

Frau von Staël's eyes flashed flames of sacred anger; the Queen, the Prince looked at her, astonished. She seemed to have forgotten her surroundings, and stared vacantly into space. Like a Sibyl who has been compelled by her feelings to reveal all her thought, she now appeared to be examining the past and present in her mind in order to find a clue to the distant future.

As Fjelkestam argues (p. 106), it is not the question of art that is most central in *Jenny*, but the issue of Jewishness. Art retains an important function, however, as the song scene shows. Things seem to have been different for Louisa May Alcott, who portrayed young female artists on several occasions. And Jo in the *Little Women* tetralogy is perhaps the most well known. The chapter on Alcott deals with the popularization of the sublime, which Fjelkestam (p. 130), in contrast to other researchers, does not think weakens the notion: 'Instead, it is about a democratization of sublimity, which [...] prompts compassionate tears and laughter in community rather than fearful existential anguish in solitude. The sublime has thereby not lost its political edge but rather widened it.'

Fjelkestam stresses the importance of genre and the different interpretations it may have over time. As a genre it implies rhetorical devices such as allegory and intense emotional tableaux, as Fjelkestam discusses earlier in connection with *Corinne*. These narrative tools, Fjelkestam proceeds (p. 131), aim to create feelings in the reader and thereby induce political effects. The character of Jo (whose literary career follows a course similar to Alcott's own) suggests such artistic and political aims, Fjelkestam concludes (p. 131). As in *Corinne*, there is the question of passing on artistic skills to the next generation. In the case of the *Little Women* tetralogy, this is done when Jo's sister's daughter Josie eventually becomes an

actress. Josie elaborates a sublime technique as an actress, which is stressed in the novel when a famous actress from the previous generation initiates her in the art of acting and sublimity. The literary development of Jo, which might perhaps be said to be similar to Josie's, is central to the aesthetics of the *Little Women* tetralogy and illustrates the more popular type of sublimity, Fjelkestam concludes. And, in contrast to *Corinne*, Alcott's protagonists are not geniuses.

Fjelkestam's *Det sublimas politik* is truly interesting reading. Her aims in the book, to give a political perspective on the sublime, and to connect the discipline of aesthetics to the area of cultural theory, are achieved. I do, however, regret the absence of a concluding chapter discussing the differences and similarities between the three main works studied, through the prism of the sublime viewed as an analytical tool, such as Fjelkestam has elaborated it. As it is now, the reader is left with some threads still hanging loose. It would be very interesting, indeed, to read a complementary article clarifying the theoretical discussions on the notion of the sublime based on the empirical studies conducted by Fjelkestam in *Det sublimas politik*.

Anna Cabak Rédei

Sven Fritz, *Jennings & Finlay på marknaden för öregrundsjärn och besläktade studier i fribetstida storföretagande och storfinans* (Stockholm: Kungl. Vitterhets-, Historie- och Antikvitets Akademien, 2010). 236 pp.

Sven Fritz's book about Oregrounds iron should be seen as a complement to other books about De Geers' ironworks and iron exports. In this case study he describes the monopolization of export by exploring the relations between the ironworks and the broa-

der background of the Swedish Age of Liberty from four perspectives: Jennings & Finlay as *Verlag* for Antoine De Geer; its acquisition of ironworks and iron contracts between 1753 and 1758; the loans from the Riksbank; and the dissolution of John Jennings's ironworks holdings. There is no suitable English word for this particular type of enterprise, so I will use the German word *Verlag* to designate firms that acted similarly to wholesalers and brokers, both financing and distributing the goods produced. Today the publishing industry still uses this system.

In the book, the reader learns how the contracts between ironmaster and *Verlag* could be shaped and how the *Verlag* credits were intended to function. Through the description of Jennings & Finlay's long-term contract with Antoine De Geer, Fritz shows, for instance, that *Verlag* contracts were around before the law of 1748. The techniques used to draft contracts, however, were refined over time. He also shows that the *Verlag* did not charge interest in the strict sense, but suggests that there was likely a certain amount of interest compensation built into the fixed price. The contracts lacked provisions that could protect ironmasters against reprisals during the contracted time period if they were unable to deliver the stipulated quantity. Here the reader gets an insight into services other than the purely financial that the *Verlag* could assist the ironmaster with, such as the purchase of grain and currency exchange. It is apparent that the services were never financed by Jennings & Finlay by charging a higher price than it had paid for grain, and that the price was set below the Stockholm brokers' price quotations and tables of market prices. In addition, it never made a profit on currency exchange. During its time as *Verlag*, it also often advised on purchases by informing De Geers about expected price changes and purchasing conditions in Stockholm.

