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# **The Rise of the Historical Critical Method in Sweden**

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by Dr. Rebecca G. S. Idestrom

## **Introduction**

**A**t the end of the nineteenth century, Swedish biblical scholarship was going through a transition period.<sup>1</sup> Biblical research was being challenged and re-evaluated as it was attempting to respond to the waves of new theories and ideas from the continent. Sweden was not isolated from the theological controversies and debates which plagued continental Europe and Great Britain in the nineteenth century. The emergence of the historical-critical method led to a theological crisis for many individuals at the University as well as in the Church community. Consequently, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the theologians were by and large preoccupied with the usefulness and implications of the new method. Their response to these questions in turn shaped and molded their own approach to biblical research.

The new period of transition within biblical scholarship in Sweden began in the 1870s and 1880s. During this time, the theological discussions and debates centred around the nature, inspiration, and authority of the Bible.<sup>2</sup> The relationship between faith and criticism became an important topic for consideration. By the 1890s, the modern critical approach was making serious inroads in certain theological circles and was debated at great length in the Faculty of Theology in Uppsala. However, the full acceptance of the modern historical-critical method did not come until the early twentieth century.

This paper will outline the response of certain scholars at Uppsala University to modern historical criticism and some of the factors which influenced their response.

## **The Rise of the Historical-Critical Method**

In 1887, Ludvig Bergström (1857–1932), a student at Uppsala University, made a study trip to Germany where he was

introduced to the historical-critical method.<sup>3</sup> When he returned to Sweden, he brought back a copy of Wellhausen and reported on his findings in the Uppsala Theological Society. The end result was that from 1888 onwards the modern critical method and Pentateuchal source criticism in particular were continuously debated in both the Theological Society and the Society for Semitic Languages in Uppsala.<sup>4</sup> According to Nathan Söderblom (who was also a student in Uppsala at the time, and later became professor there and then the archbishop of Sweden), it was Bergström who was really the first to introduce the subject in such a way that it began to be seriously considered and debated from then on. In a letter to Bergström, Söderblom described the debate over the historical-critical method in the Society, saying: "As you hear, things are moving forward, and you deserve a 'thank you' for giving the first push."<sup>5</sup>

However, the acceptance of the modern critical approach to biblical exegesis at Uppsala was a gradual and complex process and did not occur overnight. There were a number of bumps and hurdles along the way. In fact, many members of the Faculty in Uppsala reacted with suspicion and caution when they first encountered the new approach. For example, in a letter to his fiancée dated October 1889, Samuel Fries, another student in Uppsala who came to embrace the new method, described the Faculty members' response in general to the critical approach: "Wellhausen's name has a terrible sound among the theologians up here thanks to their ignorance. They think he is some kind of antichrist. As for me, I am of the conviction that he is one of the greatest geniuses of our century..."<sup>6</sup>

Although students like Bergström, Söderblom, and Fries embraced the approach and accelerated the pace of its eventual acceptance, bringing it to the forefront in theological debates in the late 1880's and 1890s, they were not the first in Uppsala to be aware of historical criticism or be influenced by it. In the first half of the nineteenth century, there were Swedish theologians who were beginning to adopt historical criticism in their biblical exegesis or at least who were very aware of German critical scholarship and wrote about it.<sup>7</sup> But it was in the second half of the nineteenth century when it began to make more serious impact in Sweden. In 1877 a student named Johan August Ekman (1845–1913) wrote a thesis entitled "Similarities between Isaiah chapters 40–66 and

Jeremiah, observed with regard to the question of the origin of the former,"<sup>8</sup> where he concluded that Second Isaiah was written in the sixth century.<sup>9</sup> In his study, Ekman used Jeremiah as a measuring stick for determining the date of Isaiah 40–66. He wrote the thesis in order to apply for the position of *docent* in exegesis in the Faculty. At the time, some of the Faculty members considered the thesis too controversial and 'unorthodox' and Ekman nearly did not get appointed. For example, one professor claimed that the thesis was destructive because it questioned the authenticity of the Scriptures.<sup>10</sup> However, his professor and mentor, Otto Myrberg, came to his defense and in the end he got the appointment and remained *docent* in exegesis for ten years. Although this was not the first time that an exilic date had been proposed for Second Isaiah in Sweden, it was the first time such controversy was raised over the issue. Consequently, some scholars have described Ekman's thesis as "a boundary stone between the older and newer direction within biblical research at Uppsala University."<sup>11</sup> Although this is probably a slight exaggeration, Ekman's work did reflect the beginnings of change in Old Testament exegesis in Sweden toward the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup>

