

—Ann Öhrberg—The Power of Genre
and the Gendered Archive—

Crucial to the task of re-materializing the multiple contingencies of history writing is the project of historicizing the emergence of state and local archives; interrogating how archive logics work, what subjects they produce, and which they silence in specific historical and cultural contexts [...].¹



We know that archives produce history and that they themselves have a history. The last few decades of research have in different ways demonstrated the importance of analysing archival structures, or of considering the sheer materiality of archives and the mechanisms produced by them when it comes to historiography. The appeal made in the quotation above could therefore seem somewhat unnecessary, as scholars today are seldom naive when it comes to the importance of these facts. On the other hand, the archival mechanisms behind them are still in place, and in many ways unexplored. Archives often contribute to the fact that women or other marginalized groups to a large degree are absent from the historiography of ‘Grand History’, and in this chapter some of the consequences of archival structures and how they are formed by, and generate, gender-blindness are discussed with a starting point in the filing of texts written by women in eighteenth-century religious archives. However, the discussions also concern how documents in the archives can reveal resistance against the notions behind these structures.

The chapter is made up of examples from the so-called Moravian movement, one of many evangelical revivals in Early Modern time that spread from Germany across Europe and its colonies. Wherever they went the Moravians formed archival collections that in

some cases also were institutionalised as archives towards the second half of the eighteenth century.² These were an important part of the Moravian earthly universe, as the Moravians during the eighteenth century created a public space open to all members of the Moravian church; this space also connected to a more general public sphere in different ways through a variety of communicative means and mediations of their message, for example in print or via oral preaching.³

Archives, gender and genre

To understand archival practices such as those developed in the eighteenth century by the mobile, transnational, and sometimes-persecuted Moravians, it can be fruitful to see archives as processes, not as static, monolithic institutions. For the purpose of this chapter the term ‘archival collection’ is therefore introduced to supplement the term ‘archive’; the former term points towards collections that are assembled with archival ambitions. Thus, the multifaceted significance and shifting demarcations are captured between the often unorderedly early modern collection, as ‘an archive in being’, and an archive understood as a (seemingly) more fixed entity where documents are neatly filed and stored in a dedicated room or building, entitled ‘archive’.⁴ It also emphasises the different status of the eighteenth-century Moravian archival collections. For example, in Sweden the Moravians were thoroughly monitored by the authorities and therefore ‘the archive’ during the first decades after the movement had reached Sweden in the 1730s, up until about 1760, took the form of manuscript collections (of letters, handwritten collections of songs etc.) which, together with Moravian devotional literature, were in the possession of different families.⁵

To open up the discussion on archives with regard to gender and power, the orders of archives are seen in the following as effects of what Eric Ketelaar calls the processes of “archivalization”. Archivalization precedes archivization, and it is a process that is socially and culturally determined, when conscious or unconscious choices are made concerning what is selected for archiving.⁶ When a document (or artefact) is chosen to be archived it is classified with the purpose of being filed correctly, and this is the perhaps most important fundamental aspect that makes up the order of archives. I argue that two intertwined factors are a part of the processes of archivalization: firstly, gender and, secondly, notions of “genre”. Both factors are to be seen as crucial when it comes to how archives create gendered history writing. Here I would like to introduce the notion of genre in connection with the process of archivalization, as genre is included in the process when choosing, classifying and filing a document. I claim that this is especially relevant when it comes to the Moravian archives as they contain not only legal documents, architectural drawings, accounts, lists of members and other formal documents, but also *Lebensläufe* (memoirs), personal diaries, letters, songs and theological texts and so forth, of which many are attributed to individual authors.

When discussing genre, one has to consider the content of a filed document, and this kind of knowledge about the material that is archived has for obvious reasons always been essential for archivists. For example, Cornelia Vismann discusses a new form of education for archivists that emerged during the early modern era in the German-speaking countries in connection to archival practices: “state practice” (*Staatspraxis*) then became a university subject, and entailed the ability to handle documents according to rhetoric, style and the matter at hand. The students not only learned how to

handle files, via binding, stapling, and storing, but also additionally were trained in how to read them. During the eighteenth century, Vismann continues, the art of summarizing records became a new subject for law students, as the sheer volume of files required this skill.⁷ For the purpose of ordering and summarizing documents one had to have some idea of the content – it was, and still is, the foundation for classification.

In this chapter this knowledge is understood as entangled with notions of genre. Genre as a concept is therefore not comprehended as an objective tool for classification, or as a static feature that lies exclusively in the content of a document/text, i. e. as a positivistic generic characteristic that offers means for classification of documents in an archive. Instead, genre is understood in a broad contextualized and historicised sense, that is, as a mutable and historically situated aspect of a text and the media that carries it. This view enhances the notion of genre as an aspect that directs the way in which we perceive and read a text in connection with discursively formed prevailing ideas on for example style, aesthetic ideals, what an author is and – in the case of the Moravian archives – religious beliefs. The process also includes different ideological apprehensions such as those regarding gender. Another way of putting it is that genre is in the eye of the beholders, as the readers or recipients read and understand a text on the basis of subjective, prevailing, historically variable, notions of taste, history, memory, identity, nation and so forth. Consequently, one could add that how documents in an archive are ordered according to genre becomes a process that in itself creates knowledge and therefore is also embedded in power dynamics.