It is often claimed that *Verlag* loans were behind traders taking over ironworks, but

Fritz clearly shows that *Verlag* loans are unable to explain Antoine De Geer's insolvency. Antoine De Geer's financial position was weak and he had been in significant debt long before Jennings & Finlay entered the picture. The debts were mainly in the form of long-term promissory loans from private individuals. A large share of these debts were to relatives, and another large share was likely to friends. Only a minor share came from the few big merchants who had lent money to Antoine De Geer. Fritz also shows that Jennings & Finlay never financed its purchases of ironworks with foreign loans, as has commonly been claimed. Instead, it raised the money by taking loans from the national bank, using the ironworks as collateral.

Despite the purpose of the book to study the monopolization of iron export, Fritz himself concludes that there was no such monopolization. He nevertheless contends that it was the intention of Jennings & Finlay to establish a monopoly on Oregrounds iron, which he claims is shown through its ironworks acquisitions. Certainly Jennings & Finlay's role as *Verlag* to Antoine De Geer served as an important expedient for its ironworks acquisitions, but as Fritz notes, it was only when the strategy of iron contracts failed that it started to buy ironworks, and then as a complement to the iron contracts.

The strength of the book lies in its wealth of detailed information, which will reward researchers who wish to dig deeper into the subject. The book also contains some curious digressions, like the description of Antoine De Geer's illness and its treatments, which is of more interest to medical historians. Given that Fritz is an economic historian who for the most part bases his research on letters, accounts, proceedings, and official documents, the lack of tables and diagrams is striking. His main sources consist of letters and documents largely relating to the De Geer brothers. This makes the book's title somewhat misleading,

especially as large parts of the book spend more time treating the De Geer brothers than Jennings & Finlay.

Even though there are some tables and graphs, for example those depicting the development of the price of iron and the Riksbank loans, I feel that there could have been more. For instance, Fritz could have given a rough picture of the development of De Geer's different ironworks to make it easier for the reader to keep up with all the detailed information. At the very least, the text would have been easier to follow if Fritz had made a more concerted effort to summarize his points, especially in the very long third chapter. At times he also passes over important points, especially those relating to Jennings & Finlay, choosing instead to focus on others that can seem less important – especially those relating to De Geer, which rarely add any information that amplifies or simplifies the interpretation. The study is considerably weakened by the fact that Fritz chooses not to analyze the data. Without the summary at the end of the book, it is hard for the reader to understand what Fritz believes he has shown. Despite a few flaws, this book will likely prove useful to those who study ironworks or finance during the Age of Liberty.

Lili-Annè Aldman

Esbjörn Funck, *Några idéer och tänkesätt på Carl Carlesons väg genom den tidiga frihetstiden* (Kristianstad: MonitorFörlaget, 2008). 183 s.

Esbjörn Funcks bok, med den något otympliga titeln *Några idéer och tänkesätt på Carl Carlesons väg genom den tidiga frihetstiden*, behandlar en typ av litteratur som går under beteckningen essäpress. Den utgörs vanligen av veckoskrifter som enbart tar upp ett tema eller en fråga i varje nummer. Dessa upplevde en blomst-

ringstid under första hälften av 1700-talet. Sedan länge har *Sedolärande Mercurius* (1730–1731) ansetts vara den första i Sverige. Den var en moralisk tidskrift, som mest byggde på översättningar av utländskt material. Detta var inget ovanligt och ofta omformades det övertagna innehållet för att passa svenska förhållanden. *Mercurius* gavs ut av bröderna Carl och Edward Carleson (då ännu Carlsson) och föregick alltså den för eftervärlden mera kända *Then Sväniska Argus* (1732–1734) utgiven av Olof von Dalin.

Avsikten med Funcks studie är att ge en detaljerad redogörelse och tolkning av innehållet i några akademiska skrifter av Carl Carleson samt några av de politiskt vinklade numren av *Mercurius*. Funcks skrift kan te sig något opropotionerlig, då han som ledstjärna flera gånger framhåller ekonomihistorikern Lars Magnussons tes att eftervärldens bedömning av tidigare epokers ekonomiska debattörer och teoretiker bör ske med blicken vaken för språkbruk, samhällsklimat och idéliv, alltså en mycket tät besked. Detta har Funck verkligen gjort med besked. Här handlar det framför allt om naturrätten och den roll den spelat, då svenska skribenter och debattörer utvecklade sina tankar om merkantilismen under frihetstiden. Styrkan i hans bok ligger i de långa bakgrundsteckningar han ger, men det opropotionerliga ligger i deras tillämpning på det mycket blygsamma primära källmaterialet. En hel del i framställningen av olika kontexter kan ibland också tyckas irrelevanta för sammanhanget. Här ges alltså översikter över de moraliska veckoskrifterna med nedslag i England, Frankrike, Nordtyskland och Skandinavien fram till Carlesons *Mercurius*, där Funck med hjälp av de något ålderstigna auktoriteterna Karl Warburg, Otto Sylwan och Martin Lamm konstaterar att det är med *Mercurius* som en ny genre introduceras i Sverige. Vi får också en mycket noggrann redogörelse för Carlesons yttre barndomsmiljö vid Södermalmtorg i Stockholm med inslag av pestepi-