Ekman's teacher, Otto Ferdinand Myrberg (1824–1899), who was the ordinary professor of biblical exegesis from 1866 to 1892 in Uppsala, and who had defended his student during the controversy, was not ignorant of the historical-critical method as some have supposed.<sup>13</sup> He was already aware of Pentateuchal criticism at least as early as 1863.<sup>14</sup> Professor Myrberg was a complex and somewhat controversial figure who paradoxically was both conservative and broad-minded at the same time. In general, Myrberg's response to modern historical criticism was largely negative but he did not completely reject all its findings. At times he even made certain concessions to it. In fact, his response was mixed and seemed to change, depending on which biblical text was under discussion. He was more conservative in his views on the Pentateuch than on the prophetic literature. This can be demonstrated by comparing his response to Pentateuchal criticism with his views on Second Isaiah and the book of Daniel. He accepted that Isaiah 40–66 came from the exilic period and in the case of Daniel, he neither adopted the traditional nor the modern understanding of the date and authorship of the book. Instead he argued for two authors, Daniel himself and someone from the Maccabean period.<sup>15</sup>

However, toward the end of his life, Myrberg seemed to become more conservative in his position and took a polemical, apologetic stance against biblical criticism in defense of the integrity of the Bible. He dubbed the modern historical-critical method as “newer hypercriticism” because for the most part he saw it as an extreme method which fragmented the biblical text and undermined its authority.<sup>16</sup> The periodical *Bibelforskaren* became the main vehicle for Myrberg’s attack on this new onslaught on the Bible.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, it is not surprising that when Bergström and Fries raised the topic at the Theological Society in Uppsala in 1888, Myrberg launched his main, full-scale attack against the approach. In response, Myrberg gave a lecture at the Theological Society on April 10, 1889, entitled “The present position of Pentateuchal criticism”<sup>18</sup> where Myrberg attempted to defend the essential Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Although Myrberg conceded that the Mosaic authorship was not as important as the historical veracity and trustworthiness of the account, he still believed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.<sup>19</sup> His contention with the so-called “negative Pentateuchal criticism” was that it “portrays the Pentateuch little more than an historical novel.”<sup>20</sup> The historical critics had gone too far.

In the years that followed, Myrberg continued to fight the historical-critical method through several publications.<sup>21</sup> Although these efforts as well as his very presence in the Faculty of Theology in Uppsala may have delayed its impact somewhat, ultimately his efforts were unsuccessful. His last generation of students were much more openminded to the changes of methodology in biblical exegesis.

One of these students was Samuel Fries (1867–1914). He became convinced of the validity and importance of the historical-critical approach<sup>22</sup> and began to promote the method within the Faculty of Theology through giving papers, debating the question with fellow students,<sup>23</sup> and finally publishing his own controversial textbook on the subject in 1894, a new *History of Israel*.<sup>24</sup> It had been Fries’ hope that the Faculty would accept his *History of Israel* as the new main textbook in the subject (replacing Kurtz) and that he would get financial help for its publication. But the Faculty rejected it and recommended the Danish scholar Frants Buhl’s *History of the Israelite People* instead as the standard textbook.<sup>25</sup> The Faculty members felt that Fries proposed too

many daring hypotheses and that his views would soon be out of date because historical criticism was still in a stage of flux and development. At times, his work covered up the divine revelation in Israel's history and therefore his work was not suitable for students of theology. Consequently, he got no financial backing since this would have been seen as if the Faculty supported Fries' work.<sup>26</sup> But the fact that it was Herman N. Almkvist, the professor in Semitic languages at Uppsala, who had encouraged Fries to write the book in the first place probably did not help the matter either. There was great dislike and animosity between Almkvist and the members of the Faculty of Theology.<sup>27</sup> It also did not help Fries' cause that Myrberg had written a scathing 40 page review of the book.<sup>28</sup> It was also partly Fries' own fault that he was not that well accepted within the Faculty of Theology. Fries' somewhat arrogant and ungracious attitude in general did not help the matter. But his attitude was motivated by his frustration. He believed that he was misunderstood and misrepresented. In a letter to professor Rudin he asked in exasperation: "Why should it be precisely me who has become the Faculty's 'enfant terrible'?"<sup>29</sup>