Alastair Fowler recognises, in his influential study on genre (*Kinds of Literature*, 1982), genres as something historically situated and

changeable, and subjects of interpretation, building on the recipients' or readers' competence and notions of them.⁸ One way of analysing these aspects is to understand the way genre is communicated and perceived through *paratexts*. With the purpose of analysing how literary texts are conceived in connection with other texts surrounding it, Gérard Genette introduced the term *paratext* in his classical *Seuils (Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation)*. The paratext includes the so-called *peritext*, which guides the reading beforehand through mediated signals as to how to conceive the text, as well as the *epitext*, mediated information that comes 'after' a text.⁹ The paratext directs the attention of the reader for example when it comes to constructions of "genre".¹⁰ Genette's approach to genre yields the possibility of enhancing the fact that genre is historically changeable and something that is communicated, interpreted through, and entangled with, materiality. However, Genette's examples concerns printed, fictional and/or poetical literature. Transferred to the universe of files and handwritten, sometimes bureaucratic, documents that make up an archive, I would like to draw attention to such features as transcriptions, scribbles in the marginal, how the files are ordered and catalogued, and the structure of archives and so forth. Although certainly not a text in the way Genette would define it, this also would include the buildings, rooms, coffins, boxes or shelves in which an archive is stored, and additionally it points towards the way an archive is set in a specific, geopolitically charged place. My focus is how the archival order, and an archive itself, becomes gendered through all of these features and how they also are intertwined with notions of genre, i. e. where a document is filed based on perceived knowledge of its content.

Classification and ordering can make a file and the text it carries visible, just as it can hide it away. In the following I discuss how

texts written by women are lost in archivalization and thus in archivization – and I argue that in the end this had consequences when it came to the writing of Moravian history. However, I also demonstrate how these texts, from another aspect, can nevertheless be interpreted as means for authorization, and how they in different ways offer resistance against the way they are filed. The texts date from the mid-eighteenth century and are found in the Archives of the Moravian Church of the British Province (London) and the Swedish archive Evangeliska Brödräfsamlingens arkiv (Stockholm), and are discussed with attention to the way they are archived and imbedded in archival paratexts, in relation to their content. Moreover, the examples concern texts written by women, and filed in the archives under the heading “memoirs” (Swedish *levnadslopp*, German *Lebenslauf*). In focus are three interrelated questions: How can the importance of genre be understood in connection with archival practices and archive materiality in these specific examples? Are there any discrepancies between content and the way the texts are classified? How is gender produced through these practices?

The Moravian archives

”Ich bin ein ganz aparter Freund von Documenten” (I am a very special friend of documents.). The quotation is taken from the first leader and leading theologian of the Moravian Church: the German count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf.¹¹ From the beginning of the movement, in the late 1720s, he initiated the collecting and ordering of documents, and in the mid 1730s an archivist was appointed; at this time, it is assumed that the archival collection was stored in Zinzendorf’s own estate. The safety of this archival collection was a problem; in 1742 the documents were kept in two chests so that

they could be hastily transported if necessary. (As the collection was in constant movement, when it followed Zinzendorf on his travels, it caused problems for the persons responsible for its preservation and order.) This first Moravian archival collection toured to various places during the eighteenth century, before it became institutionalised as the so-called Unitätsarchiv that was founded in Herrnhut in the early nineteenth century. Here it is held still today, contained in the same building since 1890.¹² During its first 240 years of existence the keepers of this archival collection and later on archive were men – an interesting fact to bear in mind considering the egalitarian ideals that characterised the movement.¹³ Alongside the main archival collection funded by Zinzendorf, others were established as the movement spread throughout the world.

The Moravian archival practices sprang from a combination of practical necessity and religious belief. As mission and travelling lay in the very core of the movement the Moravians needed to uphold communication networks, and in addition they had to secure this infrastructure, as the movement was persecuted or monitored in many countries. Texts that were seen as important for the movement as a whole were copied and sent to the different congregations, and to a large degree to the archival mother ship: the Zinzendorf archival collection.¹⁴ Therefore there is today a large collection that concerns Sweden and Swedes in the main Moravian archive, the Unitätsarchiv in Herrnhut, as well as vast collections from other parts of the world.

Some main reasons for the Moravian and Zinzendorf’s keen interest in archiving can be identified. The first is connected to Zinzendorf himself: he was a nobleman from the German countries, which meant that the family already kept a *Hausarchiv*, but he also was trained in legal matters before he became the leader of the

