

Vernieuwing in drieklank

Een onderzoek naar de liturgische ontwikkelingen in Denemarken (± 1800 tot ± 1950).
diss. Utrecht 1990

F.J.C. Brouwer

Summary and conclusion

Research on the developments within the liturgy of the Lutheran 'Folkekirke' (folk church) in Denmark during the Enlightenment and Romantic Era and the period following until ca. 1950 is obstructed when the scope of research is limited to the form of service and its theological background. Three complementary liturgical components are therefore included: texts of the Ordinary and Propers of the Mass and of other religious rites (part I), hymn text books (part II) and hymn singing (part III). In this manner, renewal is presented in the triad of ritual, poetry and music, known as liturgy. Just as form and content are inseparably bound, theology and artes form a dynamic powerplay in people's attempts to attune the liturgical life in its broadest sense to life and society in general. In considering the so-called Liturgical Movement as an international and interconfessional phenomenon, Denmark plays a unique role, especially where the renewing power of hymn texts and hymn singing are concerned. In the area where the work of the poet, historian, pedagogue, politician and clergyman, N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1873) brought about liturgical and social renewal affecting the vast majority of the people, the powerplay differed essentially in comparison to the liturgical developments in the Danish overseas possessions (Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and those in Norway, Sweden and Finland. These differences are handled in part IV.

Part I

The Danish social development from absolutism to democracy in the first thirty years of the 19th century ran parallel with the rise of awakening movements with pietistic leanings, which opposed the theological and liturgical harvests of the Enlightenment. A critical reflection on Creed and on baptismal and eucharistic liturgy formed the start of the so-called

Church Conflict (ca. 1820 - ca. 1840). Via this Conflict, wherein (liturgical) freedom was the central point of discussion, the farmers' resistance movement led to, among other things, the realization of the Constitution and the change from State Church to 'Folkekirke' (1849) and later to the freedom of its members to attend churches in districts other than their own ('Sognebaandsløsning'; 1855). Finally, in 1868/1873 came the possibility of forming independent parishes within the 'Folkekirke'. In most cases the awakening movements were led by laymen with 'singular gifts', while Grundtvig's ideas on the church, the people and ancient Norse Mythology became more and more enchanting to the people through the many hymns he wrote.

This Grundtvigian development of theological, liturgical and social renewal arose quickly during the 19th century, leading to an essentially Grundtvigian denomination in opposition to several oppressive, theological leaders of the State Church. Examples of the latter were J.P.Mynster (1775-1854), Bishop of Sjælland, professor of theology H.N.Clausen (1793-1877) and a relatively small group of other theologians, who oriented themselves exclusively in German theological movements and in changes to the order and form of service in Sweden (1811) and Prussia (from 1822) as opposed to militant leaders of conventicles such as J.C.Lindberg (1797-1857) and A.G.Rudelbach (1792-1862), who were inspired by Grundtvig. After various attempts to change the ritual in the 17th century Danish service books (1685/1688) by, among others, Chr.Bastholm (1785), P.O.Boisen (1806), H.G.Clausen (1806) and H.N.Clausen (1825), even Mynster's plan for a uniform Danish liturgy (1839) ended up on the shelf instead of on the altar in 1842, after extensive theological discussions. The Kirke-Ritual of 1685 was reprinted in 1855.

The wish of the predominantly farm-oriented Danish population to perform the baptismal ritual according to the books of the 17th century, that went back to the Reformation of Martin Luther, was directly linked to its pursuit of freedom and democracy; the desire to adhere to the renunciation and to baptism in catechetical form (the Apostle's Creed) surpassed the peoples' deep-seated conservatism that was a reaction to Rationalism. Grundtvig's multitude of ideas resulting in the renewal experienced by the farmfolk through his hymns played an essential role in this.