Besides expecting that his book would become a textbook in the Faculty, Fries had also been hoping to get a teaching job eventually in the Faculty. First he tried to become *docent* in exegesis but he did not get the position.<sup>30</sup> Professor Waldemar Rudin (1833–1921), the then professor in exegesis after Myrberg, hindered the appointment.<sup>31</sup> Then in 1898 Fries applied for the extraordinary chair in exegesis but did not get it; he was declared incompetent by the appointed judges, professor Rudin being one of them.<sup>32</sup> Fries was considered unsuitable to teach theological students training for the ministry in the Church because he was too uncritical about his own and others theories and he handled the biblical texts with "too little piety."<sup>33</sup> Fries tried two more times to get a teaching position, at Lund University in 1901 and then again at Uppsala University in 1902 but each time he failed. In the end, he never fulfilled his dream of an academic career and became a Lutheran priest in Stockholm instead. Part of his downfall was that Fries was very creative and innovative, which served to be both his strength and his weakness. In fact, he was much more creative and original than most of his colleagues at the time. But to his own misfortune, he was a little too daring and radical for the Faculty; he was ahead of his time, promoting his

views at a time when people still felt very threatened by the modern approach and many were not ready to accept his more radical and bold ideas. Even so, Fries' struggles played a role in promoting the historical-critical method in Sweden, even though Myrberg, Rudin, and others tried to hinder and minimize its effect.

Even though professor Waldemar Rudin had been instrumental in hindering Samuel Fries' appointment in the Faculty, he himself was a scholar in transition and not completely against the modern critical approach. As Myrberg's colleague and successor to the professorial chair in biblical exegesis, he exercised great influence on the Faculty and students as well as in the wider Church community as a whole. In fact, Rudin has been characterized as "one of the most original personalities in Swedish Church history."<sup>34</sup> He made an impact on many priests in training for ministry in the Church of Sweden.<sup>35</sup> His main contribution, however, was more in the area of spirituality rather than critical scholarship. He was motivated by pastoral concerns.

Although Rudin never fully embraced the historical-critical method, toward the end of his career, he gradually became more open to the approach and as a result he unwittingly played a significant role in preparing the way for its reception. In his study of the reception of the historical-critical method in Sweden, Sten Hidal considers Rudin as a central and key figure in the whole debate over the adoption of the newer method. In fact, Hidal credits Rudin's inaugural speech as professor in 1893 as the "actual turning point when it concerns the reception of this biblical perspective in Sweden."<sup>36</sup> In this address, Rudin used the concept of the incarnation as a way to understand the nature of God's word contained within the human shell of the biblical text. According to Hidal, this understanding prepared the way for the adoption of the historical-critical approach to interpretation. In this way, Rudin played an important role during this transition period in Swedish Old Testament scholarship.

On February 23, 1893, Rudin was installed as ordinary professor of exegesis at Uppsala University (after Myrberg retired in 1892), and on this occasion he made his famous and significant inaugural speech entitled *The divine revelation's form of abasement in the Holy Scriptures*.<sup>37</sup> Ernst Althin, a student at the time, recalled that word had spread via Rudin's son Daniel that his father would address the burning controversial issue of

biblical criticism in his inaugural lecture. Consequently the place was packed with people wanting to hear what this respected man of God would say about it. "The great lecture hall was filled to the last seat and the atmosphere was charged with expectation. Our revered teacher with the long grey locks went up to the podium and gave his sensational lecture."<sup>38</sup>

In the address Rudin emphasized the concept of incarnation as a helpful framework for understanding the nature of the Bible<sup>39</sup> and he described this phenomenon as "the law of abasement."<sup>40</sup> The inevitable outcome of this 'law' was that the divine word, the kernel, was revealed in a debased human shell, the written biblical text. Consequently, the possibility of finding mistakes and deficiencies in the Bible was also inevitable. However, Rudin pointed out that these imperfections concerned non-essentials, the human shell and not the kernel; the difficulties and mistakes were insignificant in comparison to the message.<sup>41</sup>

The response to Rudin's speech was mixed, both positive and negative.<sup>42</sup> For many of the students, it was a real encouragement to hear their revered and godly teacher address questions which were so important and relevant to them. "It cannot be too highly estimated that it was precisely Rudin, this saintly human being, who in this way dared to break through the barriers between faith and reason. It was invaluable help for the young."<sup>43</sup> The fact that Rudin, who was an important religious authority in the Church of Sweden, did not completely reject historical criticism was very significant and influential in the development that followed.<sup>44</sup> But there were also many who were completely astonished by Rudin's lecture and responded critically. Rudin was accused of having "taken modern biblical criticism under his protection and paved the way for it at the university and among the general public."<sup>45</sup> In a letter to Rudin from C. G. Nyström, Rudin was accused of destroying the Bible and people's faith in the Bible by his "negative speech."

The impressions I experienced from your presentation of the Scriptures' form of degradation was truly "degrading" and unpleasant in the highest degree... For you had so much to say about faults and mistakes that they did not receive any life sign of Scripture's glorious form...<sup>46</sup>

Nyström closed his letter by stating that such a topic should not be addressed to the general public but should only be reserved for the learned.

