press, 1997), xxxvii.

¹³ Thomas J. McCullough, “The Most Memorable Circumstances: Instructions for the Collection of Personal Data From Church Members, circa 1752,” *Journal of Moravian History* 15, no. 2 (2015): 161–163, 171–172. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jmorahist.15.2.0158>.

¹⁴ Peucker, *A Time of Sifting*, 176–177.

¹⁵ Breul, “Herrnhuter Diasporaarbeit,” 613.

¹⁶ The English branch of the Moravian Church retained its relative autonomy by publishing a periodical of its own from 1790 onwards, the Periodical Accounts. It did not seem to have included memoir texts but focused on reporting on Moravian missionary activities. Felicity Jensz, “Overcoming Objections to Print: The Moravian Periodical Accounts and the Pressure of Publishing in Eighteenth-Century Britain,” *Journal of Moravian History* 15, no. 1 (2015): 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jmorahist.15.1.0001>.

¹⁷ Breul, “Herrnhuter Diasporaarbeit”, 611.

¹⁸ See Christina Ekström, “Die Brüdergemeine und Schweden,” *Unitas Fratrum: Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Gegenwartsfragen der Brüdergemeine* 69–70 (2013): 189–219.

¹⁹ Christer Ahlberger, “‘Vi skall bära namnet med skam’: Om Herrnhutismen som kyrka eller sekt,” in *Den glömda kyrkan: Om Herrnhutismen i Sverige*, ed. Christer Ahlberger and Per von Wachenfeldt (Artos, 2016), 11–27. By contrast, two other, short-lived Societies, in Uddevalla (founded in 1801), and in the naval port of Karlskrona (1802), both ceased to exist during the first half of the 1800s.

²⁰ Peter Burke, “Cultures of Translation in Early Modern Europe,” in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Burke and R. Po-chia Hsia (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 24.

²¹ Friedrich Wilhelm von Schubert, *Sweriges Kyrko-Författning och Lärowerk, för äldre och nyare tid beskrefne*, transl. Abr. Z. Pettersson (Berlingska boktryckeriet, 1822), vol 1, vii; Friedrich Wilhelm von Schubert, *Sweriges Kyrko-Författning och Lärowerk, för äldre och nyare tid beskrefne*, transl. Abr. Z. Pettersson (Berlingska boktryckeriet, 1825), vol. 2, 288.

²² “Lebenslauf der verwitweten Schwester Maximiliane Auguste Bellwitz,” *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine* 65, no. 8 (1883), 705.

²³ The ‘Moravian Lives’ project (website: www.moravianlives.org) has transcribed and digitised a large number of Moravian memoirs (to date more than 60 000 texts). The project is a cooperative effort by the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, Bucknell University, Pennsylvania, and the Unity Archives in Herrnhut and the Moravian Archive in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Even though this digital collection was a great help for localizing multi-lingual memoirs, the matching of documents is very time consuming. A systematic comparison of entire archival collections was not deemed worthwhile for our project but would probably yield many more cases of translated memoirs.

²⁴ “Personalialia: Den gifta Systren Anna Bagge född Bundi,” vol 93 (unpaginated), Evangeliska Brödräfsamlingen in Stockholm (hereafter EBS); “Die verehlichte Schwester Anna Bagge, geboren Bundi,” R 22 94 04 (unpaginated), Lebensläufe, Unity Archives, Herrnhut (hereafter UA); “D. 20^{ten} May ging die verehlichte Schw. Anna Bagge [...],” *Gemeinnachrichten* C 184 780, pages 780–781, UA; “Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS; “Zum diario von Stockholm gehörig: Jahre 1811–1813. Der verh. auswärtige Bruder Graf Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” R 22 45 16 (unpaginated), UA; “Der verheirathete äuswärtige Bruder, Graf Johann Gustav Lagerbjelke,” *Gemeinnachrichten* A 391 452, pages 452–475, UA.