Only after Grundtvig's death in 1872 were new impulses felt toward adapting church ritual, both from the Grundtvigian school (P.A. Fenger's concept-servicebook of 1874 and Fr. Nielsen/Th. Skat Rørdam's proposals for baptismal and eucharistic liturgy of 1893-1895) on the one hand and from the clergymens' conventions (proposals for revising the Collects) and the 'Kirkelige Raad' that unofficially functioned as the head of the church

(second cycle of pericopes 1885). Besides revised Collects, new baptismal and eucharistic liturgies were authorized in 1895, based on proposals of Nielsen and Skat Rørdam. While Grundtvig's influence was most effective in the area of hymnodic development, the orientation in foreign theologies and liturgies by the majority of the teachers of theology, bishops and pastors in the large cities triumphed in 1912, when extensively modified rituals for baptism, eucharist and marriage were authorized. From that moment, the hymns of M.Luther, Th.Kingo (17th century), H.A.Bronson (18th century) and many, many hymns by Grundtvig, often set to Danish romantic melodies, were heard within a liturgical framework that displayed definite traces of Romanizing influences from Germany, England and Sweden ('liturgical archeology'). In Northern Schleswig, that was German soil from 1864 until 1920, the Danish congregations were also confronted with liturgical change (H. Prahl 1894), that arose from the growing interest in the Early Church among theologians. Again, the theologians attempted to renew the liturgy behind the backs of the parishioners without taking social trends into account.

Within the scope of the interest in (Pre-)Reformation church and liturgical history were the renewal of the Offices ('Theologisk Oratorium'), the reorientation in Gregorian Chant and 16th-century church melodies (Th.Laub, M.Wöldike, J.P.Larsen, F.Viderø) and the work of 'Samfundet Dansk Kirkesang' in the area of church music and liturgy (i.a. proposal for the Liturgy of the High Mass, 1943). Some order in the chaos of liturgical forms was brought about when, in 1949 and 1955, the Bishops assembled in a single 'Directory' several orders of service for i.a. baptism and eucharist (1895 and 1912), marriage (1897, 1912 and 1938) and burial (1910 and 1928/1930), as well as a new collection of Collects (authorized in the period from 1895 to 1953). The rise of the Occumenical Movement exerted certain influence on liturgical developments in Denmark during the first half of the 20th century. N.Söderblom (1866-1931) and his son-in-law, Y.Brilioth (1891-1959), were prominent Swedes in this regard. High liturgical celebrations, intercommunion between Sweden and England since 1920, the emphasis on the priestly office and apostolic succession did not go unnoticed by Danish theologians who were strongly oriented toward foreign trends. The emanation of the 19th-century Danish awakening movements was slowly usurped by the above-mentioned 20th-century developments: church attendance has declined since ca. 1930.

Part II and III

The influence of German Rationalism manifested itself at the end of the 18th century in the area of hymnology, as well. The *Evangelisk-kristelig Psalmebog* (1798) especially shows traces of this: uniformity in form and content, based on the trio God-virtue-immortality, together with simplistic ideas prevailed over artistry. The awakening movements resisted the obligatory use of this hymnal by publishing alternative collections of spiritual poetry for church and home use from ca. 1800, on their own initiative or in cooperation with kindred spirits. Several regions held fast to the hymnal of Th.Kingo (1699). 'Awakened' souls from other areas drew from anthologies of Th. Kingo's and H.A.Bronson's religious poetry, but also embraced new hymns by B.S. Ingemann and C.J. Boye, among others. Grundtvig's hymns, that were original creations or arrangements of biblical Psalms and traditional Greek, Latin, German, English and Danish hymns, spread quickly among the Danish population from ca. 1830. Grundtvig's hymns fit well into the framework of the order of service as prescribed in the 17th-century Danish service books and by Balle's *Baptismal Ritual* (1783). The number of non-authorized supplements to the authorized hymn text books (Kingo 1699, *Evangelisk-kristelig Psalmebog* 1798, *Roskilde Konvents Psalmebog* 1855 and *Psalmebog for Kirke og Hjem* 1898) grew to ca. two hundred local, regional or national hymn collections between 1800 and 1930. The countless editions of Grundtvig's *Fest-Psalmer* formed the basis for the spreading of 'the new hymn' via these supplements. Around 1840, attempts were made by the awakening movements to replace the rationalistic hymn text book of 1798 with concept versions, but Bishop J.P. Mynster checked this endeavour by publishing his own, limited supplement. This deed, together with the establishment of the Constitutional Monarchy, supplied the best basis for growth of the familiarity with Grundtvig's new theology in the form of a new style of church hymn, even though the official hymn text book of 1855 displays much influence from the former State Church.