Rudin had not anticipated the effect that his speech would

have. It is fair to say that he had not clearly thought through the consequences and implications of the stance he took in the lecture. This became evident in the following years in his debate with Samuel Fries over Fries' *History of Israel*. In this work, Fries claimed that his theological perspective was the same as expounded by Rudin in his inaugural speech. Rudin then wanted to distance himself from those promoting the historical-critical method; he did not want to be associated with a more radical critical perspective which negated the divine revelation and the historicity of the Old Testament. His motivation for addressing this particular topic had been most of all shaped by his pastoral concern. It was really his concern for the students' spiritual struggles which made him grapple with these issues and try to find a helpful framework.<sup>47</sup> The fact that Rudin was not totally against the historical-critical method was important in preparing the way for its reception in Sweden. In this way, Rudin was more open to it than his colleague and predecessor Myrberg and consequently he played a more influential role in the process of events.

It was Rudin's successor, Erik Stave (1857–1932), however, who embraced the historical-critical method completely and implemented it fully in his teaching. When Erik Stave was appointed the ordinary professor in exegesis in 1900 at Uppsala University, this event signified the near end of the forces of resistance against the adoption and the legitimization of the historical-critical method in Old Testament exegesis in Sweden; within a few years the modern critical approach would dominate the Faculty of Theology in Uppsala and be victorious. Stave played a very significant role in this process, not only through his advocacy of the methodology within the university context but also through his attempts to popularize it to a wider audience.

While he was a student in Uppsala, Stave went on a study trip in 1890–91 which would have crucial importance for Stave's approach to Old Testament studies. During this year, he travelled to Germany and to the Middle East. It was during this study trip that Stave became convinced of the validity and importance of the historical-critical method. Stave came to this conviction especially through studying with the Danish scholar Frants Buhl in Leipzig, who became Stave's mentor and lifelong friend. Buhl was able to reconcile Christian faith with biblical criticism; he did not see them as necessarily opposed to each other or completely

irreconcilable.<sup>48</sup> This convinced Stave of the positive aspects and the necessity of the new historical-critical approach and consequently he tried to implement it in his studies of the Old Testament on his return to Uppsala University.

When he returned to Uppsala, he felt quite frustrated with the conservatism and the ignorance of the modern critical approach found among some of the Faculty members. He believed that Sweden was fifty years behind the times in theological education and he was very eager to change that circumstance and introduce the new perspective and methodology. However, when he became professor in exegesis in 1900, Stave felt more freedom to exercise his influence in a greater way over the Faculty members and students. Even then, there was some opposition from other Faculty members; Adolf Kolmodin and Hjalmar Danell were some of the more conservative theologians at the time.<sup>49</sup> With the appointment of like-minded theologians like Nathan Söderblom, who became professor in 1901, things got a little easier. However, it was not until Danell resigned as professor and became bishop of Skara in 1905 that the majority of the Faculty members were in favour of the modern critical approach.<sup>50</sup> The year 1905 is thus very significant in the history of Swedish biblical scholarship because it marks the end of the conservative stronghold in the Faculty of Theology at Uppsala.<sup>51</sup> By that time, Stave had more allies within the Faculty and there was more academic freedom to pursue the historical-critical method to biblical exegesis.

When Stave became professor, he made it his goal to promote the historical-critical method and as a result he made a number of speeches and wrote several articles on the positive aspects of the method in order to promote it within wider circles. At first, however, Stave received much opposition and criticism against his views and he suffered a lot personally through this opposition and mistrust which affected his health.<sup>52</sup> However, he was not one to let set-backs and discouragement keep him from fighting for what he firmly believed to be true. Consequently, Stave continued to advocate his views with fervour through his teaching, preaching, and writing throughout his life until his death in 1932. Stave's *Introduction to the Canonical Texts of the Old Testament* (1912) and *The History of Israel* (1916) became the standard textbooks in the subject at Uppsala University for many years.<sup>53</sup> Stave was fully convinced that the historical-critical

reading of the Old Testament was true and that it actually aided the Christian faith. Therefore, he felt that his calling in life was to promote it. Therein lies Stave's significance as an Old Testament scholar. Stave never contributed anything new and innovative to Old Testament scholarship in general. Rather, his significant contribution was to defend and promote the modern critical method in Sweden. Stave is remembered as one of the first main advocates of the modern critical approach in the Faculty of Theology at Uppsala University at the turn of the century.

