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On two Wittenberg prints dedicated to crown prince Erik of Sweden

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MEILICHA DÔRA

Poems and Prose in Greek
from Renaissance and Early Modern Europe

Edited by
MIKA KAJAVA, TUA KORHONEN AND JAMIE VESTERINEN

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Ἦνίδε γράμματα γραψάντων εὐγνώμονα δέξαι.
Ἐρῆκος ὁ ἐλάχιστος Σίρονεν

Neo-Latin Texts and Humanist Greek Paratexts. On Two Wittenberg Prints Dedicated to Crown Prince Erik of Sweden¹

JOHANNA AKUJÄRVI

Τοῖς διδασκάλοις μου
Jerker καὶ Karin

This is a study of two Wittenberg prints that have many points of contact. Henricus Mollerus Hessus' (1528–1567) *Stheno Sture senior incluti Regni Sveciae gubernator* [...] *carmine elegiaco celebratus* printed in 1557 (hereafter *Stheno Sture*),² and Laurentius Petri Gothus' (c. 1529–1579) *Strategema Gothici exercitus adversus Darium, periucundum, carmine redditum elegiaco* printed in 1559 (hereafter *Strategema*).³ In addition to Latin introductory texts and the main texts, which in both prints narrate scenes from Swedish and ancient history in Latin elegiacs, they contain two paratexts each in Humanist Greek. Further correspondences between the two prints are that both exploit topics that floated in the propaganda of the day and that they are explicitly addressed to the well educated crown prince Erik, the future king Erik XIV of Sweden (1533–1577; reigned 1560–1568). Moreover, the authors were connected to the Vasa dynasty.

¹ Early versions of this paper were presented at the Renaissance Society of America meeting in New Orleans 2018 and at the International Association of Neo-Latin Studies congress in Albacete 2018; I thank the audience at those venues for comments and suggestions. Research for this paper has been made within the framework of the project *Helleno-Nordica. The Humanist Greek Heritage of the Swedish Empire*; I thank the Swedish Research council for making it possible (grant 2016-01881), my colleagues in the project for stimulating discussions on all aspects of our work, and Tua Korhonen in particular for carefully reading this paper.

² Mollerus (1557a); the copy in Lund University Library (*sign.* Paleot sv [1557]) has been used for this study. Note: the spelling of Latin is unified (except for chronostichs), ligatures are resolved and the nasal mark is replaced by the nasal in question.

³ Petri (1559); the only known copy, in the Royal Danish Library (*sign.* NL 75:1, 181 00332) has been used for this study, together with the edition by Nordström (1922).

Mollerus and Petri often figure in the annals of Swedish (Neo-Latin) literature.⁴ However, they are not only early authors of Neo-Latin poetry in Sweden, they are also the two first known authors of Humanist Greek poetry in a Swedish context; as such, they have been noted by scholars of Greek studies and poetic tradition in Sweden.⁵

The reception of the *Strategema* reflects the status of the author. In 1922 Johan Nordström published an edition of the *Strategema*, rediscovered in the collections of the Royal Danish Library in Copenhagen, but Swedish scholars had been searching for it since the 18th century at least. The print is cited by the title *Strategema Gothici exercitus adversus Danicum* (or *Danum* or *Danos*) by bibliographers like Anders Anton von Stiernman, Eric Benzelius Jr, and Elias Palmskiöld; little of the content of the Latin poem was known but a fairly accurate summary of the argument of the preface circulated.⁶ The author, Laurentius Petri Gothus, the second Lutheran archbishop of Sweden, accounts for the interest in the print, apart from its age. For instance, in a letter inquiring about a number of old rare prints, Palmskiöld wished to learn more about the strategem used and to know whether the author was the later archbishop.⁷

One piece of new information about the print appears in Olof Plantin's review of Greek studies in Sweden: *huic Epigramma Graecum elegantissimum praemisit* ('he prefaces it with a very elegant Greek epigram').⁸ Where Plantin learnt about the Greek epigram is unknown, but he must rely on second hand information. For, despite his knowledge of the first liminary Greek poem, he still cites the title incorrectly ([...] *adversus Danos*) and he does not appear to know about the concluding Greek poem. Eric Michael Fant, the next to publish on the Greek tradition in Sweden, repeats the information given by Plantin (the title is still incorrect, now [...] *adversus Danum*), and adds a few notes on the men who have searched for the print (Benzelius and Palmskiöld) and explains that he has

⁴ E.g. Schück & Warburg (1985, 87–8); Ijsewijn (1977, 184); in Ijsewijn (1990, 274) only Petri remains.

⁵ On Mollerus: Floderus (1785–1789, 3–5); on Petri: Plantin (1736, 23); Fant (1775–1784, 17–20). These works are dissertations, but are cited by the name of the author only. On Petri, see also Collijn (1927–1931, 262–264).

⁶ The following builds on Nordström (1922, 237–242).

⁷ Printed in Anonymous (1760, 143; letter sent in 1702). See also the note in Warmholtz (1790, 32, no. 3026a).

⁸ Plantin (1736, 23). Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of (Humanist) Greek and Latin are mine.

not been able to find a copy.⁹ After him, Matthias Floderus simply declares that he has not been able to find a copy of the *Strategema*.¹⁰

Nordström's discovery, finally, revealed that the strategem was one directed at Darius, the king of Persia (c. 522/1–486 BC) rather than the more expected Dane(s), and that the text is more than a panegyric of Gustav I of Sweden (Gustav Vasa, hereafter Gustav), as Henrik Schück had speculated before the rediscovery.¹¹ In addition to editing the print, both Latin and Greek texts, Nordström prefaces it with an introduction to the author, the context of its creation, its Gothicistic view of history, and a summary of the main Latin texts.

In studies on rhetoric, poetry and propaganda at the early Vasa court, viz. under the rule of Gustav of Sweden and his sons Erik XIV and Johan III, Kurt Johannesson has shown how the same topics recur in propaganda texts, in different forms, different degrees of elaboration, and always adapted for different recipients, both as regards language, form, and argument in order to argue the case of the Vasas in the propaganda war between Denmark and Sweden in the wake of the dissolution of the Kalmar Union.¹² Latin humanist poems, directed at a learned audience home and abroad, are one of the media; *Stheno Sture* and *Strategema* belong to the texts Johannesson considers. However, he shows no interest in the Greek paratexts of the prints.

The present study originated with an interest in the Humanist Greek paratexts of the prints, but it has by necessity developed into an investigation of how they relate to their context, that is, primarily, the main texts and their assumed message to the addressee(s). After short biographical sketches of Mollerus and Petri, as well as a sketch of the historical background, this paper offers a literary analysis of the two prints in question, beginning by studying the Latin texts and proceeding to editing and discussing their Greek poems, 36 elegiac verses in all (in *Stheno Sture* an epigram [4 eleg.] and a dedication [12 eleg.], in *Strategema* a liminary verse [8 eleg.] and a prayer [12 eleg.]). It is argued that while it is true that Mollerus and Petri argued issues that floated in the propaganda, other points were equally important. It is suggested that, in addition to arguing the case of the Vasas, both authors use pro-Vasa topoi to make what may have been their primary concern more appealing, and that they use the Greek paratexts to focus their message.

⁹ Fant (1775–1784, 19f.).

¹⁰ Floderus (1785–1789, 7f.).

¹¹ Schück (1890, 632f.).

¹² Johannesson (1969); (1974); (1982, 270–285); the latter translated into English in Johannesson (1991, 207–229).

The Authors

Henricus Mollerus Hessus, or Heinrich Möller of Hesse, was born 1528 in Witzenhausen in Hesse.¹³ He studied at the universities of Rostock (matriculated in 1546 as *pauper*), Königsberg (1548 also as *pauper*) and came to Wittenberg (1554); before Wittenberg he taught in Kulm (at least in 1552) and visited the university of Frankfurt an der Oder (1553). In Kulm he published works for school use and occasional poetry addressed to local dignitaries; a practice he continued both in Wittenberg and elsewhere.