Moravian Church, and therefore had professional knowledge of archiving. Furthermore, Zinzendorf was a former pupil of Herman Francke in the Pietist school in Halle and had been inspired by the way in which the Halle Pietists organised their communicative base through an archive in combination with a print shop and a library.¹⁵ Other reasons had to do with the infrastructure of the Moravian community, which as mentioned was transnational and therefore needed to create internal and stable communicative structures for the purpose of assembling, storing and forwarding information. The movement also had the purpose of spreading the message to wider circles of presumed followers all over the world. Lastly, the archival practices were loaded with religious importance, as the texts in the archives became one of the main sources when creating and maintaining faith. Another quotation from Zinzendorf can illuminate this understanding of the archive as being loaded with spiritual meaning, when the notion of archive shifts to become a bridge between this world and the next: “so ist eine jede Gemeinde so ein Archivgen, wo man die Acten und records von Gottes Sinn und Reden nach schlagen kan.”¹⁶ The congregations themselves here becomes archives, which file and record God’s words and will. One aspect of this is also that during the eighteenth century the Moravians believed that God could act through the different members and that their words therefore could even constitute additions to the Christian canon.¹⁷ Every single sermon, *Lebenslauf*, song or letter could have enormous religious significance and was therefore worth saving. In addition, the early Moravian movement was characterised by experience, not intellectual distance. Paul Peucker formulates the consequences of this for the eighteenth-century Moravian archives: “Instead of writing theological books, they [the Moravians] kept archives.”¹⁸ From a gender perspective, it is nota-

ble that these kinds of assimilated experiences and wordings could come from the female members.¹⁹ The archives were in this respect soul catchers that aimed not only at collecting administrative data on the congregation, or of its members – the outer persons, but also on the inner persons. All this additionally pointed towards posterity and the writing of history, when the Moravians aimed at writing themselves into Christian history as legitimate God’s children.²⁰

During the eighteenth century the Moravian archival collections had a steady inflow of documents, and as indicated many of them bear witness to the movement’s organisational and missionizing ambitions, and the Moravian sisters and brothers produced vast amounts of texts. Consequently, the archival collections came to contain religious songs, occasional poetry, sermons, *Lebenslauf*, theological texts, travel journals, letters, accounts, individual and congregational diaries and so on. In the Moravian archives of today there are many documents produced by or concerning women, and several traces of women in the archives bear witness to the significance of their activity during the eighteenth century. The main reason was that women in the Moravian movement, as mentioned, had comparatively privileged positions during the eighteenth century due to the egalitarian ideals that guided the movement as a consequence of its radical interpretations of the Lutheran precept of vocation. Another important factor was the thought that women had the ability to express their conversions in sincere and emotionally charged wordings. Moravian women therefore held commissions of trust and were missionaries or preachers (although only for other women), and texts by female authors were to a high degree incorporated in the Moravian canon of texts (especially regarding *Lebensläufe* and songs) and thus collected in the archives.²¹ However, the equality between men and women within the Moravian

movement had its limitations, and the idea of female participation and equality was not driven too far, as the examples elaborated on here will demonstrate.

The filing of *Lebenslauf*

The examples analysed concerns texts filed as *Lebenslauf* (German), memoirs (English) or *levnadslopp* (Swedish). These *Lebensläufe*, which represent a large quantity in the archives, are filed in the same way in the Moravian archives, regardless of where these archives are situated in the world, under headings that mark that these texts contains personal accounts, or life-stories, with a more or less large section devoted to the conversion and other spiritual aspects.

The practice of producing *Lebenslauf* for each member was a heritage from earlier Pietism. It was introduced among the Moravians in the middle of the eighteenth century, and the purpose of writing (or in some cases dictate) a *Lebenslauf* was that it should be read aloud at the funeral.²² The *Lebenslauf* accounts were also among the texts that could be circulated within the movement. In addition, we find some copies of *Lebensläufe* re-produced in Congregation diaries, as the text was read aloud not only at the funeral, but also sometimes during a gathering to mark the memory and the loss of a departed sister or brother. These multi-functional texts could also be read as devotional literature, as they reflected the process of salvation for the individual soul, or the *Lebenslauf* could be used as an account of a positive *exemplum* (a role model). Furthermore, they served as important sources when the Moravian historiographers began writing the history of the movement towards the latter part of the eighteenth century. Memoirs written by Moravian women have therefore been discussed from many aspects in earlier research: as

religious literature, private confessions, as testimonies of women's lives, and as pedagogical texts.²³ Here, however, the texts at hand are analysed from the perspective of history writing, that is, how the *Lebenslauf* could be used to *write* history.²⁴ (This aspect is of course also visible in *Lebensläufe* written by male authors. However, the relational aspect of gender that could be illuminated through a comparison between male and female authors cannot be elaborated on within the scope of this chapter.)

The examples concern firstly an American sister and secondly a Swedish sister, and the texts are filed in the catalogue over *Lebenslauf* in the Moravian archives of London ("Memoirs") and Stockholm ("*Levnadslopp*") respectively. The American Martha Nyberg, nee Bryant (1724?–1803) was born in America, but of French-Huguenot descentance, and she married the Swedish priest Lars Thortensson Nyberg (1720–1792) in 1745. Martha Nyberg and her husband went on numerous travels, and the couple were active in many congregations to which they were sent, first in America, then in Great Britain.²⁵ Additionally a Swedish sister is introduced. Ulrika Eleonora Strömfelt (1722–1798) was a noble woman from one of the pioneering Moravian households in Sweden: the Strömfelt family. Together with three of her familial sisters, Ulrika Eleonora Strömfelt became very active in the Swedish movement, especially during its first formative years from 1738 until the 1760s. These four sisters are often referred to collectively as the Strömfelt sisters in sources and Church history; they never married but instead they devoted their whole lives to their religious calling.²⁶ Both Strömfelt and Nyberg were active in the Moravian international community in different ways, and they both knew leading members of the movement, including Zinzendorf. Through the *Stammbuch* (personal guestbook) of Ulrika Eleonora Strömfelt, we also know that their paths crossed

when the Nybergs came to Sweden in the 1770s and were invited in 1776 to stay at an estate owned by the Strömfelt sisters.²⁷