## Conclusion

The acceptance of the modern historical-critical approach in Sweden was influenced by many factors, both internal and external. Not only was Old Testament scholarship in Sweden influenced by the larger philosophical and intellectual world (particularly that of Germany) but it was also shaped by the strong personalities who were involved, and by the institutional connection between the university and the Church in Sweden. Church politics often overlapped with and entered into departmental politics in the Faculty of Theology in Uppsala. There were political and personal conflicts within the Faculty which affected who got appointments, which in turn affected the way Swedish biblical scholarship developed. The fact that Samuel Fries was hindered from getting an academic appointment is one example.

There is also the question of timing; not just who were actually appointed but when they were. For example, Myrberg's presence in the Faculty for so many years was a deterrent to the advances of modern critical scholarship in Uppsala. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century, when Stave and Söderblom became professors, that the historical-critical method was promoted more fully in the Faculty.

Consequently, the acceptance of historical criticism at Uppsala University was a complex process, influenced by several factors; these factors played a role in what transpired and thus should be taken into account when considering the history of Old Testament criticism in Uppsala at the end of the nineteenth century.

## Notes

1. This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies, on May 28, 1996, at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario. It is based on the research I did for my doctoral thesis "Old Testament

Scholarship at Uppsala University, 1866–1922” at the University of Sheffield in England. The research for this article was supported by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Swedish Institute.

2. At the Uppsala Theological Society, they debated such topics as the nature of biblical inspiration, the relationship between the divine and human elements of divine revelation, biblical authority, etc. (16 April 1868, 4 March 1874 § 1 Teol Föreningens Prot 1863–1879 U 2325 a Uppsala Universitetsbibliotek (from now on UUB); 3 Oct 1883 § 5 Teol Föreningens Prot 1880–1884 U 2325 b UUB; 10 Nov 1886 § 2 Teol Föreningens Prot 1884–1889 U 2325 c UUB; 19 March 1890 § 3, 3 Feb 1892 § 7, 17 Feb 1892 § 4 Teol Föreningens Prot 1890–1906 U 2325 d UUB).
3. See Bergström’s diaries from the trip: *Dagböcker, brev och predikningar*, LBS 420A UUB.
4. See the minutes from these meetings: 22 Feb 1888 § 2, 27 March 1889 § 3, 10 April 1889 § 3, 13 Nov 1889 § 2 Teol Föreningens Prot 1884–1889 U 2325 c UUB; 3 Feb 1892, 2 March 1892 § 5, 24 Oct 1894 § 3 Teol Föreningens Prot 1890–1906 U 2325 d UUB, 4 April 1889 § 3, 24 Oct 1889 § 3, 24 April 1890 § 4, 9 Dec 1892 § 3, 11 Dec 1895 § 4, 13 May 1898 § 2, 12 Nov 1898 § 4 Protokollsbok för Föreningen för Semitiska Språk 1888–1907 U 2090 a UUB.
5. 11 April 1889 Letter to L. Bergström from N. Söderblom, NSS UUB.
6. 27 Oct 1889 Letter to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:24 UUB. In another letter, Fries described the Faculty members’ fear of the approach: “They are as it were afraid of everything connected with critical studies” (12 March 1889 Letter to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:24 UUB).
7. Lindeskog mentions Samuel Ödmann, Henrik Reuterdahl, Gustaf Knös, J. Thorsander in particular in his survey of exegetical theses in Sweden in the nineteenth century (Gösta Lindeskog, “Svenska Exegetiska Disputationer under 1800-talet,” *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift* 2, 17 [1941] 3–19). Reuterdahl often reviewed critical scholarship from Germany in the periodical *Theologisk Quartalskrift* (see *TQ* 1–3 [1828–1831]). Writing in 1837, he claimed that Sweden was afraid of German exegesis: “For the newer German exegesis there is still great fear” (Henrik Reuterdahl, *Inledning till Theologien* [Lund: Gleerups Förlag, 1837] 270).
8. “Likheter mellan Esaias kapp. 40–66 och Jeremias, betraktade med hänsyn till frågan om de förras ursprung,” *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift* (1877) 1–127.
9. This was not the first time that the exilic dating of Second Isaiah had been proposed in Sweden. The Uppsala theologian and philologist Gustaf Knös advocated this theory in the 1820s. Professor H. G. Lindgren also defended this position in 1843. However, it was the first time that controversy was raised over this proposal in Sweden. In a letter, Rudin expressed the strife within the Faculty: “In the Faculty there has been much bickering and strife.” Ekman was being appointed “with reservation” from certain members (16 June 1877 Letter to F. Arvedson from Rudin, FAS G7:bc UUB; emphasis by Rudin); Sten Hådal, *Bibeltro och bibelkritik: Studier kring den historisk-kritiska bibelsynens genombrott i Sverige 1877–1910 med särskild hänsyn till Gamla testamentet* (Lund: Skeab Verbum, 1979) 56, 62–64.
10. Torén could not agree with everything in Ekman’s thesis, but his reservations did not hinder him in voting in favour of appointing Ekman. Hultkrantz felt that the thesis had serious faults but since it had passed the defense and they