Since ca. 1830, the rapid spread of Grundtvig's hymns went hand-in-hand with the approval of secular melodies for church use. The melodies of well-known folksongs and battle songs were also adopted by the awakening movements for use with Grundtvig's texts, which were sometimes supplied with new meters to replace the isorhythmic melodies that were then still commonplace in church hymns. Composers such as C.E.F.Weyse, H.Rung, A.P.Berggreen, J.P.E.Hartmann, Chr.Barnekow and the Norwegian, L.M.Lindeman, brought an end to this contrafactum by writing new 'lively' melodies (romances) for Grundtvig's texts, in which the relationship between the atmosphere of melody and harmony was more important than

the exact relationship between text and music. Stemming from the great lack of new melodies for the considerable church hymn repertoire of the 19th century and on account of the chaotic spreading of new melodies in the country (analogous to the spreading of Grundtvig's hymn texts), many texts were sung to a common melody. Whereas the form of the old, isorhythmic chorale was better applied to full congregational singing, the romance melody was better suited for singing by smaller circles (conventicles). Around 1880, a unique 19th-century Danish phenomenon had manifested itself: the interweaving of Grundtvig's hymns with the church romance, the Danish folksong and the ancient chorales from the Reformation, baroque and pietism. Hymn texts from three important old traditions, which Grundtvig adapted along with new hymns (Luther, Kingo, Brorson), were hereby attached to the corresponding musical styles of the above-mentioned.

Textual or musical uniformity in the singing of particularly Grundtvig's hymns was nonexistent in the period around 1870. This was due in part to the practice of the *contrafactum* and the diversity of ways in which parts of Grundtvig's repertoire were circulated throughout the various regions in Denmark. The Hymnal of 1898 and Bielefeldt's Hymnal (1901) brought some order in this lively chaos. Within this context, Thomas Laub drew from ideas stemming from the German church music renewal movement and propagated the restoration of the strophic hymn from the time of the Reformation, with Gregorian-based melodies in a metered rhythm. Laub opposed the singing of 'deadly, stiff chorales' and the use of secular romance melodies in the church because he felt that the hymn tune should be the servant, or 'vehicle' of the text. Laub's contribution to Danish hymnody consisted of his role as expert in the area of the Lutheran service and as interpreter of the ideas of the German choral movement. His one-sided purism and academic style drew much criticism. A select group of epigones, including M.Wöldike and J.P.Larsen, adapted the realization of Laub's ideas on many points in a way that the lines of Grundtvig, the artist and Laub, the purist could be combined in an artistically justifiable volume called *Den danske koralbog* (1954), which neglects neither the musical repertoire from Grundtvig's proving grounds nor the metrical chorale. In addition, this volume united the hymnodic traditions of Northern Schleswig and Denmark. *Den danske koralbog* has contributed to the publication of a volume containing chorales used in common by Nordic countries (*Nordisk koralbog*, 1961).

After Grundtvig's death, more and more of his hymns were included in authorized hymn text books (1873, 1892, 1898 and 1953). The number of these rose so sharply that one third of the hymns in *Den danske salmebog* are from Grundtvig's pen. Grundtvig's hymns have provided substantial

material for the awakening movements of the masses. The 'awakened' effected renewal in the Danish church through a renewal of the content of the liturgical life. In contrast, the 'theological top' (bishops, professors in the Theological Faculty, 'Kirkelige Raad') strove until the end of the 19th century to adapt the 17th-century service books in order to keep pace with the theological currents and changes in ritual in countries such as Germany and Sweden. The leaders of the Danish Church were more interested in this orientation toward foreign trends than in the forces of liturgical renewal that emanated totally from Grundtvig's hymns and the awakening movements. The divergent developments of the masses and the 'liturgical top' slowly blended from the end of the 19th century, as more and more bishops became Grundtvig-oriented, until various traditions and currents harmonized in the singing of a church hymn repertoire tinted by the Grundtvig movement. Around 1950, this hymnodic unification was symbolized in the realization of *Den danske salmebog* and *Den danske koralbog*. Thanks to Grundtvig's versatile artistry, Denmark was singing 'a new song', which firmly united the Danish vocal culture, the country's natural beauty, its history and the traditions of the Danish and apostolic churches in a new theology and art. Pertaining to hymnody, this unity has had a strong pedagogical effect. Because of the great love of the Danes for Grundtvig's hymns, the 20th-century hymn repertoire is underrepresented in *Den danske salmebog* (1953). Also absent in this hymnal is a connection with the liturgical discussions of the first half of the 20th century, with the possible exception of the Laub Movement.