In Wittenberg Mollerus became praeceptor of the Swedish nobleman Åke Bengtsson Färla. He visited Sweden repeatedly on Åke's account and through Åke's relatives he came in contact with the Swedish royal family. On his first visit to Sweden he may have brought an *Epicedion* celebrating the life of the recently deceased Lars Siggesson Sparre (1554) dedicated to the nobleman Erik Trolle *fautori suo honorando*.¹⁴ But soon he directed a series of Latin poems to Swedish royalty. Beginning with *Carolus Canuti cxxxix Svecorum rex* to king Gustav (1555), in 1557 he addressed *Stheno Sture* to the crown prince Erik and *Triumphus Christi* to his brother Johan, the future king Johan III, and an *Epithalamion* to the wedding of Gustav's daughter Katharina to Edzard II of East Frisia (1559). He was in the service of the Swedish royal court from August 1558 until 1560 when he returned to Wittenberg. From Wittenberg he proceeded to Danzig where he had been appointed rector of the gymnasium. Mollerus continued to celebrate Swedish royalty in occasional poems in Danzig: *Sertum Musarum* for the coronation of Erik XIV (1561), *Aulaeum gratiarum* to Johan upon his arrival to Danzig to court Catherine Jagiellon, daughter of Sigismund I of Poland (1562); *Elegia de adventu in Prussiam et civitatem Dantiscum* also celebrates Johan's arrival, and includes a series of epigrams in honour of other members of the royal family.¹⁵ Mollerus died in 1567 only 39 years old. His poems for the Swedish royal family are only a small part of his poetic output.

¹³ Biographical data after Johannesson (1974).

¹⁴ The dedicatee is perhaps Erik Trolle (1533–1560), son of Ture Trolle, who studied in Rostock (enrolled 1549) and thereafter in Wittenberg and Paris.

¹⁵ In addition to the above mentioned works, a series of portraits of the Swedish royal family is included among other portraits in Mollerus' *Imaginum liber* (1566).

Laurentius Petri Gothus was born 1529 or 1530, the son of a burgher of Söderköping.¹⁶ There he received his primary education. Since the university of Uppsala, the only institution for higher education in Sweden, hardly functioned after the devastations of the reformation,¹⁷ Petri, like all who needed university education, travelled to the continent. German protestant universities, particularly Rostock, Greifswald, and Wittenberg attracted Swedes.¹⁸ Petri seems to have enrolled in Wittenberg in 1546, but due to the troubles that culminated in the Schmalkaldic war (1546–1547) after the death of Luther, he is likely to have returned to Sweden quickly. His studies were sponsored by crown prince Erik. Perhaps Petri went to the court upon his return; at least he was present there as preacher in 1554 (see below). In 1557 Petri returned to Wittenberg and became magister only one year later, which suggests that he had been able to continue his studies in the meantime. During this stay he also published the *Strategema* in 1559. He remained in Wittenberg until spring 1561, studying probably with the intent to become doctor of theology. After a short visit to Sweden, he travelled back to Germany in 1562. In 1565 he returned to Sweden for good. In 1566 he was appointed professor of Greek at the reopened university of Uppsala; he advanced to rector (1572) as more professors were appointed to the university.¹⁹ When the university fell out of royal favour, Petri had succeeded his father-in-law, Laurentius Petri (Nericus), as archbishop of Sweden (1574). He died in 1579.

Petri's Latin poems are few. The *Strategema* is his first and largest poem. When he returned to Sweden, he published a small collection of elegies – one upon the death of Gustav, one upon the death of his sister, and one upon his return to Sweden – and a poem celebrating the coronation of Erik.²⁰ His other publications include a considerable number of works on matters of religion and church.

Mollerus and Petri were contemporaries, they knew each other,²¹ they were in the service of the Vasas, and, to my knowledge, *Stheno Sture* and *Strategema*

¹⁶ Biographical data after Nordström (1922, 221–235); Svalenius (1977–1979).

¹⁷ Lindroth (1976, 15–35).

¹⁸ On travel to German universities in the second half of the 16th century, see Wilner (1904); on confessional aspects of *peregrinatio* in the 16th century, see Göransson (1951, 1–16); for an overview of Swedish *peregrinatio academica* 1200–1800, see Eliasson (1992).

¹⁹ On Petri's university career, see Annerstedt (1877, 60–64).

²⁰ *Aliquot elegiae* and *Urbs Stocholmia* both 1561. Both prints edited by Bergh (1973).

²¹ When Petri left Wittenberg in 1561 he was sent off with a small collection of propemptic poems; one was written by Mollerus, who sends his best to colleagues in the chancellery and sings the praises of the Swedish royalty. *Non vidi*, but see Johannesson (1974, 79).

contain their only published Greek poems – with the caveat that in the case of Mollerus this statement may hold only as far as his prints directed at the Swedish royalty;²² few of his publications are readily available.

Background of the Prints

In the tense relations between Sweden and Denmark after the dissolution of the Kalmar Union that had united the Nordic states under one monarch until 1523, and the ascendancy of Gustav (1496–1560, reigned from 1523) as king of Sweden, propaganda was used by the Swedish court to consolidate the position of Gustav against both internal and external threats. Recurring topics concerned the interconnected issues of the legitimacy of Gustav's rule and relations between Sweden and Denmark.²³ The two Wittenberg prints describe the events that lead to the dissolution of the union as a righteous struggle for freedom by Swedes from Danish rule, they celebrate Gustav's role in that fight, and they remind of how Denmark played the dominant part in the Kalmar Union and of the iniquity of king Christian II of Denmark. A recurring motif, which figures especially prominently in the *Strategema*, was the so called Stockholm bloodbath, viz. the execution of a large number of leading opponents to Danish rule among the Swedish aristocracy at the coronation of Christian II to king of Sweden too (and not only to Denmark and Norway in 1520), an event that secured Christian the byword "Tyrant" in Swedish propaganda. Internally prominent issues were the legitimacy of Gustav's rule, and, in the 1550s, in Gustav's old age, the legitimate succession to the throne of his oldest son Erik. Sore points in this connection were the lineage of the House of Vasa – noble and only remotely connected to royalty; other families had nobler and more royal pedigrees – and the fact that Gustav had replaced the old institution of elective monarchy with a hereditary one.

In the 1550's two texts that circulated widely stirred new agitation in Sweden. One was the posthumously published *Gothorum sveonumque historia* (1554) by Johannes Magnus, the last Catholic archbishop of Sweden.²⁴ Gustav

²² I thank Peter Sjökvist for helping me with prints in the Uppsala University Library.

²³ This section is indebted to Johannesson (1969).

²⁴ Johannes Magnus (1554); in the following, Johannes Magnus' text will be referred to not by page, but by book and paragraph. See also the recent Swedish translation and commentary by Johannesson & Helander (2018).

was displeased with many episodes in it that could be interpreted as critique of his policies regarding the reformation, reduction of church assets, and curtailment of the power of the prelaty, but the work was also valuable as a source of historical arguments for the Swedes in the propaganda war with Denmark: the account abounded in *exempla* of how trusting and brave Swedes are overcome by the deceptions of Danes, but, most importantly, the work was a well written history that presented Sweden with a long, Gothicistic past, stretching as far back as to Magog, the grandson of Noah. Johannes Magnus' catalogue of rulers features an unbroken line of 'internal' rulers of Sweden until Gustav, the 143th king of the Goths and Swedes.²⁵ Erik was particularly taken with this grand and glorious version of Swedish history; he designated himself Erik XIV because of the thirteen earlier Gothic kings named Erik in Johannes Magnus' catalogue.

The other text was *De statu religionis et reipublicae* of Johannes Sleidanus, first published in 1555 and quickly reissued and translated into a number of vernaculars, including Swedish.²⁶ In this history of the reformation Sleidanus speaks of Sweden as a province of Denmark, calls the Swedish opposition against Danish domination in the union in the 1520s a *rebellio*, and describes its leader Gustav as an *ex nobilitate quidam, Gustavus Erixonius* etc.²⁷ This revived the old arguments against Sweden in relation to the dissolution of the Kalmar Union and the nobility and legitimacy of the House of Vasa.

Countermeasures were mobilized. Mollerus, who had not had immediate success with *Carolus Canuti* addressed to Gustav – indeed, his celebration of the wedding of Elizabeth of Denmark to Ulrich III of Mecklenburg-Güstrow in 1556 suggests that he tried his luck elsewhere – now received pay to write *contra Sleidanum* according to notes made by Karl Gera whom Mollerus had come in contact with through the above mentioned Åke Färila.²⁸ No such refutation by Mollerus is known, but Petri for his part refuted the most offensive passage in Sleidanus phrase by phrase in the *Strategema*. Moreover, prince Erik complains about Sleidanus' false depiction of the events in question in a letter to Philipp Melanchthon, and suggests that unlike Sleidanus, Melanchthon would give an accurate account of the (pre)history of the Swedes (here called Goths).²⁹

²⁵ Printed before the main texts in Johannes Magnus (1554).