needed a *docent*, he was also in favour of Ekman. Cornelius was the most condemning however. He stated that it was “a serious thing to contest the genuineness of any part of the Holy Scriptures.” Since the thesis had a “destructive tendency, I cannot see it as desirable or beneficial that its author becomes a teacher in the Faculty of Theology.” Thus, he voted against Ekman being appointed (31 May 1877 Teol Fak Prot 1876–81 AI:14 UUB; Herman Lundström, *Årkebiskopen Doktor Johan August Ekman* (Uppsala: J. A. Lindblads Förlag, 1915) 74–85).

11. Hjalmar Lindroth, “Ekman, Johan August,” *Svenskt Bibliografiskt Lexikon* 13 (1950) 8. Lundström claims that *methodologically* it was a boundary stone (Lundström, *Årkebiskopen*, 70; emphasis by me). Hidal sees Ekman’s thesis as introducing the first phase of the emergence of the historical-critical method in Old Testament exegesis in Sweden and consequently he begins his study with the year 1877. Hidal limits his study to the period of 1877 to 1910 (Hidal, *Bibeltro*, 10).
12. Hidal, *Bibeltro*, 62–4; 225, fn 2. Linder claims that “the first draft of wind of the new documentary research within exegesis reached Uppsala with the 1877 thesis of the later archbishop J. A. Ekman...” (Sven Linder, “Domprost Erik Stave: En minnestekning,” *Svensk Exegetisk årsbok* 5 [1940] 231). The debate continued in the following year when Ekman led a discussion over the exilic dating of Isaiah 40–66 at the Theological Society (23 Oct 1878 § 2 Teol Föreningens Prot 1863–79 U 2325 a UUB).
13. His students Nathan Söderblom and Samuel Fries claimed that Myrberg was very ignorant and naive.
14. In his essay on the divine names of Elohim and Jehovah, Myrberg mentioned the “bold conclusions” of the documentary hypothesis in a long footnote (O. F. Myrberg, *Bidrag till en biblisk teologi* (vol 2; Stockholm: E. T. Bergegren, 1863) 73–75). Since in the same footnote, Myrberg discussed Hengstenberg’s interpretation of the divine names, it is possible to surmise that he was influenced by Hengstenberg’s negative evaluation of the documentary hypothesis.
15. O. F. Myrberg, *Åro Daniels Profetior ett verk af den Makkabeiska tiden. Ett bidrag till Danielsfrågan* (Stockholm: Z. Haeggströms Förlagsexpedition, 1896) 27. According to Myrberg, Chapters 1–7, 9 and 12 originates from Daniel whereas chapters 10–11 were composed in the Maccabean period. Chapter 8 serves as a transition chapter between the two sections. Chapters 10–11 are historically bound to the time of the religious persecutions of the Israelites by Antiochus Epiphanes in the second century. Therefore this section is not real prophecy but rather “a commentary on Daniel’s prophecy interwoven with some historical facts...” (ibid., 21). Chapter 12 is by Daniel but contains two interpolations, 12:5–7 and 12:11–12 added later. The final shaping of the book took place in the Maccabean period (ibid., 24–26, 30–31).
16. Myrberg used this term as early as 1865 in his article on Second Peter (O. F. Myrberg, “Om Aposteln Petrus och den äldsta kyrkans falska gnosis,” *Uppsala Universitets årsskrift* [1865] 1–2). See also O. F. Myrberg, “Ett yttrande i Pentateukfrågan,” *Bibelforskaren* 6 (1889) 113; idem, “En ny lärobok i Israels Historia,” *Bibelforskaren* 12 (1895) 157.
17. A number of articles appeared on the subject in the periodical from 1889 onwards, written by Myrberg and others.
18. 10 April 1889 § 3 Teol Föreningens Prot 1884–89 U 2325 c UUB. This lecture was later published in *Bibelforskaren* under the title “A word concerning the question of the Pentateuch” (“Ett yttrande i Pentateukfrågan,” in *Bibelforskaren* 6 (1889) 108–116).