The neo-classical *Vor Frue Kirke* (Church of Our Lady) in Copenhagen, with Bertel Thorvaldsen's empire style sculptures, is still the Cathedral of the Danish Church, but the country's largest church is Grundtvig's Church (1921-1940), also in Copenhagen, serving as a symbol of the 'victory' of Grundtvig's hymns and of the Danish people. The church hymn again forms the nucleus of the liturgy of the Danish 'Folkekirke'; this nucleus of the Danish Congregation bears Grundtvig's name.

Part IV

In certain respects, the historical developments concerning the Danish liturgy during the period from ca. 1800 until ca. 1950 display similarities to those of other churches in Nordic countries and Western Europe. An example of this is the fact that the 'awakened', as a reaction to Rationalism, regarded the pursuit of liturgical renewal from a romantic view of life as part of the general conflict between tradition and renewal. The agendas of Sweden (1809/1811) and Prussia (from 1822) served as models

in the attempts to adapt service books to the prevalent theology or desires of priests. Since then, an international orientation in ritualistic aspects has led to changes in and revisions of the Lutheran service books of all the Nordic countries. Many changes in the Lutheran service books in Northern Europe (except Iceland) during the period from 1910 to 1920 brought about the attuning of various liturgical traditions, stemming from tendencies toward historicism (Romanization), parallel to the rise of the Oecumenical Movement. The influence of Gregorian Chant and the orientation in the classical Roman liturgy are, in Northern Europe, most strongly present in the new Icelandic liturgy (1981). The tendency toward Romanization is not present in Greenland or the Faroe Islands.

Differences in the nature of the people and the political and historical developments within church and folk are not the only common denominators where the distinction in liturgical renewal between the Nordic countries is concerned: personalities have played decided roles. Where the awakening movements remained outside the church, 'free churches' arose, with their own low church liturgies, whereas the official (state) church embraced high liturgical forms (Sweden). In Norway, the priests were influenced by the awakening movements; in contrast to Sweden, no free churches were organized there. Swedish influence on Norway brought about a high liturgy in the latter. The liturgical life in Finland developed into a synthesis of Swedish high churchmanship and Finnish awakening movement. The awakening movements in the large Nordic countries were all pietistic in nature: in Norway orthodox pietism ruled, in Sweden a Moravian-Lutheran form that was mixed with English influences and in Finland a 'fear-pietism', whose background also lay in ancient Finnish mythology. The pietistic slant within the Danish 'Indre Mission' (Internal Mission) had a Grundtvigian tint, however.

Although the content of Danish liturgical proposals, through their orientation in Swedish agendas and those of Germanic countries, were in step with international developments in this area, it is noteworthy that changes to the 17th-century Danish service books appeared relatively late. Until the 1890's, changes in the agenda of the Danish Church scarcely occurred. Denmark introduced a new lectionary in 1885. Sweden extended the existing pericopes with two alternatives in 1862 pertaining only to the reading of the Gospel. Norway followed suit in 1887/1889 for both the Epistle and the Gospel. It was not until 1958 that the Danes, in the footsteps of Iceland (1910), Finland (1913) and Sweden (1942) began to use a third pericope. In Sweden, exorcism, tracing the cross and renunciation were discarded from the baptismal liturgy in 1809/1811 and the Sanctus was added to the beginning of the Mass. Finland did away with tracing the cross and renunciation in 1886/1888 and Iceland in 1910, while

Norway never deviated from the traditional Lutheran baptismal ritual other than placing the renunciation and the Apostle's Creed in the confessional form. In Denmark, the catechetical form of the renunciation and Apostle's Creed were maintained until 1963, as a result of the 19th-century Church Conflict and the influence of the Danish awakening movements that had embraced Grundtvig's centralization of baptism and the Apostle's Creed. England, Sweden and Finland held fast to the apostolic succession as a basis for the unity of the churches and the worship of the sacraments. Contrastingly, the Danish had renounced the concept of apostolic succession in 1537. They played a less active role in the international movement in the area of liturgy and oecumenism than church representatives from Sweden and Finland, for example. The cause of this lies in the influence of Grundtvig's work on a large segment of the Danish population. Neither has a parallel development of the Oecumenical and Liturgical Movement occurred in the Danish Church.