When it comes to *Lebensläufe* concerning female married Moravians, they are – as far as I have seen – filed under their name as married with no cross-references to maiden name, and the same goes for Nyberg’s memoirs, and other documents concerning her; nothing can be found if one searches for her maiden name in the catalogues.²⁸ Martha Nyberg’s memoirs found in the London archive are not written in her own hand, and an annotation at the top of the first page states that it is a copy that belonged to one A. C. Hasse; a heading refers to his “Book of Materials for Memoirs” with an subtitle stating: “Some few remarkable Events in the Course of Life of Martha Nyberg”. This is apparently a copy of the original manuscript.²⁹ Hasse, or Hassé was a nineteenth-century Moravian bishop and a historiographer of the English Moravian church. There are some corrections of spelling in the manuscript, and a few marginal annotations, written in the same hand as in the rest of the text, some of them clarifying facts (such as names, dates and places), some giving references to appropriate Bible passages or other comments. It is unclear whether these marginal annotations were written by Hassé or by Nyberg herself. The transcription is not a fair copy, but nevertheless it has probably been incorporated in more than one archive, or collection, although the original has been lost, or simply purged from the London archive after the nineteenth century.

One probable explanation is that this Moravian collection had been cleansed at one time or another. Like many other archival collections funded during the early modern era, ambitious archivists cleansed the Moravian collections in the 1760s, and the cleansing continued into the early nineteenth century when the central Moravian archives were established in a more organised way. A

main reason for this purging was an ambition to erase a part of the movement’s history, when language and practices used during the mid century were taken too far in the eyes of a later generation Moravians during the so-called “Sifting Time”.³⁰ Ambitious archivists even made changes in the filed documents to erase information, for the purpose of laying the foundation for a new, adjusted history writing.³¹ However, it should be noted that this process also coincides with general tendencies in the Western world when archives were ordered in accordance with scientific, historiographical, and male-gendered new principles that came to rule processes of archivization.³²

Furthermore, Nyberg’s text has not been found in any of the major archives (in America and Germany), which could indicate that it is a text of less interest to the movement at large. However, her memoirs were obviously assigned some importance by Hassé, perhaps as they reveal facts about the Moravian history in Great Britain. Unfortunately, a pamphlet written by him on the Moravian history in England ends in 1742 does not include the Nyberg couple, as their activity in congregations in Great Britain began in the 1750s.³³

One very brief part of Martha Nyberg’s memoirs is dedicated to the subject of salvation and faith. But the main part regards her travels, her meetings with influential Moravians, and the state of affairs in the congregations where she and her husband are ordered to work. Through her memoirs we can extract a story that enhances her husband’s contributions to the movement, but not least this autobiography stresses her own importance for Moravianism from the very first years as an adherent, and later as a member.

When Martha Nyberg is 21 years old, the memoir tells us, she spends time with Zinzendorf and his daughter, who then are visiting America: “In the year 1741 Count Zinzendorff & the Benigna [his

daughter, married de Watteville] came to New York. They spoke often with five of us in particular”.³⁴ Martha Nyberg marks here that she has a special position, as she has been chosen to be one of a close circle that was to receive the Moravian message by none other than Zinzendorf himself. Further on, after her marriage, the memoirs tell a story of a successful and diligent couple, and how she and her husband serve the movement. Wherever this couple goes faith prospers, and matters are organized in efficient ways.

In 1750 the couple was summoned by Zinzendorf to go from Bethlehem, America to London, the purpose being to meet him there. A laborious crossing of the Atlantic detained them, and they instead ended up going to Herrnhut in Germany, to meet influential and governing members of the congregation. Here the Nybergs spent a year training for their task of establishing or consolidating congregations in England, Wales and Ireland: “we had an opportunity of improving our knowledge of the affairs of the Kingdom of our Lord relative to our future plan, and also of forming an acquaintance with many valuable Brn [Brethren] & Srs [Sisters].”³⁵ After being sent to the Dublin congregation, and working some time there, the Nybergs received a new calling and were sent to Bristol, where they spent seven years. The memoirs here offer an example of the way the role of this couple is described:

From there [Dublin] we were called to Bristol; arriving April 28. 1756 when we spent almost seven blessed Years, notwithstanding the care of presenting that Estate for the Congn [Congregation], repairing the Houses, building the Chapel there, and also that in Kingswood; as well as providing every thing necessary for house-keeping, for hitherto the Labourers boarded with a Br [Brother] & Sr [Sisters] which was not convenient, as there was now a Congn

[Congregation], settled. But the loving & hearty Spirit, which prevailed at that time among the Brn & Ss together with the continued increase of both Congn [Congregation] & Society, made it lively & encouraging. [Underlining in the original.]³⁶

Both spiritually and practically the Nyberg’s seem to have been successful, as they appear to be of great importance for the consolidation of this congregation. Of interest is also the choice of pronouns in the memoirs, as shown in this quotation. When describing how the couple is “called” by the main congregation (and God) the pronoun is in the first person, but plural, not singular: “we were called”. In other words, *both* Martha and her husband receives a calling, a fact that can be explained by the radical interpretation on the Lutheran thoughts on calling that permeated the Moravian movement – here concerning gender. In this respect Martha Nyberg’s memoirs bear witness to her self-confidence with regard to her importance as a diaspora worker.