19. *Ibid.*, 108–109.
20. *Ibid.*, 111.
21. Besides the articles already mentioned, Myrberg published several critical evaluations of the historical-critical approach, including other conservative theologians' response to the method in his periodical *Bibelforskaren*.
22. Fries himself began to grapple with the issues related with the historical-critical method in 1888 as revealed in his letters to his fiancée. Although he may have already been exposed to the burning topic when Ludvig Bergström first introduced it at the Theological Society in Uppsala on the 22nd of February 1888 (I do not know whether he was present but the likelihood of this is very high, since Fries usually attended most of the meetings), but by the 30th of September 1888 he was definitely researching the subject. At this time he mentions Wellhausen and also C. E. Johansson's work on *The Holy Scriptures and the negative criticism* (which came out in 1886) and states that he has long been interested in the questions relating to the Jehovah cult in Israel in pre-exilic times. But Fries had not yet fully embraced the method as a letter dated 14 Oct 1888 reveals. At that time he was studying the Dutch scholar Abraham Kuenen's *Volksreligion und Weltreligion*: "He belongs to the negative criticism and is not at all to my taste" (14 Oct 1888 Letter to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:24 UUB). In the same letter, Fries mentions that he really wants to read Wellhausen's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (*sic*) but has not been able to find it at the Uppsala University library. But by March 1889 Fries seems to have fully embraced the historical-critical method and disdains the paranoia of Wellhausen and historical criticism among his fellow students and teachers in the Faculty (30 Sept 1888, 12 March 1889, 1 April 1889, 8 April 1889, Letters to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:24 UUB).
23. Samuel Fries gave two papers on Wellhausen and Pentateuchal Criticism at the Society for Semitic Languages in Uppsala (24 Oct 1889 § 3, 24 April 1890 § 4, Protokollsbok för Föreningen för Semitiska Språk 1888–1907 U 2090 a UUB). The minutes also reveal that he always joined into the lively debates on the subject at the Theological Society and at the Society for Semitic Languages and even reviewed books on historical criticism for both the Societies.
24. S. A. Fries, *Israels Historia* (Upsala: W. Schultz, 1894). Fries had been very nervous and worried about writing this book because he expected the conservative Faculty members to take offence and it could create a scandal. He fluctuated between despair and hope in his feelings and was not at all certain that he should publish it. Yet at the same time he was so convinced of its rightness and importance that he felt compelled to do it. When professor Almkvist, the professor of Semitic languages in Uppsala, first suggested the idea to him, Fries believed that it must be God's will and leading: "I have as it were a feeling; *Now or never!* The book *must* be written, it is *needed*, and, as Almkvist said, it is not always one has the opportunity to do something *useful* in this world" (Nov [?] [no exact date given], 1892 Letter to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:25 UUB; emphasis by Fries). See also 2 Dec 1892, 9 Dec 1892 Letters to F. Fehr from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:121 UUB. But some of his friends like Nils Göransson also tried to discourage him from writing it for fear of the effect it could have. And in the end, these warnings came true and the work was not at all well received (29 Nov 1892, Letter to S. A. Fries from N. J. Göransson, SAFS T3k:7 UUB).
25. Frants Buhl, *Det israelittiske folks historie* (Kjbenhavn: Gyldendanske bog-handels forlag, F. Høgel & sn), 1893.

26. 10 Feb 1894 § 5 Teol Fak Prot 1894–98 AI:17 UUB. Fries was told by the Dean of the Cathedral (“Domprostén”) that word was spreading within the Faculty that he had denied the divine revelation of Scripture. Fries denied that he had (11 March 1894, Letter to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:26 UUB).
27. In a letter to Fredrik Fehr, Fries stated that Almqvist believed that the Faculty would have accepted Fries’ *History of Israel* if Almqvist had not been the one who encouraged him in the first place (4 March 1894, Letter to F. Fehr from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:22 UUB).
28. Myrberg, “En ny lärobok i Israels Historia,” *Bibelforskaren* 12 (1895) 157–196. For Myrberg, Fries represented the modern hypercritics who cut the Bible into little pieces and then reassembled the fragments into a new and different picture of the biblical story after their own whim and fancy. He prayed that God would preserve them from the rewriting of history based on such scholarship. Fries was blindly and uncritically following his German mentors in his theories.
29. 13 July 1895 (rewritten on the 15 July) letter to W. Rudin from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:121 UUB.
30. Fries was really confident that he would get the position: “To refuse to let me become *docent* after I have completed the theological licentiate or the doctorate naturally is completely impossible.” His confidence was misplaced (no date, prob Feb 1894, Letter to Anna Fries from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:26 UUB).
31. In his correspondence, he made the claim that it was Rudin who had stopped him from becoming *docent* (13 July 1895, Letter to W. Rudin from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:121 UUB; 7 Dec 1894, Letter to N. Söderblom from S. A. Fries, SAFS T3k:23 UUB).
32. *Sakkunniges utlåtande angående sökandene till det lediga e. o. professorsambetet i exegetik vid Upsala Universitet jemte vederbörandes meritförteckningar* (Upsala: Edv. Berlings Boktryckeri, 1898); *Handlingar angående e. o. professuren i exegetik vid Upsala universitet år 1898* (Teologiska Fakultetens utlåtande; Upsala: Edv. Berlings Boktryckeri, 1898). Erik Stave got the position instead.
33. *Sakkunniges utlåtande*, 6–12. They stated that a teacher of theology must be free from prejudice in his scholarship, to have a firm belief in the divine revelation of the whole Bible and to handle carefully and piously the modern critical questions. They did not believe that Fries conformed to these stipulations (*ibid.*, 12).
34. Gösta Wrede, Review of *Bibeltro och bibelkritik*, by Sten Hidal, *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift* 56/4 (1980) 178.
35. Martin Lindström, “Rudin, Erik Georg Waldemar Napoleon,” *Svensk Uppslagsbok* 24 (1957) 652; Clemens åhfeldt, “Några ord om W. Rudins homiletiska författarskap,” *Bibelforskaren* 34 (1917) 1–2.
36. Hidal, *Bibeltro*, 77.
37. Later he repeated the speech on the 27th of April 1893 at the Swedish Bible Society’s annual meeting (W. Rudin, *Den gudomliga uppenbarelseens förnedringsgestalt i den heliga skrift* (Tal vid Svenska Bibelsällskapet Allmänna årssammankomst den 27 april 1893; Upsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1893); *idem. Den gudomliga uppenbarelseens förnedringsgestalt i den heliga skrift* (Uppsatser i teologiska och kyrkliga ämnen 7; Upsala: W. Schultz, 1893).