²⁶ Sleidanus (1555); Sylvius (1675).

²⁷ Sleidanus (1555, 48 [M iiiijr]).

²⁸ Carlsson (1920, 51) and Johannesson (1969, 25).

²⁹ Letter to Melanchthon copied in Palmsk. 5 (pp. 80–81), ms. in Uppsala University Library; quoted in Wieselgren (1835, 122–124 n. *).

Mollerus' *Stheno Sture*

Stheno Sture is the third poem on Swedish matters by Mollerus, all of which treat subjects important to Gustav. The first poem, *Epicedion Siggonis* (1554, see above), dedicated to Erik Trolle, celebrated the life of the recently deceased Lars Siggesson Sparre, councillor (*riksråd*) and constable (*riksmarsk*) to Gustav, who together with Gustav had been one of the young noblemen taken hostages to Denmark in 1518. In the two panegyric biographies *Carolus Canuti* (1555) and *Stheno Sture* (1557) he celebrates the life and deeds of two men to whom Gustav was related: Gustav's family ties to Karl Knutsson (Bonde) (1408–1470), king of Sweden, were on his mother's side (his mother's (half) sister's father was Karl Knutsson's grandson on his mother's side); to Sten Sture Sr (c. 1437–1503), regent of Sweden after Karl Knutsson, the kinship was on his father's side (his father's father was married to the sister of Sten Sture). Karl Knutsson (*rex*) was succeeded by Sten Sture as regent (*dux*). Following Johannes Magnus' catalogue, Mollerus designates Karl Knutsson the 139th and Sten Sture the 140th ruler of Sweden.

In his reading of the two latter poems, Johannesson has importantly positioned them in the context of Johannes Magnus' history and the ongoing efforts of the House of Vasa to legitimize their position and that of Sweden in relation to Denmark.³⁰ In *Carolus Canuti* (38 pages with 24 verses each on average) other leading men are pushed out or into the background of the narrative, and Karl Knutsson is portrayed as a heroic protector, saviour, and liberator of Sweden from Danish rule. By stressing the ties of kinship between Gustav and Karl Knutsson, Mollerus creates a sense of continuity of Swedes rallying under the leadership of one 'family' in their resistance and opposition to unjust Danish power, but also suggests that Gustav has a hereditary claim to the throne. At the outset Mollerus appeals to Gustav to look kindly upon the poem; the kinship between the subject and the addressee of the text appears to be both part of the argument of the text and a selling point for the poet in relation to the monarch. Introducing a short panegyric of Gustav early in the text, Mollerus explains that Karl Knutsson is not presented as an *exemplum* for Gustav to follow; instead, he should look upon the actions of his ancestor as if he viewed his own, reflected in a mirror:

*Cuius dum memori res gestas mente reuolues,
Fortunæ uarias aspiciasque uices.*

³⁰ Johannesson (1969, 24f.); (1974); (1982, 276–278); (1991, 213–215).

*Tunc uelut in speculo te contemplaberis ipsum,
Et cursum regni, factaque celsa, tui. (Carolus Canuti, Bv)*

As you reflect upon his (*sc.* Karl Knutsson's) deeds in your mind that remembers well, and behold the changing turns of fate; then you shall behold as in a mirror yourself, the course and lofty acts of your reign.

Mollerus uses the same strategy in *Stheno Sture*. In the dedication to *Stheno Sture*, addressed to prince Erik, Mollerus reminds of *Carolus Canuti* and explains that the praise of Karl Knutsson in that poem is to the credit of Gustav and Erik as much as to that of Karl himself, and he continues to elaborate on the theme of offspring inheriting both the reputation and the worldly goods of their (fore) fathers:

*Nam cum non tantum regni sis ipse paterni,
Suecarumque heres indubitatus opum.
Sed quoque successor laudum, summique decoris,
Quae pater et proauu commeruere tui [...]. (Stheno Sture, A iiir)*

For as you are not only the certain inheritor of your father's kingship and the might of the Swedes, but also heir to the praises and the highest dignity that your father and forefathers earned [...].

In the beginning of the main poem (1404 elegiacs), Mollerus speaks of refuting the lies that are told about the obscure origins of Gustav and that he would be an illegitimate ruler.³¹ Gustav is in fact, Mollerus stresses, descendant of one of the most renowned Swedes, Sten Sture, who in his turn took over the rule of Sweden after Karl Knutsson, another of Gustav's relatives (Bv–B iijr). That being established, the bulk of the poem consists of dramatic battle scene narratives in which Swedes fight off invaders, mainly Danish ones; Sten Sture plays a vital part by rousing battle speeches and crucial efforts in precarious situations (B iijv–Fr). The narratives in both *Carolus Canuti* and *Stheno Sture* are probably, as Johannesson suggests, moulded and elaborated on the account of Johannes Magnus; for *Stheno Sture* Mollerus may also have had additional Swedish informants.³²

³¹ *Ut confutemus vanae mendacia famae, / Quae passim falso vulgus in ore gerit. / Obscuro generis Gostaum [!] sanguine natum, non recto fasces iure tenere suos (B ijt–v).*

³² Johannesson (1969, 24–5).

After the account of the death – from the plague – and funeral of Sten Sture, Mollerus summons the Muses to pay their respects to him. This the Muses do, and after that they enter Erik's castle and start to sing (Fv). Here begins the final part of the poem, a long speech by the Muses to Erik – all the more flattering as it is presented as delivered not by the poet but by the assembled song goddesses (Fv–G ivr). In light of the high expectations on Erik as heir to the throne, the Muses direct a series of precepts for a good ruler to him – to control his temper in all situations; to revere God, be pious, support true worship, protect the learned who preach the true word of God – *Haec est prosperitas florentis maxima regni, / Gloria nec maior regibus esse potest* ('This is the greatest success of a flourishing kingdom; there is no greater glory for kings', F ijv); to promote education of the young, and support the arts; to rule justly both of his own accord and by good counsel, and to purge the court of flatterers and parasites. As the Muses start to advise Erik on how he shall become an *exemplum* for Swedes to follow, they break off and change direction. They stop admonishing Erik and start praising him for his accomplishments: his learning and reading, his mastery of the martial arts, in short his possessing all the virtues and good qualities appropriate for a divinely sanctioned king.³³ They pronounce that with Erik *barbaries* will finally be exiled from Sweden and the Muses thrive,³⁴ as schools are opened, the youth is educated, poetry is practiced and the study of theology is encouraged (G iijr). In concluding this Mirror of Princes, the Muses invite Erik to consider his own reputation and to give continued support to Mollerus, for, they say, as he has celebrated Karl Knutsson and Sten Sture, he will surely celebrate Erik as well. The only way to secure posthumous fame is to favour the *Camenae* and to support poets, they say and depart.³⁵ In the final verses of the poem, the poetic I steps in and asks Erik to accept the words of the Muses that he himself brings as a gift.³⁶

Mollerus' Greek poems

Not counting numerous passing remarks on praise becoming good/just/pious regents (e.g. *Reges laus decet ampla pios*, 'Ample praise befits pious kings,' E ivr), the conclusion is the fourth time that the theme of poetry and poets as providers

³³ *In te virtutum concursus et ordo bonarum est, / Quas in divinis Regibus esse decet* (Gv).

³⁴ *Te Duce barbaries sic Svecia exultat oris, / Et viget hic nutu gloria nostra tuo* (G iijv).

³⁵ *Sic, et non aliter, te laus aeterna sequetur, / Nos inopes, tanti iuris habemus opes* ([G ivv]).

³⁶ *Haec sunt, o Sueciae Rex inclute gentis Ericae, / Laudibus Aonides quae cecinerunt tuis. / Accipe [...] Nuncius ipsarum quae tibi dona fero* (G ivr).

of eternal glory, and that of the necessity of the nobility to provide both subject matter and material support to poets are made topical by Mollerus in *Stheno Sture*. Mollerus has the Muses dwell on that Erik needs to cultivate a good relations to poets and to provide them with material for praise, if he wishes that his name be remembered.³⁷ He should be a Maecenas,³⁸ for the praise of poets is more incorruptible than monuments like pyramids and colossuses that fall to pieces by the ravages of weather and wind (F iijv). This is a topos in Greek and Roman poetry, but in view of Mollerus' choice of words, the intertext here is surely Horace's *Exegi monumentum aere perennius / regalique situ pyramidum altius* etc. (*Carm.* 3.30.1–2). But unlike Horace, Mollerus speaks about the permanence of the recipients' reputation rather than that of the poet himself; this is in line with the general orientation of the poem.