²⁵ “Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta”, British Provincial Archives, Moravian Church, Fulneck (hereafter BPA), accessed 6 March 2025, <http://moravianlives.org/memoirs/peter-jacob-planta-english/>; “Memoirs of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Brother, Peter Jacob Planta,” R 22, 135 35, Lebensläufe, UA; “Lebenslauf des Bruders Peter Jacob Planta,” *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* 1, no. 1 (1817), 3–15 (reprinted in *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine* 54, no. 7 (1872), 589–601); “Lefnadslopp af Broder Peter Jacob Planta,” *Församlingsberättelser*, AI: 89, EBS. “Memoir of Br James Liley,” R 22, 136 28, Lebensläufe, UA; “Lebenslauf des am 2^{ten} Merz 1827 in Fulneck selig entschlafenen Bruders James Liley,” *Gemeinnachrichten* A 443 36, no. 3, pages 36–73, UA; “Den i Fulneck den 2dra mars 1827 saligt af-somnade brodren James Lileys lefnadslopp,” *Församlings-berättelser af år 1828, Andra delen*, A, No 3, Vol. 9 församlingsberättelser 1824–1828, Evangeliska Brödräfsamlingens i Göteborg arkiv, Riksarkivet Göteborg (hereafter RaG).

²⁶ “Personalialia: Den gifta Systren Anna Bagge född Bundi,” vol 93 (unpaginated), EBS.

²⁷ “Personalialia: Den gifta Systren Anna Bagge född Bundi,” vol 93 (unpaginated), EBS.

- ²⁸ "Personalia: Den gifta Systren Anna Bagge född Bundi," vol 93 (unpaginated), EBS; "Die verehlichte Schwester Anna Bagge, geboren Bundi," R 22 94 04 (unpaginated), Lebensläufe, UA; "D. 20^m May ging die verehlichte Schw. Anna Bagge," *Gemeinnachrichten* C 184 780, pages 780–781, UA.
- ²⁹ "These biographic notes were put down by Mr. Bagge himself, and it originally covered a hole sheet, he asked to me would I erase and add as its suitable. I left everything then, only shortened it, but its still to voluminous, but he didnt let me shorten it more.' (Enefalk's translation, attempting to convey the original's unorthodox grammar and spelling.) "Die verehlichte Schwester Anna Bagge, geboren Bundi," R 22 94 04 (unpaginated), Lebensläufe, UA.
- ³⁰ Hilary Brown, *Women and Early Modern Cultures of Translation: Beyond the Female Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2022), 136–151; Mettele, *Weltbürgertum oder Gottesreich*, 221–222.
- ³¹ Thomas J. McCullough, "The Most Memorable Circumstances," 172.
- ³² "Personalia: Den gifta Systren Anna Bagge född Bundi," vol 93 (unpaginated), EBS.
- ³³ Christina Petterson, *The Moravian Brethren in a Time of Transition: A Socio-Economic Analysis of a Religious Community in Eighteenth-Century Saxony* (Brill, 2021), 234–239.
- ³⁴ Öhrberg, "Den smala vägen till modernitet", 51–69.
- ³⁵ "Personalia: Den gifta Systren Anna Bagge född Bundi," vol 93 (unpaginated), EBS. The phrasing at the same time indicates that "The Lot", a form of cleromancy applied among the regular settlements of the Moravian Church, was not practiced among the Moravians in Gothenburg. The Lot was formally abolished in steps, 1819–1836.
- ³⁶ "Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta", BPA; "Memoirs of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Brother, Peter Jacob Planta," R 22, 135 35, Lebensläufe, UA. A section of circa 100 words has been removed in the Herrnhut manuscript, bringing the text down to 6300 words. It differs in terms of punctuation but is otherwise similar to the copy in England. Yet another English version seems to have been bound together with a collection of medical recipes that Planta presented to his daughter Benigna, in England, in 1801. The combined volume was sold to an unknown buyer at an auction in 2021: '18th century Commonplace Book.-Planta (Rev. Peter Jacob, Moravian)'. Forum Auctions, clubbed in London 15 July 2021. A printout of the auction website is kept by the authors.
- ³⁷ "Lebenslauf des Bruders Peter Jacob Planta," *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* 1, no. 1 (1817): 3–15.
- ³⁸ "Lefnadslopp af Broder Peter Jacob Planta," *Församlingsberättelser*, AI: 89, EBS.
- ³⁹ "Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta", BPA; "Memoirs of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Brother, Peter Jacob Planta," R 22, 135 35, Lebensläufe, UA; "Lebenslauf des Bruders Peter Jacob Planta," *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* 1, no. 1 (1817), 5; "Lefnadslopp af Broder Peter Jacob Planta," *Församlingsberättelser*, AI: 89, EBS.
- ⁴⁰ "Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta", BPA.
- ⁴¹ "Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta", BPA.
- ⁴² Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Travels*, II, transl. Thomas Carlyle (Chapman and Hall, reprint 1899 [1824]), 72. The German original reads 'Eines Abends sagte Jarno zu ihm: Wir können Sie nun so wieder als den Unsern ansehen, daß es unbillig wäre, wenn wir Sie nicht tiefer in unsere Geheimnisse einführten.' Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, II (J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1876 [1975–1796]), 211.
- ⁴³ "Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta", BPA.
- ⁴⁴ "Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta", BPA.
- ⁴⁵ Vincent Brown, *Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War* (The Belknap press of Harvard University Press, 2020), 44, 53.
- ⁴⁶ Katharine Gerbner, "'They call me Obea:' German Moravian Missionaries and Afro-Caribbean Religion in Jamaica, 1754–1760," *Atlantic Studies* 12 (2015): 162–168, 174. The given name of German-