38. Ernst Althin, *Från Rudin Inledning till profetian i Gamla testamentet 1884 till Lindblom Profetismen i Israel 1934* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerups Förlag, 1936) 29.
39. Hidal points out that this was not the first time in Sweden that the incarnational form of abasement was applied to the Scriptures. Both Ullman (in 1886) and von Schéele (in 1883) described the Scriptures in this way (Hidal, *Bibeltro*, 82).
40. "föredningslagen." Alternative translations are: "law of debasement", "law of degradation" or "law of humiliation."
41. Rudin, *Uppenbarelsens föredningsgestalt*, 6, 10.
42. Hidal, *Bibeltro*, 79, 84. In a letter to Fredrik Fehr, Samuel Fries described the mixed reactions: "The content of professor Rudin's inaugural lecture was so remarkable that we 'critics' can feel completely content. Whether he will demonstrate the same liberalism in the concrete as in the abstract only the future will tell. As a matter of fact, several of the theologians are angered over Rudin's openness and honesty and many wives here in the city are seriously distressed over everything 'radical' they got to hear" (1 March 1893, Letter to F. Fehr from Fries, SAFS T3k:121 UUB).
43. Althin, *Från Rudin Inledning*, 29.
44. E. Rodhe, *Svenska kyrkan omkring sekelskiftet* (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1930) 120.
45. W. Lönnbeck, "Notiser," *Facklan* 3/4 (April 1904) 155.
46. 13 Feb 1894 Letter to Rudin from C. G. Nyström, WRS T1ge:11 UUB.
47. Rudin, *Uppenbarelsens föredningsgestalt* (Uppsatser 6), i-ii; Nathan Söderblom, *Waldemar Rudins inre liv* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt, 1923) 132.
48. Hidal, *Bibeltro*, 137.
49. Alf Tergel, *Ungkyrkomännen, arbetsfrågan och nationalismen 1901-1911* (Stockholm: Verbum, 1969) 25-28; K. A. Lundqvist, *Organisation och bekännelse: Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsen och Svenska kyrkan 1890-1911* (Uppsala: Klippan, 1977) 224-25. Danell was professor in dogmatics, and Kolmodin became extraordinary professor in exegesis in 1903 and ordinary professor in 1909. Kolmodin specialized in the New Testament.
50. Einar Billing became Danell's successor to the chair in 1908.
51. Tergel, *Ungkyrkomännen*, 38-40.
52. During the winter of 1901-02, Stave experienced very poor health. In letters to his friend Ekström, Stave attributed his bad nerves and ill health to all the stress from the 'battle' and 'storm' which blew up around his speech at Läckö. However, Stave said that he was willing to suffer if it helped the cause of truth. "And if my efforts for a more understandable and more correct conception of our position on the Bible can gain more success through what has happened, then I am glad. Every real step forward is not only gained through diligence but above all through suffering" (10 Dec 1901, 18 Dec 1901, 9 Jan 1902, 25 May 1902, 16 Sept 1902, Letters to G. Ekström from Stave, GES UUB).
53. E. Stave, *Inledning till Gamla Testamentets kanoniska skrifter* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1912); idem, *Israels historia* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1916).