This is also one of the messages of the Latin dedication, and the sole message of Mollerus' two Greek poems. The wording of the epigram on the title page is stark:

ὡς χρὴ αἰνεῖσθαι μουσῶν ἥρωας ἀοιδαῖς,
 οὕτως ἐν τιμῇ τὰς πρέπον αὐθις ἄγειν.
 ὑμεῖς οὖν βασιλεῖς δότε καὶ μούσαισιν ἀμοιβήν,
 ἀκαμάτῳ μὲν ὑμᾶς εὐλογέουσιν³⁹ ὀπί.⁴⁰

As heroes ought to be praised in the songs of the Muses, so it is fitting that they in their turn honour them. Thus, you kings must compensate the Muses; they do honour you with untiring voice.

While the first couplet of this epigram is a gnomic description of the mutual obligations of poets, metonymically called the Muses, and nobles – as nobility is to be praised in poetry, so nobility ought to honour poets –, the second turns from the generic (heroes in general) to the specific (kings in particular), and, in the form of a conclusion drawn from the first couplet (note οὖν), exhorts

³⁷ *Vatibus esto bonis clemens, illisque canendi / De te, Rex, animum materiemque dato* (F iijv).

³⁸ *Maecenas igitur sis uatibus acer* (F iijv).

³⁹ Cf., e.g., Hil. *trin.* 3.7: *aeternis et indefessis in caelo vocibus laudant; indefessis vocibus or indefessa voce laudare, clamare, dicere* or other verbs of 'speaking' are a very common collocation in Christian Latin literature.

⁴⁰ Text as in Mollerus (1557a). Principles for quoting/editing Humanist Greek texts: spelling, accents and diacritical marks are normalised without comment, both when existing diacritics have been changed and when missing ones have been added, unless this changes the meaning of the word. In non-Greek words accents and diacritics are not added if there are none.

kings to compensate poets who fulfil their part of the mutual understanding. This epigram with its frank plea for patronage is placed on the title page but does not have the laudatory, commendatory or dedicatory function typical of liminary poetry,⁴¹ but functions as a motto signalling a prominent theme of the print.

On the verso follows a twelve verses long dedicatory epigram that elaborates the message of the first poem:

Ἐπίγραμμα πρὸς Εἰρῖκον τὸν Σουιδῶν βασιλέα.
 ὡς περισταμένοιο ἑύκρατος ἠέρος ἀτμίς⁴²
 ἠρέμα τῆς γαίης ἐξάγει εὐφορίαν.
 τὴν δ' ἀντικρὺ κακῶς ἀποσβέννυσ' ἢ δ' ἐπιθλίβει
 αἰθέρος ἢ στυγερὴ χειμερὶν τε ζάλη.
 οὕτως εὐλογία τε φιλοφροσύνη τε ἀνάκτων 5
 μουσάων κραδίην καὶ ἀνεγείρει ὄπιν.
 αἱ δὲ ἀτιμασθεῖσαι ὁμοῦ πάνυ ἀκρέες εἰσίν,
 τοῦθ' ἔρδει σκόλυθρος καὶ φρέν' ἄμουσος ἄναξ.
 σὺ χθονὸς οὖν Γοθίας βασιλεῦ κύδιστε Ἐρίκε
 ἐννέα ᾧ κουρῶν ἐσθλὴ βοηθὲ διός.⁴³ 10
 ἴσθι ἔλευθέριος δώροισι, φρεσὶν ἥπιος ἴσθι,
 εἰ φιλέεις μουσῶν δῶρα ἰοστεφάνων^{44, 45}

Epigram to Erik, king of Swedes: As a well-tempered steam of the surrounding air gently brings forth the fecundity of the earth, which, conversely, is badly extinguished and checked by the ether's odious and wintry squall, [5] so reasonableness and kindness of kings rouse the heart and care of the Muses. But, if dishonoured, they are quite mute – this is what a miserly king, with a rude mind, does. Thus, Erik, most illustrious king of Gothic land, [10] noble assistant of the nine daughters of Zeus, be generous with gifts, be kind in your mind, if you love the gifts of the violet-crowned Muses.

⁴¹ Cf. van Dam (2015, 51 and *passim*).

⁴² Cf. Arist. *Pr.* 915b4: δι' ἀνωμαλίαν τοῦ περισταμένου ἀέρος, etc.

⁴³ Cf. Hes. *Theog.* 915–917; Clem. Al. *Strom.* 6.2.11.1: Μνημοσύνης καὶ Ζηνὸς Ὀλυμπίου ἐννέα κοῦραι, quoting Eumelus (fr. 16 Kinkel).

⁴⁴ Cf. Thgn. 1.250: ἀλλὰ Μουσάων δῶρα ἰοστεφάνων.

⁴⁵ Text as in Mollerus (1557a) with the following emendations: **6** ἀνεγείρει conieci] ἀναγείρει ed. | **10** κουρῶν correxi] κούρων ed.

This poem not only elaborates on the epigram on the title page but also applies the message to Erik specifically. Now the relation between poets and the powerful is not described as a matter of obligation, but one of inspiration, and the message is strengthened with an epic simile: as fair weather makes the crops grow and the cold winds of winter makes them wither and die, so a nurturing relationship makes the Muses sing and the opposite turns them mute, if the nobleman is an unrefined miser. The two final couplets exhort Erik to be generous to poets if their gifts please him. Finally, Mollerus' signature, used both here and in *Carolus Canuti*, created from his initials, repeats the message: *Honos Musis Habendus* ('the Muses are to be honoured').

As Mollerus' Latin is elegant,⁴⁶ so his Greek poems are well composed. Both poems have a moderate tinge of the Greek epic/poetic style; despite some irregularities, metre and prosody are adequately handled.⁴⁷ In addition to some poetic morphology, as well as vocabulary and/or word-forms,⁴⁸ Mollerus also uses the two rare adjectives ἀκρέες (acc. pl. of ἀκρής) and σκόλυθρος. The former appears to be attested only in Hesychius in the whole of the *TLG* corpus, while the latter is attested in a number of ancient lexicographical works beginning with the two 2nd century Atticistic lexica of Pollux and Pausanias.⁴⁹ Both adjectives were incorporated into early modern western Greek lexica from the Greek lexicographical tradition. The *Lexicon Graecolatinum* printed in Paris 1530, for instance, simply translates the entries on ἀκρής from Hesychius and σκόλυθρος from *Suda* or Photius.⁵⁰

Prince Erik was most likely to have both understood and appreciated all parts of *Stheno Sture*, including the Greek paratexts. Gustav had no reputation for learning, but he had not neglected to give his sons a thorough humanistic

⁴⁶ On Mollerus as Latin poet, see Johannesson (1974).

⁴⁷ Note ὑμᾶς with short first syllable in poem 1 v. 4; hiatus is frequent and occurs without shortening in poem 1 v. 1 and poem 2 v. 6.

⁴⁸ Morphology: e.g. μούσαισιν, εὐλογέουσιν; περισταμένοιο, γαίης, στυγερή, χειμερίη, εὐλογία, μουσάων, κραδίην, φιλέεις. Vocabulary/wordforms: e.g. ὅπι; ἡέρος, ὄπιν, κύδιστε, ἰοστεφάνων.

⁴⁹ Hsch. α 2557; Poll. *Onom.* 10.164 (quoting the comic poet Telecleides [fr. 5 Meineke]); Paus. Gr. σ 18.