When Martha Nyberg had passed away a devotional text was found in her belongings: “Thoughts on the Cross of Christ”. This text is written in the same hand as her memoirs, and comes directly after it on the same sheet, but there are no amendments or marginal notations in this part of the manuscript. A paratext marks its genre: it is said to comprise some “Meditations”, “found amongst her [Nyberg’s] papers”.³⁷ All this reveal Nyberg as the author. The status of the text, why it originally was written, is not stated clearly in the paratext or actual text. However, when reading it, we find that the wordings reveal an ambition to discuss the subject at hand on a more abstract and general level rather than just to guide a soul through the stages of introspective meditation or to transmit experiences of such a meditation. In the preliminary part the purpose

and subject are defined, and the importance of this is underlined: “There is no subject of more weight, or more worthy of employing our thoughts and consideration”. The text continues with an elaboration on this statement, emphasising its importance: it is said that although God and his Angels esteem this, the same does not apply to mankind. The text is interpolated with exclamations that stress this message but does not contain the often-used Moravian metaphors that were used to create faith through experiences of the suffering of Christ.³⁸ Instead, this text reflects how this is supposed to be achieved. Judging from its content, this is not a devotional text, but rather an intellectual, and theologically charged reflection.

Of interest here is the way in which this text is copied and filed together with the memoirs, thereby attaching it as a recording of Martha Nyberg’s private life. Further-more there is no separate reference or cross-reference to this text in the catalogue. The way this text is filed relegates Nyberg’s “Thoughts” to her private sphere, or life-story, which in many ways diminishes its importance, regardless of what the text communicates.

Archival collections from the Swedish Moravian eighteenth-century movement are spread across many Swedish memory institutions; a large bulk is however still in the possession of the modern heirs of the eighteenth-century congregation, in the archive of *Evangeliska brödräfsamlingen* in Stockholm. The Strömfelt sisters resided near Stockholm, so documents concerning them are partly to be found there. In the case of Ulrika Eleonora Strömfelt, one of her texts is filed under the heading memoirs (in Swedish “*Levnadslopp*”). In the main Moravian archive, das Unitätsarchiv in Herrnhut, we find a number of documents concerning the Strömfelt sisters, for example letters and some religious songs. However, there is no copy of Ulrika Eleonora Strömfelt’s text, “Fröken Ulricka Strömfelts

Berettelse”, which could be an indication that her story was not circulated within the movement, or that it was purged from the main archive later. The latter is probable, as the Strömfelt sisters were seen as problematic after the 1760s.³⁹ The Ulrika Eleonora Strömfelt document is somewhat hard to find in the Stockholm archive as it is not included in file 91, which has her name on the back of the document case; instead Strömfelt’s text is found in file 95, which is marked: Memoirs of brothers and sisters belonging to the society of Stockholm from Riben to Åkerblad (“*Levnadslopp över Syskon tillhörande Stockholms societeten från Riben t och med Åkerblad*”). However, the most interesting thing is that this text is *not* a *Lebenslauf*, as the filing would indicate. Instead, it is some sort of history writing, as is clearly indicated by its content. A paratext on the first page of the document points to this: Miss Ulricka Strömfelt’s Story (“*Fröken Ulricka Strömfelts Berettelse*”).⁴⁰ This title diverges from the general pattern of labelling *Lebensläufe* as memories (in Swedish *levnadslopp*) and shows that this is Strömfelt’s story not about herself, but about something else.

When reading the text, one soon discovers that all the normal features of the Moravian *Lebenslauf* are absent, and there are for example no emotional descriptions of inner struggles and salvation. Instead, it is a sober historical account of how Pietism, followed by Moravianism, found its way to Sweden. Consequently, the text is not primarily written in the first person singular, and there is no “I” in the narrative, although in one passage a possessive pronoun is used, and that is when Strömfelt briefly describes the role her own family played in Swedish Moravianism when they went to Livonia (present-day southern Estonia and northern Latvia) in 1738.⁴¹ Ulrika Eleonora was not aboard this ship however, so the story of this voyage is re-told. This account is found elsewhere in contemporary sources as

well as in later Church history, but in a more elaborated form, and it also became a part of Swedish Moravian historiography.⁴² However, as the Strömfelt story has been filed as a *Lebenslauf*, there is a risk that it has been misread – or not read at all during later centuries. If we search for Ulrika Eleonora or her sisters in the Moravian archives, no documents are found that date from the second half of the eighteenth century. As mentioned, after the turn of the century the Strömfelt sisters became the subjects of rather pejorative descriptions as being smitten by the emotional storms that swept through the movement during the above-mentioned Sifting Time.⁴³ This could be one explanation for the circumstance that all traces of them cease in the Moravian Archives, as documents concerning them could have been the subjects of the archival purging mentioned above.