Many within the English and Danish awakening movements were creative in the writing of hymn texts and tunes. With respect to quality, amount and influence on religious life, the Danish dominate all (Grundtvig, romance composers). Within the awakening movements in other Nordic nations, the faithful sang, in addition to their traditional hymns, those of the Moravians (Greenland, Norway, Sweden and Finland) and hymns from the circles around Moody and Sankey (Faroe Islands, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland). The Danish also felt this latter influence from America and England, but the power of Grundtvig's hymns remained stronger and more convincing to them. Sweden and Finland were far into the 20th century before they embraced the official hymnals (both text and music) of the awakening movements.

The official hymnals of the Nordic countries since ca. 1700 (of Iceland since 1801) until the first half of the 20th century have been published without music. The accompanying chorale books have been produced by musicians who were bound to the choices of tunes indicated in the hymnals (text only) that were largely edited by theologians. Many hymns were sung to the same tune, so that the familiar repertoire of tunes and rhythms was scarcely renewed. Initially, an inspirational climate for innovative poetry and music was absent. Only in the areas where almost no instruments were available or where the people were more or less isolated (the Faroe Islands, various parts of Norway, Iceland and several areas in Denmark) did church and other music remain lively through the use of folk tunes. Considered within this perspective, the approval of the use of secular melodies and the introduction of the romance into the liturgy of the Danish Church was a breath of fresh air for the Danish congregations. The texts and music of Moody and Sankey became more

firmly rooted outside Denmark, where Grundtvig's poetry and the romance were unknown. Laub's counter-movement, that attempted to restore the Reformation chorale, has not yet succeeded in preventing the romance melodies from playing a role that would be difficult to eliminate in the Danish religious/liturgical life.

Norway (L.M.Lindeman) purposely disassociated itself from the German choral movement during the 19th century. Only in the 1920's was this attitude changed by the publications of O.M.Sandvik, although his work found practical application only long after the appearance of P.Steenberg's Chorale Book (1949). Only after continuous pressuring by the 'Laubians' has Denmark applied the principles of the German Choral Movement to a greater extent since ca. 1940.

Although around 1900 Friedrich Spitta and Julius Smend, in their German renewal movements allowed popular forms, esthetic, psychological and sociological aspects to play a role and Friedrich Niebergall defended an reenactment of the liturgy ('anschaulich-dramatische Gestaltung'), their ideas have not had, ca. 60 to 80 years after Grundtvig's 'folkelige' and cultic-dramatic views of church and liturgy, the scope, power and influence that Grundtvig's renewals had on the Danish Church. No other Protestant church in Europe has been so strongly influenced by the 19th-century awakening movements as the Danish; a 20th-century hymnal that has been so dominated by a single poet (Grundtvig) is unique. Nowhere else has church life, with respect to structure, experience, liturgy and music, been as greatly changed by the liturgical theology and artistry of a single person. The Danish Church exemplifies one in which renewal of theology, liturgy, spirit of the people and 'folkelige' experience has been brought about through the singing of hymns.

Conclusion

In many respects Grundtvig was ahead of his time; ideas occurred to him 125 to 150 years ago that today are considered new. Until now, Grundtvig has not received the international recognition his contemporary, Søren Kierkegaard, posthumously enjoys. This is probably due to the problem of translating his poetry. Although he has become internationally known to a certain extent as founder of the Danish Folk High School, it is still noteworthy that the spiritual renewal he fostered is scarcely encountered in church history books outside Northern Europe. His unique theological ideas, his views on the sacraments and ecumenism, his ideas about the

relationship between religion and paganism on the one hand and between Christianity and Norse Mythology on the other, and about the relationship between church, mankind, politics and education deserve broader interest from churches and nations.

A sequel to this thesis could entail performing further research employing semiotic analysis, for example, on Grundtvig's sacred texts and the music to which they are sung, in order to describe the power and effect of poetry and music as catalysts for renewal of faith and religious life. Such research extends to literature, liturgiology and musicology and also serves the disciplines of anthropology and practical theology.