⁵⁰ See *Lexicon Graecolatinum* (1530) s.v. ἀκρής *mutus factus ob timorem, aut subitum terrorem* compared with Hsch. α 2557 ἀκρής· ὁ διά τινα ἔκπληξιν ἄφωνος γενόμενος; and s.v. σκόλυθρος *illiberalis, sordidus* compared with *Suda* σ 650, σκόλυθρον· σκινπόν, καὶ ἀνελεύθερον, or the identical entry in Photius' *Lexicon* s.v. σκόλυθρον.

education.⁵¹ Even Greek appears to have been included, as evidenced by book inventories and the occasional Greek word and phrase interspersed in Erik's Latin letters, as the one to Melanchthon, referred to above.⁵² And the message was received, after this Mollerus was in the service of the House of Vasa.⁵³

Petri's *Strategema*

The *Strategema* is a complex print in many parts: two Humanist Greek poems (one at the beginning, the other at the end), one Latin prose dedication (9 pages), the poem *Strategema Gothici exercitus* (520 verses, the last few in Greek). Petri touches on so many themes in the print that its several arguments defy concise summary. Johannesson, dismissing Nordström's reading of the text as an expression of the author's personal patriotic feelings of gratitude regarding the political and religious reforms in Sweden under Gustav, argues that the *Strategema* is to be understood in the context of contemporary propagandistic exertions and that the poem itself is to be read as a political allegory warning the Danes off an attack on Sweden in a time when the tension between the countries was intensifying.⁵⁴ The following analysis offers a complementary reading of the print, while indebted to Johannesson's study of its propagandistic context.

The prose dedication

In the prose dedication to prince Erik, Petri treats the Lutheran reformation, the independence of Sweden from Denmark, the rule of Gustav, and the legitimacy of Erik's succession as established states that are not argued; the severed ties to Rome and Denmark are described as fortunate developments and as liberation from foreign religious and political tyranny (A2r–A3r). He devotes more argumentative energy on two recent issues in the debate: the identity and great ancientness of Goths and a refutation of Sleidanus.

Petri introduces Sleidanus by stressing that his history contains audacious calumnies that must be refuted (A4v). After first quoting the whole objectionable

⁵¹ On the princes' education, see Johannesson (1969).

⁵² On the princes' Greek, see Collijn (1921, 117–118).

⁵³ Johannesson (1974, 73).

⁵⁴ Johannesson (1969, 25–28); Nordström (243–249).

passage,⁵⁵ Petri proceeds to a refutation phrase by phrase in which he constantly stresses Sleidanus' impudence. For example, when he comes to Sleidanus' calling the struggle against Danish supremacy a *rebellio*, he just asks 'So you call defence of freedom, expulsion of tyranny, restitution of freedom a rebellion?'⁵⁶ Here more clearly than most, Petri shifts the focus from arguing the facts of the issue to attacking the reliability of the report, thereby implying that the author either is not fully informed or is informed but chose to slant the presentation, and, thus, suggesting that Sleidanus is not to be taken seriously. Indeed, to drive home that argument, Petri concludes the section on Sleidanus with a reflection on the deteriorated quality of historiographers, who, he says, used to be a truth-loving (*φιλαλήθεος*) species from whom one would expect 'the truth without affections' (*a quo veritas sine affectibus expectanda esset*). Quoting Josephus (*AJ* 1.3) he concludes that historians now write to please their masters (Bv).

Petri's choice of subject for the poem *Strategema* is inspired by the grand, Gothicistic view of Swedish history as promulgated in Johannes Magnus' *Historia* (not mentioned in the whole print⁵⁷), according to which the invasion of Scythian territories by the Persians under king Darius I, son of Hystaspes, in 513 BC, is part of Swedish history. Since Sweden being the true home of the Goths (*verissima Gothorum Patria*, A3r) is a matter of controversy, Petri proceeds in the introduction to demonstrate that no people can compete with the Goths as to age, virtues, and achievements both military and cultural (A3r–[A4v]). For all that, all admire the power and glory of Rome, which was destroyed by the Goths (B2r).

This discrepancy, Petri explains, is due to a shortage of men to record the achievements of the Goths. For this is what the Goths need: a Homer to record their achievements; they have never suffered from a lack of Achilleses (*in hunc usque diem nunquam defuit Achilles, sed heu defuit Homerus*, B2r). In addition to the Greek liminary poems and a quote in Hebrew from the book of Isaiah (32.17) on the title page, Petri demonstrates his learning and fruits of his studies with numerous Greek quotes, allusions and scattered Greek and Hebrew words

⁵⁵ Sleidanus (1555, 48 (M iijr)) = Petri (1559, Br): *Suecos ità debellatos, ex nobilitate quidam, Gustavus Erixonius, à Lubecensibus, ut creditur, instigatus et adiutus, iterum ad rebellionem incitat, et foeliciter quidem. Simulabat initio, se negotium agere filiorum Stenonis: Confirmatio autem factus, regni possessionem arripit, et sui muniendi causa, Stenonis filiam in matrimonium ducit.*

⁵⁶ *Rebellionem vocas libertatis defensionem, tyrannidis expulsionem, pacisque restitutionem?* (Br).

⁵⁷ As Nordström (1922, 243) notes.

and phrases throughout the dedication.⁵⁸ His talk about Homer and Achilles here is one of many allusions to ancient Greek literature, but also a variation on the *topos* that without poets (and historians) the great deeds of great men fall into oblivion, perhaps by way of allusion to Cicero's *Pro Archia poeta* (24), where – as part of the argument on the value of poets – Cicero presents Alexander of Macedon contemplating Achilles' tomb at Sigeum and praising him fortunate to have had Homer as herald. For without the *Iliad* Achilles' memory would have been as covered in dust as his bones are. It is Petri's hope that someone in the future might rise to the challenge; his booklet is intended as a small contribution to the recording of the historical feats of his homeland, Petri explains; his aim is to restore events recorded by Greek historians to the truth of native history.⁵⁹

Herodotus is the only historical source Petri refers to regarding the strategem of the Goths. It may be that Petri read the episode in Herodotus – perhaps even in recreational breaks from his study of theology, as he specifies (B2r) – but he paraphrases Johannes Magnus' version, as Nordström has shown.⁶⁰ Petri's dependence on Johannes Magnus is evident also in many parts of the dedication, inter alia in his discussion on the name and identity of the Goths – *Gether* in Swedish, *Gethae* in Greek and *Gothi* in Latin (A3r).⁶¹ Petri explains that Herodotus, though he is the first historian to speak of their deeds and does distinguish the Goths from the Scythians, ascribes the deeds of the Goths to the Scythians, which is to be expected when a historian does not have access to the oldest and proper historical sources.⁶² Petri even notes that Herodotus is cautious and indicates that he has reached the limit of his knowledge with *κατ' ὅσον ἡμεῖς ᾔδμεν* ('as far as we know', Hdt 4.20) both here and elsewhere.⁶³ Thus, Petri

⁵⁸ Greek authors explicitly quoted/cited: Pindar (*Ol.* 9.40; see below), Josephus (*AJ* 1.3), Herodotus (4.20, 4.118, see also below), Euripides (*Phoen.* 1623–1624, 1015–1018), Xenophon (*Cyr.*, see below); Greek proverb *παρόντα ἀποδημεῖν* (a witticism in Ar. *Eq.* 1120 that entered collections of proverbs); words e.g. *ἀρχαιολογία*, *αὐτόχθονα*; Hebrew particularly on p. A4v when arguing direct ties between the Hebrew and Gothic/Swedish languages. Many of the authors quoted were part of the curriculum in Wittenberg, see Nordström (1922, 228–230). For the authors alluded to in the Greek poems, see below.

⁵⁹ *ad patriae historiae veritatem* (B2r).

⁶⁰ Nordström (1922, 242–249); Johannes Magnus 3.6–9; Herodotus 4.83–143, particularly 118–143.

⁶¹ Following Johannes Magnus *praef.* 7.

⁶² *neglectis propriis et primis eius gentis historiis* (A3r).

⁶³ *ipse sibi cavens, saepe hanc addit correctionem* (A3v). Similar indications are indeed common in Herodotus' *Histories*.

argues, following Johannes Magnus, there is no reason to have greater confidence in Greek historians than in native ones who have direct access to the sources: a list of kings that stretches further back in time than any, except perhaps the Hebrew one; knowledge about all Goths, not only the Asian ones; language; writing (i.e. runes, which are presumed to be much older than Greek and Latin letters); and inscribed ancient monuments (i.e. rune stones, also presumed older than the remains of antiquity, A3v–[A4r]).⁶⁴

Petri concludes the dedication with a reflection on the use and necessity of reading and studying history of all times,⁶⁵ for history is a source of useful lessons both for character development, political deliberation, government, and theology.⁶⁶

The Latin poem

While the dedication vehemently argues the case of Sweden and its regents against the conventional understanding of the history of Europe and the slander of its enemies, the *Strategema*, the poem itself, consists of three scenes in elegiac distichs. The poem as a whole reads like a series of lessons, one for each scene. The two first scenes come from the story of how the brave, warlike but peaceable, and freedom-loving Goths fought off the Persian invasion (from Johannes Magnus/Herodotus);⁶⁷ the third merges two scenes of dying/old monarchs advising his heirs (from Xenophon and Petri's own observation). The scenes are clearly separated by extensive authorial comment on their significance.