Two important questions remain: What was removed from these archives? How were these two women included in Moravian history writing? A fundamental aspect is of course the fact that these texts and others like them were filed with disrespect to the original genre. The history writing of female authors was sparsely incorporated in the official history writings of the Moravian church, when several books were printed and made public from the second half of the century and onwards. Women are seldom mentioned in these stories on Moravianism, with only a few exceptions,⁴⁴ and when they are mentioned their memoirs have often served as sources of information. Thus, women become the objects of the Moravian History, not subjects. In later years research has seen a change, however, and we now have descriptions of the importance of female activity as well as editions of diaries or *Lebenslauf* written by female Moravian authors.⁴⁵

When it comes to Nyberg and Strömfelt it is notable that they use, or even claim history or theological writing as genres for their enterprises. However, it is hard to find their texts if we look in the archives for texts concerning history or theology from this viewpoint, considering the ways the texts are filed. Through the conception of *Lebenslauf* as a genre in combination with notions on gender, the texts analysed here are attached to Nyberg and Strömfelt as individuals, and associated with their private and also inner lives. Nevertheless, these texts bear witness to female authorisation, and their authors' attempts to write themselves into a more official discourse.

During the nineteenth century some of the Moravian *Lebenslauf* accounts were chosen and published in print, thus celebrating the lives, achievements and memories of Moravian men and in a few cases women; this framed in a new way how they became canonised as parts of the Moravian movement or even general church history. This coincided with changes in the Western world on different levels: shifts occur regarding gender, religion, and history. Towards the end of the eighteenth century earlier research regarding women's position in European Moravian congregations shows that women after this time lost influence on both a formal and an informal level.⁴⁶ This change coincides with the above-mentioned changes in society at large when women in many ways were excluded from the new public sphere.⁴⁷ The Moravian archives were in many ways inclusive when it came to archiving documents concerning female members, but nevertheless its order set up borders for the use of women's texts in more prestigious contexts, as the texts discussed here demonstrate that not only women but also files concerning them came to be relegated to the private – not the public – sphere.

Endnotes

- 1 Antoinette Burton, “Introduction. Archive Fever, Archive Stories”, *Archive Stories: Experience, Identity, History*, ed. Antoinette Burton (Durham NC: Duke University press, 2005), 9.
- 2 Paul Peucker, “Pietism and the Archives”, in *A Companion to German Pietism, 1660–1800*, Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition. Vol. 55 (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015), 393–471, 397.
- 3 The Moravian movement is connected in earlier research to processes of modernity – from this aspect the use of archives can be seen as imperative. Regarding the notion of modernity, see for example Dror Wahrman, who underlines that the notion of modernity is not to be seen as an endpoint, but “as a direction and a process. See *The Making of the Modern Self. Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004), xvi. Regarding Moravianism, Pietism and modernity see, Ann Öhrberg, “Den smala vägen till modernitet: retorik och människosyn inom svensk herrnhutism”, in *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, (2007), 51–69; the contributions in Daniel Lindmark & Fred van Lieburg, eds., *Pietism, Revivalism and Modernity, 1650–1850*, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2008); Martin Gierl, “Pietism, Enlightenment, and Modernity”. In *A Companion to German Pietism, 1660–1800*, Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition. Volume 55 (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015), 348–392.
- 4 One can compare to Cornelia Vismann’s description on the lack of order that often-characterised elderly archival practices. See Cornelia Vismann, *Files. Law and Media Technology* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008 [2000]), 96 ff.
- 5 When the archival collection of Stockholm transformed into an archive is somewhat unclear. It is obvious, however, that it was established in the 20th century and that the archival collection dates from the 1740s (see Arnold Sandborg, “Kyrkliga arkiv i Sverige”, in *Arkiv samhälle och forskning*, Svenska arkivsamfundets skriftserie 4 (Stockholm, 1958), 3–18, 17 f. This archive is still in the care of the congregation. Regarding the archive of the congregation in Gothenburg, which today is deposited

in the Landsarkiv in Gothenburg, see Em.[anuel] Linderholm, *Yttrande angående Ev. Brödräfsamlingens i Göteborg underdåniga ansökan den 12 april 1928 om omorganisation av Den Linhultska Stiftelsens Förvaltning*, Göteborg 1928, 20.