The renewal of the worship service (= Liturgical Renewal I) within the Danish 'Folkekirke' was brought about principally by Grundtvig's hymns, which were inundated with the interaction between myth and cult, through which renewal and salvation are available to the faithful. The latter renewal is a renewal of the believer, the congregation, brought about by the liturgy, or in this case, the singing of Grundtvig's hymns during the service (= Liturgical Renewal II). Two concepts are presented here:

- Liturgical Renewal I: renewal of the liturgy (genitivus objectivus) and
- Liturgical Renewal II: renewal (of the congregation) by the liturgy (ablativus causae).

Through a Liturgical Renewal II, a Liturgical Renewal I was kindled from within the Danish 'Folkekirke' through the singing of Grundtvig's hymns. Although the alterations to the agendas of 1885, 1895 and 1912 were not made in accordance with this Liturgical Renewal II, the religious/liturgical life in Denmark has developed along the lines of Liturgical Renewal II, independently of this change in agenda, or Liturgical Renewal I.

Liturgical Renewal I (liturgical forms) need not lead to Liturgical Renewal II (personal, congregational). Liturgical Renewal I is meaningful and justifiable only when congregational renewal (II) is at stake.

In the 19th century the Danish church authorities prescribed the hymns to be sung. On the other hand, Grundtvig operated on the basis that the people sang what they believed. Liturgical renewal in both senses occurs when the arts are used judiciously during the worship service. A 'folkelig', or people-oriented liturgical life, the cult of the myth, is stronger than any liturgical directive. Expressed by Knud Ottosen, 'The debate about the official rituals and the form of the liturgical orders seems to show a disproportion between the theological artillery which has been mobilized and the very small sparrows under attack, and the fact that the birds have flown away in the meantime does not seem to bother the gunners!'

Had the research on Danish liturgical development during the period from ca. 1800 to ca. 1950 been performed according to the method utilized by the majority of studies on the Liturgical Movement, whereby the scope is directed toward the liturgical texts of ritual and prayer, the conclusion would obviously have been that Denmark has undergone scarcely or no development with respect to the form of the worship service from 1685/88 to the end of the 19th century. The *modus operandi* employed in this thesis, researching the service books and hymnals (both text and music) in their mutual interaction with respect to the celebration of the liturgy, leads to a conflicting conclusion, however: although the changes in the Danish service books have been relatively slight, as has been their influence on the renewal of religious life, the Danish 'Folkekirke', through Grundtvig's innovative hymn texts and the resulting renewal in hymn singing (romances), has undergone a significant revolution in liturgicis and spiritual life. Although the research method employed here cannot be equally thorough in every aspect of the set framework, it is preferable to a solely theological approach because of its interdisciplinary approach to the phenomenon liturgy in all its dimensions. Further, the previous chapters reveal that liturgiology, practiced as an interdisciplinary and applied artistic science, reinforces the existence of liturgy, itself; the liturgy, that visually and aurally can be perceived as the triad of ritual, poetry and music. In the final analysis, every liturgical form stands or falls as a result of its theological and artistic eloquence.

The Benedictine Prosper Guéranger (1805-1875), the driving force behind the Roman Catholic Liturgical Movement of the 19th century, dared to assert that 'No one would deny that liturgy belongs entirely to poetry and this is precisely why song is its complement.' More potently, his contemporary, N. F. S. Grundtvig, put these words into practice with the poetry of Thomas Kingo: 'Siung og Troe / saa skal du stige / Sjungendes i Himmerige' (Sing and have faith! Then you will ascend, singing, into heaven) on his lips. He renewed the liturgy through poetry and song, so that 'the sung hymn (...) became the strength of our (Danish; FB) church.' Olivier Rousseau, author of the acknowledged history of the Roman Catholic Liturgical Movement, writes that 'Liturgy is the convergence of all arts. (...) A decline of the traditional spirit of Christianity carries with it the downfall of the religious arts. Liturgiology, as every science, 'must apply its wisdom modestly and not disturb music'.

'Le savant cherche, l'artiste trouve.'
 ('The scholar seeks, the artist finds.')

(Translation: Todd Fair)