First scene: When the king of the Goths was not intimidated into a humiliating alliance with Darius, the king of Persia, Gothic territory was invaded by Persian forces. As the lines of battle had been formed, the Goths forgot about the Persians and started to chase a hare that showed up between the armies – the military threat concerned them so little.⁶⁸ In Johannes Magnus this scene illustrates the Goths' bravery and contempt for the enemy (3.7). For Petri, too, it demonstrates

⁶⁴ On the parallels to Johannes Magnus, see notes in Nordström (1922, 255–257).

⁶⁵ *non minus necessarias quam utiles esse Historiarum omnium temporum lectiones et cognitiones* (Bv).

⁶⁶ Perhaps influenced by Melanchthon's view on the importance of historical studies for a better understanding of God's manifestations and workings, sacred history and biblical prophecies, and to properly judge theological controversies; see Ben-Tov (2009, 37–41).

⁶⁷ Johannes Magnus 3.6–8; Herodotus 4.118–143.

⁶⁸ B3v–Cr; vv. 29–134; Petri follows Johannes Magnus in placing the scene with the hare before the mystifying gifts.

the fearlessness of the Goths. Their playing proves them to be the very opposite of braggarts who flee the actual battle; in a just war no one can hope to defeat the Goths without much bloodshed.⁶⁹ But, he continues, the brave do not always have the advantage. In times of dirty warfare, tyrants easily defeat the virtuous and brave by deceit (*Fraude perit virtus [...] / Quique nequit vinci robore, fraude potest*, v. 181f.), Petri says and reminds the youth of the blood that coloured the square (*memor esto [...] qua clade, iuventus / Tinxerunt proprio sanguine triste forum*). With this allusion to the Stockholm bloodbath – further described as stemming from deceit and dated with a chronostich ([...] *MagnaqVe⁷⁰ per fraVDes patrIa pressa fVIIt*, ‘[...] by deceit our great homeland was overcome’, v. 190)⁷¹ which gives the year MDVVVII, viz. 1517⁷²) – Petri links the Goths who faced the Persians, the Swedes who were slaughtered in Stockholm and the present day. This is a reminder that functions as a warning about the consequences of letting one’s guard down as the Goths did when they started chasing the hare and as the Swedish nobility did when they trusted the Danes and were decimated. Thus, first lesson: do not be overconfident and do not underestimate your enemy.⁷³

Second scene: The Persians, looking with wonder at the Goths’ indifference towards themselves and their arms, next receive perplexing gifts: a mouse, a bird, a frog and an arrow.⁷⁴ Deliberating on the meaning of the gifts, not the ones that he had demanded as a token of submission, Darius heard the opinion of two men. One was a flatterer who could dupe wise Solomon – he interpreted the gifts

⁶⁹ Cr–C2r; vv. 135–196.

⁷⁰ I delete the comma after *magnaque*.

⁷¹ A few verses later Petri weaves in his name: *LAUs RENovata TIbi PErfregit TRIstia GOTHE* (v. 193).

⁷² 1517 is not the year of the bloodbath, but the year when the controversy between the regent Sten Sture Jr (with the anti-unionists) and archbishop Gustav Trolle (with the pro-unionists) had escalated so that Christian II of Denmark was drawn in and set in motion a series of events that led up to the the bloodbath in November 1520.

⁷³ Johannesson (1969, 27) reads this as a warning directed at the false Danes not to attack the braves Goths/Swedes, but it is difficult to support that reading in light of the repeated variations on the topic deceit easily conquers the brave, which must be taken as a warning to the brave (viz. Goths/Swedes) not to trust those who are deceitful, either to be taken in a general sense or as referring to Danes.

⁷⁴ *Munera, Mus, Volucris, Rana, Sagitta simul* (v. 210); here Petri silently brings the account closer to Herodotus where the Scyths give ὄρνιθὰ τε καὶ μῦν καὶ βάτραχον καὶ ὄϊστοὺς πέντε (‘bird, mouse, frog and five arrows,’ 4.131); in Johannes Magnus the Goths give only *avem, murem, ranam* (bird, mouse, frog, 3.7).

to signify submission –, the other was a greyhaired old man who told the truth, however displeasing – he interpreted the gifts to signify resistance by all possible means against the aggressors.⁷⁵ Neither Herodotus nor Johannes Magnus has a scene of counselling at this point.⁷⁶ It is thus Petri who transforms the positive interpretation of the gifts – that they signify the submission of the Goths – from being Darius' wishful thinking to the fawning interpretation of a flatterer. Both this modification to the intertext(s) and the following commentary stress the difficulty but necessity of distinguishing good advice from bad.⁷⁷ Not only the harmful services of the bad advisor are to be avoided, but the good ones are to be recognised and cared for; they will secure the persistence of power.⁷⁸ Only the further development of events shows what is good advice, so Petri relates how the Persians barely escaped, and thereafter adds approving comments on the virtuous and moderate king who knows to listen to advise also when it goes against his desires.⁷⁹ Thus, second lesson: a good king must know how to recognize good advice.⁸⁰

The last scene, or rather: double scene, does not continue the narrative on the Persian invasion, but begins with commentary that elaborates what is here taken as the final couplet of the second scene – *concordia* is the cause of victory⁸¹ – and serves to establish the fundamental importance of *concordia* for well-functioning relations on all levels, both socially and societally.⁸² Petri juxtaposes a short paraphrase of the deathbed speech of Cyrus, the founder of the Persian empire, from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (a highly popular text during the Renaissance),⁸³ with a scene of Gustav advising his sons,⁸⁴ an event that he says he witnessed.⁸⁵

⁷⁵ C2r–C3v; vv. 197–286.

⁷⁶ Hdt. 4.132; Johannes Magnus 3.7.

⁷⁷ C3v–[C4r]; vv. 287–328.

⁷⁸ *Plurimus est usus, sapientum maxima cura, / Quorum consiliis robora fixa manent* (v. 307f.).

⁷⁹ *Crede mihi, decus est modesto principe maius / Nullum, cui facile est mentis habere satis* (v. 323f.).

⁸⁰ Taking into account only the flight of the Persians, Johannesson (1969, 27) reads this scene as advice to the Danish king not to provoke the Goths; this neglects too much of the text to be a convincing interpretation.

⁸¹ *Haec etiam meminisse iuvat: Concordia fecit, / Victrici dextra, colla inimica premi* (v. 327f.).

⁸² [C4r]; vv. 329–342.

⁸³ [C4r]–Dv; vv. 343–414; Xen. *Cyr.* 8.7.6–28; on Xenophon in the renaissance, and the *Cyropaedia* specifically, see Marsh (1992, 116–138).

⁸⁴ Dv–D2v; vv. 415–478.

⁸⁵ Johannesson (1969, 27f.) observes correctly that this juxtaposition serves to elevate Gustav to the

For also our own times give such examples,⁸⁶ Petri explains, and assures that he committed what he heard and saw to memory. A chronostich gives the year 1554, and specifies the event to one evening in spring time;⁸⁷ Petri also explains that he was then preacher at the royal court.⁸⁸ The speeches of the old, venerable monarchs who have built an empire, are held in the presence of their courts and directed to their sons. Both summarize their achievements and express a wish for the continued existence of their empire through their heirs; for this they advise unity, internal peace and harmony, that the sons respect the rules of succession; only one son, the oldest, shall be king (*scepstriger*, v. 465). Finally, Petri's commentary drives home the third lesson of the poem: *concordia* between rulers and ruled, between generations and between brothers preserves the people, as history shows – ‘as long as you remember your forefathers’ (*dum memor es patrum*, v. 481).⁸⁹

Petri's Greek poems

Petri concludes the poem with a prayer for the well-being of the state – wishing for dutiful administration, lasting unity, and most of all that king and people know the religious dogmas.⁹⁰ Independence and lawful rule are good things, but to acknowledge Jesus is the only salvation for the wretched.⁹¹ All three are united in Sweden/Gothia (*haec coëunt foelix [...] ô Gothica tellus*, v. 507), a rare occurrence. Finally, argument shifts into prayer. First, a prayer for peace, in which Petri mixes in Greek words and verses (vv. 512–514; 519–520):

level of Xenophon's *Cyrus*, as builders of empire and wise rulers.