- 6 Eric Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives: The Meanings of Archives”, *Archival Science*, no. 1 (2001), 131–141.
- 7 Vismann, *Files*, 105 f.
- 8 Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature. An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 37–48.
- 9 Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation, Literature, Culture*, Theory 20 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997 [1987]), 4 ff. and *passim*.
- 10 Genette, *Paratexts*, 94–103.
- 11 Quotation from the so-called *Jüngerhausdiarien* after Gerhard Meyer, “Einführung in die Büdingsche Sammlung”, in Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, *Ergänzungsbände zu den Hauptschriften*, eds. Erich Beyreuther & Gerhard Meyer, Band VII, Büdingsche Sammlung Band 1 (Hildesheim: G Olms, 1965), v.
- 12 Nils Jacobsson, “Från en forskningsresa till Herrnhut. Nya bidrag till den svenska herrnhutismens historia”, in *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift* (1903), 6 ff.; Rüdiger Kröger, Claudia Mai & Olaf Nippe, *Das Unitätsarchiv. Aus der Geschichte von Archiv, Bibliothek und Beständen* (Herrnhut: Comenius-Buchhandlung, 2014), 10–41; Peucker, “Pietism and the Archives”, 397.
- 13 *Das Unitätsarchiv*, 44–73.
- 14 *Das Unitätsarchiv*, 13 f.
- 15 Regarding the early history of the Moravian archives, see, Jacobsson, “Från en forskningsresa”, 6 ff.; Meyer, “Einführung in die Büdingsche Sammlung”, v-xii; Peucker, “Pietism and the Archives”, 396 f.; Paul Blewitt & Simon Reynolds: “The Moravian Church Archives and Library”, in *Journal of the Society of Archives*, no. 2 (2001), 193–203; Paul Peucker, “Selection and Destruction in Moravian Archives Between 1760 and 1810”, in *Journal of Moravian History*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Fall 2012), 170–215; *Das Unitätsarchiv*, 12–19.

16 Quotation from Jüngerhausdiarium, September 11, 1750, after Stephanie Böß, *Gottesacker-Geschichten als Gedächtnis. Eine Ethnographie zur Herrnhuter Erinnerungskultur am Beispiel von Neudietendorfer Lebensläufen*, Studien zur Volkskunde in Thüringen 6, diss. 2014 Jena (Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 2016), 42.

17 Colin Podmore, *The Moravian Church in England 1728–1760*, Oxford Historical Monographs, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 2; Peucker “Pietism and the Archives”, 406 f.

18 Peucker, “Selection and Destruction”, 2012, 172.

19 Another function visible in the Moravian archival collections is how the globally squatted members constantly reassured each other that they were present in spirit, although not present in the flesh. Regarding this aspect of letter writing, see “The Strömfelt Sisters. Gender and power within the Swedish Moravian movement during the eighteenth century”, in *Pietism, Revivalism and Modernity, 1650–1850*, Daniel Lindmark & Fred van Lieburg (eds.) (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Press, 2008).

20 Peucker, “Selection and Destruction”, 173.

21 Regarding female agency and gender in the Moravian Church, see for example Otto Uttendörfer, *Zinzendorf und die Frauen. Kirchliche Frauenrechte vor 200 Jahren* (Herrnhut: Verlag der Missionsbuchh, 1919); Madge Dresser, “Sisters and Brethren: Power, Propriety and Gender Among the Bristol Moravians, 1746–1833”, in *Social History*, vol. 21, no. 3 (October 1996), 304–329; Katherine M. Faull, transl. and ed., *Moravian Women’s Memoirs. Their Related Lives, 1750–1820*, Women and Gender in North American Religions (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1997); Beverly Prior Smaby, “Female Piety Among Eighteenth Century Moravians”, in *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, Vol. 64, *Essays in Honor of Richard S. Dunn* (Summer 1997), 151–167; Martin H. Jung, *Frauen des Pietismus. Zehn Porträts von Johanna Regina Bengel bis Erdmuth Dorothea von Zinzendorf* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998), 44–73; Öhrberg, “The Strömfelt Sisters”; Aini Teufel, *Eine Gräfin auf Pilgerschaft. Erdmuth Dorothea von Zinzendorf in ihren Reisetagebüchern* (Kultur-Wissen-Bilder Verlag: Dresden, 2014); Ulrike Gleixner, “Pietism

and Gender. Self-modelling and Agency”, in *A Companion to German Pietism, 1660–1800*, Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition. Volume 55 (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015), 423–471; Ann Öhrberg, “Den anonyma handen i arkivet”, in *Spänning och nyfikenhet. Festskrift till Johans Svedjedal*, eds. Andreas Hedberg, Jerry Mättää & Åsa Warnqvist (Möklinta: Gidlunds, 2016), 13–27.

22 Peter Vogt, “In Search of the Invisible Church: the Role of Autobiographical Discourse in Eighteenth-Century German Pietism”, in *Confessionalism and Pietism. Religious Reform in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Fred van Lieburg, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz Abteilung für abendländische Religionsgeschichte. 67 (Mainz: Verlag von Philipp von Zabern, 2006), 293–311; 294 ff.; Böß, *Gottesacker-Geschichten als Gedächtnis*, 66 ff.

23 Eva Hættner Aurelius, *Inför lagen. Kvinnliga svenska självbiografier från Agneta Horn till Fredrika Bremer*, Litteratur Teater Film, nya serien 13 (Lund University press: Lund, 1996); Christine Lost, *Das Leben als Lehrtext. Lebensläufe aus der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine* (Herrnhuter Verlag: Herrnhut, 2007); Gisela Mettele, “Constructions of the Religious Self. Moravian Conversion and Transatlantic Communication”, in *Journal of Moravian History*, no. 2 (Spring 2007), 7–36.