born Caries is rendered as Georg in the Herrnhut registers; in Anglophone research it is usually spelled George.

⁴⁷ Gerbner, “‘They call me Obea’,” 172–173.

⁴⁸ Brown, *Tacky’s Revolt*.

⁴⁹ Alexander Lasch, “Unterschiede ‘zwischen uns & den weißen Leuten:’ Selbstpositionierungen in Missionsnarrationen,” in *Die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine im 18. Und 19. Jahrhundert. Theologie – Geschichte – Wirkung*, ed. by Wolfgang Breul (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2023), 541–542. Compare, however, Jon F. Sensbach, *A Separate Canaan: The Making of an Afro-Moravian World in North Carolina, 1763–1840* (Omohundro Institute and UNC Press, 1998).

⁵⁰ “Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta”, BPA.

⁵¹ “Memoir of the Life of our late venerable & happily departed Br Peter Jacob Planta”, BPA.

⁵² “Lebenslauf des Bruders Peter Jacob Planta,” *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* 1, no. 1 (1817): 14; “Lefnadslopp af Broder Peter Jacob Planta,” *Församlingsberättelser*, AI: 89, EBS.

⁵³ In British India, servants included contracted wage earners and occasionally even family members. George Birnbaum, “Servants in England and America in the Eighteenth Century: The Beginnings of Slavery,” *Revue de la Société d’études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles (Actes du colloque “Maître et serviteur dans le monde anglo-américain aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles” 1985)*, <https://doi.org/10.3406/xvii.1985.2223>; Nitin Sinha, “Who Is (Not) a Servant, Anyway? Domestic Servants and Service in Early Colonial India,” *Modern Asian Studies* 55, no. 1 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X19000271>.

⁵⁴ “Lebenslauf des Bruders Peter Jacob Planta,” *Beyträge zur Erbauung aus der Brüdergemeine* 1, no. 1 (1817): 14.

⁵⁵ “Lefnadslopp af Broder Peter Jacob Planta,” *Församlingsberättelser*, AI: 89, EBS. The word ‘mästaren’ in Swedish would usually denote either Jesus Christ, or a master artisan.

⁵⁶ Mettele notes that the Moravians were pragmatic with respect to language use. Language was simply a means to convey divine truth, whereas worldly aspects were of secondary importance: Mettele, *Weltbürgertum oder Gottesreich*, 124–126. We suggest that this feature, at least in part, explains the variation between different translations of the memoirs.

⁵⁷ Petterson, *The Moravian Brethren in a Time of Transition*, 18.

⁵⁸ Wilhelm Odelberg, “Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* 22 (1977).

⁵⁹ “Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS.

⁶⁰ “Zum diario von Stockholm gehörig: Jahre 1811–1813. Der verh. auswärtige Bruder Graf Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” R 22 45 16 (unpaginated), UA.

⁶¹ “Der verheirathete äuswärtige Bruder, Graf Johann Gustav Lagerbjelke,” *Gemeinnachrichten* A 391 452, pages 452–475, UA.

⁶² Mettele, *Weltbürgertum oder Gottesreich*, 218–231.

⁶³ “Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS. The editing out of Lagerbjelke’s philosophical interests contradicts previous research stressing that Zinzendorf ‘emphasized the value of philosophy’, among other modern ideas: Anders Jarlert, “Epilogue: the piety of Enlightenment – much more than rationality.” In *Religious enlightenment in the eighteenth-century Nordic countries: Reason and orthodoxy*, edited by Johannes Ljungberg and Erik Sidenvall (Lund University Press, 2023), 396.

