New types of management genres are currently emerging in the semiotic landscapes of public authorities. Mulderrig (2011) has described ‘soft power’ genres that, for instance, make use of a specific type of ‘grammar of governance’. Arguably, these types of ‘soft power’ genres aim at affecting beliefs, attitudes, actions, and identities of employees in a managerial landscape in which bold authority is no longer possible. During the last 10 years or so, public authorities in Sweden have started to produce so called ‘platform of values’ texts (“värdegrunder”) that seem to be key resources in this movement toward ‘soft power’ management. These texts are generally multimodal to an extent unprecedented in genres of public authorities in Sweden, and in my presentation I explore the connection between the social action of ‘soft power’ management and the specific semiotic design of ‘platform of values’ texts. My data come from the research project The archaeology of a new genre: Vision and values texts of public authorities in Sweden (financed by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond 2016–2018) and consist of approximately 250 ‘platform of values’ and related texts along with data from a two-hour focus group discussion involving HR managers and directors from seven authorities.

Bio
Anders Björkvall joined Örebro University as a Professor of Swedish Language in the Fall of 2016. He is primarily active in the fields of multimodality, social semiotics, discourse analysis, literacy studies, and the ethnography of artefacts and texts. Recent publications include ‘Places and spaces for multimodal writing in “one-to-one’ computing” in Multimodality in writing: The state of the art in theory, methodology and pedagogy (2015), ‘Practices of visual communication in a primary school classroom: Digital image collection as a potential semiotic mode’ (Classroom Discourse, 2014); ‘Practical function and meaning: A case study of IKEA tables’ in The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis (2013) and ‘Multimodality’ in Handbook of Pragmatics (2012). Anders has also published a Swedish handbook of multimodal analysis (Den visuella texten: Multimodal analys i praktiken, 2009), introducing the analysis of multimodal texts to a Scandinavian audience.