24 This aspect is apparent in several *Lebensläufe*, see for example Faull, *Moravian Women’s Memoirs*, 39 ff., 49–56, 69–77, 90 ff., 11 ff., 122–129.

25 The information on Martha Nyberg’s life given here is primarily based on her memoirs, as there is little information on Martha Nyberg in printed sources.

26 On the Strömfelt sisters, see Ann Öhrberg, “The Strömfelt Sisters”.

27 Ulrica Eleonora Strömfelt, stambok (*Stammbuch*), Y 132 k, Uppsala University Library, Uppsala.

28 This archive practice is usual in many archives, or other memory institutions, and it is one explanation behind the fact that women can be hard to track in archives, which in turn contributes to male-gendered history writing.

29 If this has been dictated or not is not stated in the text. Dictation was a practice used when someone did not have writing skills or was unable to write themselves for other reasons.

30 The word sifting refers to Luke 22:31: “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.”

31 Peucker, “Selection and Destruction”.

32 Joan M. Schwartz & Terry Cook, “Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory”, in *Archival Science* 2 (2002), 1–19; 16.

33 A. C. Hassé, *The United Brethren, (Moravians), in England. From 1641–1742* (London: W Mallalieu & co, 1867).

34 Martha Nyberg, memoirs, C/36/3/85, Archives of the Moravian Church. British Province, London. Underlining in the manuscript.

35 Martha Nyberg, memoirs, C/36/3/85, Archives of the Moravian Church. British Province, London. Correction in the manuscript.

36 Martha Nyberg, memoirs, C/36/3/85, Archives of the Moravian Church. British Province, London.

37 Martha Nyberg, memoirs, C/36/3/85, Archives of the Moravian Church. British Province, London.

38 “Thoughts on the Cross of Christ”, in Martha Nyberg, memoirs, C/36/3/85, Archives of the Moravian Church. British Province, London.

39 Regarding the position the congregation of the Strömfelt sisters in the latter half of the eighteenth century, see Öhrberg, “The Strömfelt Sisters”, 195 f.

40 “Fröken Ulricka Strömfelts Berettelse”, Levnadslopp över Syskon tillhörande Stockholms societeten från Ribben t och med Åkerblad, 95, Svenska Evangeliska brödrarörelsens arkiv, Stockholm.

41 “Fröken Ulricka Strömfelts Berettelse”, Levnadslopp över Syskon tillhörande Stockholms societeten från Ribben t och med Åkerblad, 95, Svenska Evangeliska brödrarörelsens arkiv, Stockholm.

42 The Moravian emissary Arvid Gradin, who knew the Strömfelts, retells the story in his history of the Swedish Moravians, see Arvid Gradin, “Bericht v.d. schwed. Umstände 1738–1750, R.19.F.a.8.1, Archive of the Moravian Unity in Herrnhut (Unitätsarchiv der Evangelischer Brüder-Unität). See also Carl Christopher Gjørwell, “Anteckningar af

Carl Christopher Gjørwell om sig sjelf, samtida personer och händelser 1731–1757”, in Martin Weibull, *Samlingar utgifna för De skånska landskapens historiska och arkeologiska förening*, III, 1875 (Lund: De skånska landskapens historiska och arkeologiska förening, 1874–1880), 63 f.; Nils Jacobsson, *Den svenska herrnhutismens uppkomst. Bidrag till de religiösa rörelsernas historia I Sverige under 1700-talet. Ur kristendomens historia och tankevärld VI* (Uppsala: W. Schultz, 1908), 135 ff.; Hilding Pleijel, *Svenska kyrkans historia. 5: Karolinsk kyrkofromhet, pietism och herrnhutism 1680–1772* (Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse 9, 1935), 422. Gradin’s importance as an emissary is described in Arthur Manukyan, *Konstaninopel und Kairo. Die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine im Kontakt zum Ökumenischen Patrichat und zur Koptischen Kirche, Orthodoxie, Orient, und Europa*, Band 3 (Würtzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2010). Strömfelt knew Gradin, to which a number of preserved, warmly written letters bear witness, and one plausible hypothesis is that he could have received more information from her directly, or from one of the other Strömfelt sisters. Regarding this exchange of letters, see Öhrberg, “The Strömfelt Sisters”.

43 Jacobsson, “Från en forskningsresa”, 42 ff.; Öhrberg, “The Strömfelt Sisters”.

44 Öhrberg, “Den smala vägen till modernitet”, 61.

45 See footnote 21.

46 Regarding this shift in general, and with focus on religion, see for example Leonore Davidoff & Cathrine Hall, *Family Fortunes. Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850*, 2. rev. ed (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), xxiv and *passim*. Regarding the Moravians, See Dresser, “Sisters and Brethren”; Öhrberg, “The Strömfelt Sisters”.

47 Ann Öhrberg, *Samtalets retorik. Belevade kulturer och offentlig kommunikation i svenskt 1700-tal* (Höör: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 2014), 110 f., 182 f. and *passim*.