⁶⁴ “Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS; “Zum diario von Stockholm gehörig: Jahre 1811–1813. Der verh. auswärtige Bruder Graf Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” R 22 45 16 (unpaginated), UA.

⁶⁵ “Der verheirathete äuswärtige Bruder, Graf Johann Gustav Lagerbjelke,” *Gemeinnachrichten* A 391 452, page 472, UA.

⁶⁶ Peucker, *A Time of Sifting*, 98–99, 143–146.

⁶⁷ Hilding Pleijel, *Herrnhutismen i Sydsverige* (Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse, 1925), 135–137.

⁶⁸ “Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke,” vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS.

⁶⁹ "Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke," vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS.

⁷⁰ Enefalk's and Åberg's translation. In original: 'Ich wurde am Hofe, bey allen Reichsräthen u. ausländischen Ministern vorgestellt'. "Der verheirathete äuswärtige Bruder, Graf Johann Gustav Lagerbjelke," *Gemeinnachrichten* A 391 452, page 460, UA.

⁷¹ "Vår salige Broder Grefve Johan Gustaf Lagerbjelke," vol. 94 (unpaginated), EBS.

⁷² "Der verheirathete äuswärtige Bruder, Graf Johann Gustav Lagerbjelke," *Gemeinnachrichten* A 391 452. However, both the Swedish and the German manuscript uses the French quarantaine for 'quarantine'. This appears to have been the standard spelling during the period.

⁷³ "Den i Fulneck den 2dra mars 1827 saligt af-somnade brodren James Lileys lefnadslopp," *Församlings-berättelser af år 1828, Andra delen, A, No 3, Vol. 9, RaG*.

⁷⁴ "Lebenslauf des am 2^{ten} Merz 1827 in Fulneck selig entschlafenen Bruders James Liley," *Gemeinnachrichten* A 443 36, no. 3, pages 36–73, UA.

⁷⁵ "Memoir of B^r James Liley," R 22, 136 28, *Lebensläufe*, UA.

⁷⁶ "Memoir of B^r James Liley," R 22, 136 28, *Lebensläufe*, UA.

⁷⁷ "Den i Fulneck den 2dra mars 1827 saligt af-somnade brodren James Lileys lefnadslopp," *Församlings-berättelser af år 1828, Andra delen, A, No 3, Vol. 9, RaG*.

⁷⁸ See e.g. Götheborgs allehanda, 6 April 1808; *Aftonbladet* (Göteborg), 20 June, 1814. National Library of Sweden, *Svenska tidningar*, <https://tidningar.kb.se/search?q=%27lilla%20london%27&searchGranularity=part&to=1825-12-31&from=1800-01-01>, accessed 27 February, 2025. The expression 'Little London' became more frequent as the nineteenth century and industrialisation progressed.

⁷⁹ "Memoir of B^r James Liley," R 22, 136 28, *Lebensläufe*, UA, unpaginated; "Lebenslauf des am 2ten Merz 1827 in Fulneck selig entschlafenen Bruders James Liley," *Gemeinnachrichten* A 443 36, no. 3, UA, page 45; "Den i Fulneck den 2dra mars 1827 saligt af-somnade brodren James Lileys lefnadslopp," *Församlings-berättelser af år 1828, Andra delen, A, No 3, Vol. 9, RaG*, unpaginated.

⁸⁰ "Memoir of B^r James Liley," R 22, 136 28, *Lebensläufe*, UA, unpaginated; "Lebenslauf des am 2ten Merz 1827 in Fulneck selig entschlafenen Bruders James Liley," *Gemeinnachrichten* A 443 36, no. 3, UA, page 45; "Den i Fulneck den 2dra mars 1827 saligt af-somnade brodren James Lileys lefnadslopp," *Församlings-berättelser af år 1828, Andra delen, A, No 3, Vol. 9, RaG*, unpaginated.

⁸¹ "Memoir of B^r James Liley," R 22, 136 28, *Lebensläufe*, UA. Unpaginated.

⁸² Compare Mettele, "Scribal Culture in the Age of Print."

⁸³ John Rudolf Weinlick, "The Moravian Diaspora: A Study of the Societies of the Moravian Church Within the Protestant State Churches of Europe" (diss. [1951]), *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 17, no. 1 (1959): 177–188, quote on p. 188.