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Title and subtitle Agitator of the Spiritual Life: J A Eklund, Christianity and Culture		
Abstract <p>The purpose of this thesis is to study the formation of opinions in issues related to the problem area of Christianity and culture of public theologian J A Eklund (1863-1945). The concept of public theologian refers to a theologian, who by participating in the cultural debate, strives to convince the public that Christianity is a superior theory of life even in modern society, and of Christianity's relevance in every area of society. Many other theologians in his time were also engaged in the issue of Christianity and culture. It was a problem characteristic of the generation.</p> <p>For more than thirty years Spiritual Life (Geistesleben, in German) was Eklund's ideological signature. To him the concept carries humanistic, idealistic and Christian implications. Spiritual life is a denotation for the superior, free human life as opposed to nature. At times Eklund constrains the concept and gives it a more distinct religious meaning as he, for example, speaks of spiritual life in terms of "human life from above". One must not thereby be led to believe that Eklund limits spiritual life to the sphere of the church; rather, in contrast he stresses that spiritual life also applies to science and learning, art and literature, customs and traditions etc. His use of the concept is highly connected to his interest in the problems pertaining to Christianity and culture.</p> <p>Eklund perceived himself as a cross between a priest and an agitator. It is characteristic to his often unconventional approach and actions in his functions as priest and bishop that he looked upon himself as an agitator, a political character who in his time was commonly referred to as a demagogue. The combination of a vehement temper, frequent controversial initiatives and an intensive will to take part in the cultural struggle earned him the name "the polemical Bishop of Karlstad". The character of Eklund's public theology, its agitating and often highly polemical mark, has to be put in relation to the intensive debates of the late 19:th century and the early 20:th century, between proponents of different theories of life.</p> <p>The issue of Christianity's relationship to culture is treated as a group of problems in the thesis. Based on the occurrence of distinct themes in Eklund's bibliography, a number of sub-problems have been identified. The thesis discusses Eklund's view of the relationship between: 1) Christianity and science 2) Christianity and humanities 3) Christianity and philosophy 4) Christianity and fiction 5) Christianity and politics/state 6) Christianity and nationalism/ethnicity 7) Christianity and history. Finally it discusses Eklund's view of Christianity's standpoint in the issue of war and peace.</p>		
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