⁸⁶ *Talia, sed veteres, non soli, exempla, libelli / Praebent, dant etiam secula nostra pios* (v. 417f.).

⁸⁷ *TēMpVs erat, phoebI tV ponDV's onVste ferebas / HesperlosqVe tVI taVre reteXI's eqVos* ('It was the time when you, laden Taurus, bore the weight of Phoebus and you covered the evening horses', v. 423f.), that is, a spring evening the year MDXVVVVVVVVIII, viz. MDLIV.

⁸⁸ *Astans tunc forte, et verbi de more paratus / Divini Praeco, nempe vocatus eram* (v. 435f.).

⁸⁹ The strong emphasis on *concordia* is significant in light of the discord between Gustav's sons. For example, Erik XIV was to imprison Johan; Erik was dethroned and imprisoned by Johan and Karl, and died before Johan III managed to execute him; during his reign Johan III had numerous conflicts with Karl; Sigismund, Johan's son and king of Poland as Sigismund III, was outmanoeuvred (on religious grounds) from the Swedish throne by duke Karl, later Karl IX, his uncle.

⁹⁰ *Sit pietas curae, maneat concordia* (v. 491); *Vera autem, verae pietatis maxima laus est, / Cum populo Regem dognata nosse Dei* (v. 499f.).

⁹¹ *Una salus miseris, Christum cognoscere Iesum, / Pernicies summa est, credere, nolle Deo* (v. 505f.)

ὄργανον <i>est pacis Rex pius ipse suae.</i>	512
Χριστ' εἰκὸν πατέρος, σῶτερ, λόγε, ὀλβιόδωρε, ⁹²	
<i>Unica tu miseris spes animosa reis. [...]</i>	
Καρτίστη ἀρετῶν, οὐθ' ἔσπερος οὔτε ἔφως	519
οὔτω θαυμαστός, ἐστι δικαιοσύνη. ⁹³	
Τέλος ⁹⁴	

A pious king is himself the instrument of his own peace. Christ, the image of your father, saviour, word, giver of bliss, you are the only resolute hope for the wretched condemned. [...] The most excellent of virtues is righteousness; neither the evening star nor the morning star is as admirable. The end.

The Latin fades into Greek, perhaps in order to accommodate the reference to Aristotle, or because it is a more holy language than Latin. Next, after the *Strategema*, follows a free standing, wholly Greek prayer:

Προσευχὴ περὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἀπὸ τοῦ Λαυρεντίου Γωθοῦ	
Πλάσμα σέθεν θνητοὺς γηραιὸν χριστ' ἔλεησον,	
σοῦ γὰρ ἄνευ, δοῦναι μηδενός ἐστι βίον.	
Νῶε κιβωτὸς ἔχει σε κυβερνήτην καὶ ἄνακτα	
μοῦνον, ἀλύξῃ ὅπως κύματα πίκρα μόρου. ⁹⁵	
ἐν πατρίδος γαίῃ ὀρθῶς ἐκκλησία αὐξοῖ,	5
δὸς ξένιον λάφῳ ποιμένα παντὶ σέο.	
ἐσπέρα ἦλθε, βροτῶν μετὰ ἡμῶν χριστὲ σὺ μείνον,	
μήποτε σεῖο φάος βούλου ἀπολλύμενον.	
ἀνδροφόνου θυμὸς δεινὸν γ' ἐχθροῖο κακιστός,	
ἐν κόσμιοι τέλει, πλεῖά τε πάντα φόνου,	10
ἀλλὰ χρόνῳ, μῶλον πολύδακρυον παῦε μόναρχε,	

⁹² Verbal echoes from one of several poem εἰς τὸν Σωτήρα, cf. *Anth. Pal.*: 1.22.1–4 Πατρὸς ἐπουρανίου λόγε [...] ὁ βροτέην γενεὴν τιμήσας εἰκόνι σεῖο [...] ὄπαζε καὶ ὀλβιόδωρον ἀρωγὴν.

⁹³ Cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 5.1.1129b27–29 κρατίστη τῶν ἀρετῶν εἶναι δοκεῖ ἢ δικαιοσύνη, καὶ οὐθ' ἔσπερος οὐθ' ἔφως οὔτω θαυμαστός. According to the ancient scholia this is a reminiscence of Euripides' lost tragedy *Melanippe* (fr. 486 Nauck).

⁹⁴ D iijr. The text in Nordström (1922) follows the original print, except for diacritics; here it is emended according to the following: 519 καρτίστη scripsi metri gratia] κρατίστη ed.; καρτίστη Nordström. Note hiatus without shortening v. 519; in v. 520 θαυμαστός is apparently scanned with a long final syllable.

⁹⁵ Cf. *Anth. Pal.* 9.276 (Crin.): πικροῦ κῦμ' [...] θανάτου.

θρήνον ἅπαντα μολῶν βέλτερε λῦσον ἄναξ.

AMEN⁹⁶

A prayer for the church, by Laurentius Gothus. Christ, have mercy on mortals, your aged images, for, without you, no one is able to give life. Noah's ark has you as pilot and only lord, in order to escape the bitter waves of death. [5] May the church grow straight in our homeland; give the gift of a shepherd to all your people. Evening came; Christ, stay with us mortals, do not ever will your light to be fading. [9] The most evil spirit of the manslaughtering enemy is something to be feared in the end of the world, and all is full of slaughter, but with time, come, sovereign supreme ruler, end the tearful toil of war and dissolve all lament. AMEN

The final text of the print continues the concluding prayer, but concerns only the church and its congregation. Despite a number of minor linguistic lapses, mostly in the area of spelling with faulty accents and itacistic mistakes, declension, shaky syntax, and a general dearth of conjunctions connecting the clauses,⁹⁷ the poem, written in adequate elegiac distichs,⁹⁸ features some epic wordforms and vocabulary, even word play.⁹⁹ Both this and the first Greek poem are adequate and bear testimony to Petri's study of the Greek language. The first Greek poem, an address to the reader printed on the verso of the title page, supports a toning down of the propagandistic reading of the *Strategema* poem itself:

AMICO LECTORI

Φεῦ, πόλεμόν τε μάχαν τε θεοῖο ἄνευ, σὺ ἕασον,

Πινδαρὸς εἶπε σοφῶς:¹⁰⁰ πάντα γὰρ ἐστὶ θεοῦ.

⁹⁶ D iijv. The text in Nordström (1922) follows the original print, except for diacritics; here it is emended according to the following: 1 πλάσμα correxi] πλάσμα ed. | 3 κιβωτός correxi] κυβωτός ed. | 6 παντί conieci] πάντε ed. | 10 τέλει correxi] τέλω ed. | 11 πολύδακρυν correxi] πολυδάκρη ed. | 12 θρήνον correxi] θροῖνον ed. | μολῶν correxi] μόλων ed.

⁹⁷ Accent: πλάσμα for πλάσμα, μόλων for μολῶν; itacistic mistakes: κυβωτός for κιβωτός, θροῖνον for θρήνον; declension: τέλω for τέλει (an easy beginner's mistake in third declension neuters with sigma stem), πολυδάκρη for πολύδακρυν; shaky syntax: e.g., the participle ἀπολλύμενον for an expected infinitive.

⁹⁸ Note hiatus without shortening v. 5.

⁹⁹ Epic wordforms/vocabulary: e.g., σέθεν, σέο, ἐχθροῖο, βροτῶν, πολύδακρυν, μολῶν; word play μῶλων – μολῶν.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 9.40f. ἕα πόλεμον μάχαν τε πᾶσαν / χωρὶς ἀθανάτων.

πράγματα τ' ἀνθρώπων θεὸς αὐτὸς πάντα κυβερνᾷ,
 εὖχος δὸς πολέμου τοῖσδε δικαιοτέροις.¹⁰¹
 ὕβριν ἀμυνόμενοι ἐχθρῶν γλυκερῆς περὶ πάτρας,¹⁰² 5
 ἀντιδίκων ἄλλων εἰσὶ δικαιοτέροι.
 τοῖον ἔχεις παράδειγμα ἐν ἱστορίᾳ, φίλε, ταύτη,
 ἦν σοὶ ἦσι φίλος. χαίρει δὲ εὐτυχέων.¹⁰³

To the kind reader. Alas! Let war and struggle without God be, said Pindar wisely. For all is in God's hands. God alone governs all affairs of men, and grants glory in battle to the more righteous. [5] Those who fight off the wantonness of their enemies for their sweet homeland, are more just than other adversaries. My friend, you have such an example in this piece of history, sent to you by a friend. Farewell and prosper.

The same judgement applies to the quality of this poem as to that of the former.¹⁰⁴ In this dedication, addressed to the reader, Petri warns against war without God, with a reference to Pindar's wise words (*Ol.* 9.40f.). Petri evidently interprets Pindar to say that man should not fight without God on his side; that is perhaps also how Melanchthon's Latin interpretation is to be taken (*Omitte bellum, omitte pugnam sine Deo*).¹⁰⁵ However, from the Pindaric context – this is a narratorial comment marking a transition from the subject of mortals (Heracles in particular) fighting against gods to the more immediate subject matter of the poem – it appears that the words in essence say “no more talk about fights against

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Il.* 5.285: εὖχος ἔδωκας etc.; εὖχος δίδωμι is a common collocation in the Homeric epics, the *Iliad* in particular.

¹⁰² Cf. *Il.* 12.243: ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πάτρης etc.

¹⁰³ [A1v]. The text in Nordström (1922) follows the original print, except for diacritics and two corrections, here with further emendations: **1** μάχαν τε sejunxi | **5** πάτρας Nordström] πτράας ed. | **8** ἦν Nordström] ὕν ed. | δὲ εὐτυχέων scripsi metri gratia] δ' ἐντυχέων Nordström; δὲ per ligaturam ed.

¹⁰⁴ Itacistic mistake: ὕν for ἦν (may however simply be a typo); the demonstrative τοῖσδε appears to be used as the definite article; no conjunctions connecting clauses (except τ' v. 3, but probably used to avoid hiatus); hiatus without shortening v. 5; one epic form (θεοῖο) and a few poetic reminiscences; word play (ἀντιδίκων – δικαιοτέροι).

¹⁰⁵ Melanchthon 1853, 204; the Pindar translation was edited by Caspar Peucer in 1558 (see introduction to Melanchthon 1853, 187–188 with full title), who lectured on mathematics and astronomy in Wittenberg when Petri studied there.

the gods.”¹⁰⁶ Petri’s interpretation of Pindar is evident from the following two couplets where he explains that God governs all, and gives the upper hand to the more righteous party, that is to the defenders rather than the aggressors.

Moreover, and most interestingly, the final couplet labels the piece of history a παράδειγμα, that is an example providing models to follow, sent by a friend to a friend. In addressing this to Erik, he could be certain that the recipient would be interested – Erik was an arduous reader of history, particularly of Johannes Magnus, whose history was to accompany him until the end of his life.¹⁰⁷ These two verses have the function of an interpretative key where Petri directs the readers towards identifying the lessons to be learnt from the historical *exempla* of his poem. In the prose dedication discussed above, Petri does not use the word *exemplum* or παράδειγμα, but speaks about the necessity and utility of history. Indeed, as the above analysis of the *Strategema* poem has shown, the three episodes serve as historical *exempla* to the three lessons to be drawn from the text; in each instance Petri makes the lesson clear with extensive commentary.

Concluding Words

The present study set out to show that Mollerus and Petri use pro-Vasa topoi to make what appears to be their primary messages more appealing to the addressee, and that this message is focussed by way of their Greek paratexts.

In *Stheno Sture* Mollerus argues exhaustively for Gustav’s close relation to Sten Sture Sr, the regent of Sweden – thus, that Gustav’s lineage is noble and that he has a hereditary claim to the throne – in addition to narrating the life and deeds of Sten Sture, with a focus on how Swedes under his leadership manage to fend off devious invaders, Danes in particular. These were all issues that floated in the propaganda. A recurring motif throughout the poem are poets as procurers of fame and the need, indeed necessity, of nobility to tend to a

¹⁰⁶ The whole section in Pindar: ἀπό μοι λόγον / τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥίψον· | ἐπεὶ τό γε λοιδορῆσαι θεούς / ἐχθρὰ σοφία, καὶ τὸ καυχᾶσθαι παρὰ καιρόν // μανίαισιν ὑποκρέκει. / μὴ νῦν λαλάγει τὰ τοιαῦτ· ἔα πόλεμον μάχην τε πᾶσαν / χωρὶς ἀθανάτων· φέροις δὲ Πρωτογενείας / ἄσται γλῶσσαν (‘But cast that story / away from me, my mouth! / for reviling the gods / is a hateful skill, and boasting inappropriately // sounds a note of madness. / Stop babbling of such things now! / Keep war and all fighting / clear of the immortals; apply your speech to Protogeneia’s / city’). *Ol.* 9.35–42; transl. by Race (1997).

¹⁰⁷ On Erik’s studies, see Johannesson (1969, 14–20); on his profound study of Johannes Magnus, see Johannesson (1982, 282–285) and (1991, 219–221).

good relationship to poets in particular and others who celebrate their deeds and thus provide lasting remembrance of past deeds. In the final part, celebrating the character and achievements of crown prince Erik, that motif becomes thematic, particularly in the concluding statement of the Muses – that the only means to secure posthumous fame is to support poets. And in the final verses Mollerus asks Erik to accept the words of the Muses – and the poem.

The print also begins on a similar note. The mutual obligations of princes and poets both on a general and specific level are the subject of the two Greek poems that precede the main texts of the print. The four Greek gnomic and hortatory verses on the title page function as a motto for the work. It is a starkly worded plea for the nobility to live up to their obligation to compensate poets for their work – remember that Gustav appears to have failed to remunerate Mollerus for the *Carolus Canuti*. The dedicatory verses on the verso elaborates on the first Greek poem in milder formulations and applies the message to Erik specifically; the final two couplets exhort Erik to be generous with his gifts if he is pleased by the poem. Thus the theme of the interdependence of poets and princes frame the whole print.

Memory of fame and glory by future generations is at the core of *Stheno Sture*, as Mollerus is selling his services to the crown prince. Fame and glory is an issue in the introduction to the *Strategema*, too, where Petri is concerned with the shortage of learned to relate the achievements of the Swedes/Goths and with setting the historical record straight, both that of contemporary history (the refutation of Sleidanus) and that of ancient history (the correct identification, ancientness, and achievements of the Swedes/Goths). Petri does not waste many words upon other issues that floated in propaganda, but simply takes the pro-Vasa side without much argument. The *Strategema* poem itself consists of three scenes from history that function as exempla for the three lessons for the preservation of power in relation to others and for internal harmony. The two first scenes form a continuous narrative from ancient Swedish/Gothic (not Scythian) history according to the Gothicistic reinterpretation of history that Petri presents in the introduction (without reference to Johannes Magnus' history), the last mixes two scenes, one from the Persian, the other from the Swedish court.

The introductory Greek verses function like an interpretative key; they label its history a παράδειγμα, that is, an example, and direct the readers towards identifying its lessons. In the prayer for peace that concludes the *Strategema*, where Petri switches gradually from Latin to Greek, and the wholly Greek prayer for the welfare of mankind, church and congregation that closes the print Petri changes both languages and the modes of delivery, from argument to prayer. This

reminds the reader that Petri though a student in Wittenberg already had held the position of preacher at the Vasa court.

Thus, both Mollerus and Petri promoted a more positive image of Sweden and its rulers. Both dedicated the prints to crown prince Erik of Sweden. Both used liminary poems in Greek to draw the readers' attention to the primary message of their prints. The reasons for choosing Greek for these parts are likely a mixture of signalling exclusivity, showing off the authors' skills, and flattering the explicit addressee's accomplishments. The Renaissance was coming to Sweden, symbolized in Mollerus by the exiling of *barbaries* from Sweden, the arrival of the Muses, and the establishment of education – including Greek studies. In the case of Erik of Sweden, it is certain that he was able to not only appreciate the poets' effort to write in Greek, but also to understand the message.

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