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Swedish Monuments of Music and Questions of National Profiling

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In an article published in 1942, the Swedish musicologist Stig Walin proposed a strategy for Swedish historical musicology. It was published in *Svenske tidskrift för musikforskning* (The Swedish Journal of Musicology) and titled »Methodological problems in Swedish Musicology«.¹ Walin had recently earned a doctoral degree in Uppsala with a dissertation on Swedish symphonies in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This was the first doctoral dissertation in musicology from Uppsala and awarded him the title of Docent.

In the 1942 article, Walin outlines an approach to historiography and the writing of music history, strongly influenced by neo-Kantianism, but also by cultural history in the spirit of Johan Huizinga.² Walin presents a number of methodological considerations, related to the particular conditions of the historical cultivation of music in Sweden. He suggests a scholarly focus, not only on the production of music, but also on what he designates the reproduction of music – a notion closely affiliated with what we would today call reception history.

At the end of the essay, Walin makes some summary statements about the specific factors facing a scholar working on Swedish music history:

»It cannot be denied that our musical culture is in many respects poor. It often reveals a lack of original creation. It only rarely creates something really new. To a large extent it uses borrowed forms that have been modified or merely remodelled in very insignificant ways. It has no plethora of great, pioneering figures. The scholar who is primarily interested to remarkable objects, large and splendid forms, ingenious creations and mighty personal achievements will often, when dealing with the field of Swedish music, be bitterly disappointed.«³

After a few examples, Walin continues:

»We cannot deny it is possible that, because of the nature of the material, musicologists of a certain disposition will simply refrain from occupying themselves with Swedish music history. It is also likely that such scholars, if for some external reason they were forced to concern themselves with Swedish music history, would not find the pleasure and satisfaction necessary for research that is in a deeper sense fruitful.«⁴

Finally, Walin concludes:

»If the force that drives the historical musicologist to engage with Swedish musical culture is their declared love for Sweden, then things suddenly change. Then the scholar engages with the field of Swedish music not for the opportunity to occupy himself with perfect musical creations or other cultural forms, or to encounter musically pioneering personalities, but precisely to gain knowledge about Swedish musical life. Then, he measures the importance of the phenomena he encounters, not so much for their objective formal nature, but rather according to the role they played in the cultivation of music in Sweden.«⁵

¹ Stig Walin, »Metodiska problem inom svensk musikhistorisk forskning«, in: *Svenske tidskrift för musikforskning* 24 (1942), pp. 45–67.

² Sten Dahlstedt, *Fakta och förnuft* (= *Studies from Gothenburg University, Department of Musicology*, 12), diss., Göteborg 1986, pp. 231–42.

³ Walin, »Metodiska problem inom svensk musikhistorisk forskning«, p. 66; all translations from the Swedish are by the author.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Walin, »Metodiska problem inom svensk musikhistorisk forskning«, pp. 66–67.

This article is obviously typical of the time when it was written, in the midst of the war, when Sweden was still under the threat of occupation. It is also an expression of an individual scholar with a particular outlook and temperament. Still, there are elements in Walin's text that are not only characteristic of his personal ideas. As I will argue in the following, a similar outlook has been quite typical of Swedish musicology in general, and to some extent has shaped Sweden's public musical life and its institutions – including such official institutions as the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. There are some features in Walin's text, in other words, which are symptomatic of a certain attitude to national music history and national musical culture and that seem to permeate public and academic discourse in Sweden.

One of these attitudes is the notion that Swedish music and musical production has been, in Walin's formulation, comparatively poor, and that it has not brought forth much music that can compete favourably with the great tradition of art music on the continent, especially in Germany. It has been considered to lack quality and inventiveness, and it has failed to make any lasting impression on the international musical scene. This is also reflected in the absence of an obvious candidate for a great national composer: there are no Swedish equivalents of Edvard Grieg in Norway, Carl Nielsen in Denmark, or Jean Sibelius in Finland.

Walín mentions three exceptions to this rule of absence. The first is Johann Helmich Roman (1694–1758), the second is Franz Berwald (1796–1868), and the third is the Swedish folk music tradition, or, at least as he claims, a large part of it. It is clear from the article, at least implicitly, that Walín does not regard Roman to be on par with Händel and Bach, or Berwald with Mendelssohn. Nevertheless, Walín maintains, they »invite rewarding considerations regarding the pure aspects of formal history«. In Walín's view, this was also applicable to Swedish folk music.

The methodological conclusion that Walín draws from his diagnosis of the cultural status of music in Sweden is symptomatic: that musicologists working with Swedish materials consequently have to apply broad perspectives on Swedish musical culture and musical life. They should not only focus exclusively on the production of high quality art music, but also on its »reproduction«, that is, the reception and uses of music, as well as on repertoires outside the tradition of European art music, including so-called Swedish folk music.

Symptomatic is also the way in which Walín tries to turn this situation from a negative into a more positive one. This may not be a very strong or particularly innovative or influential musical tradition, but it is at least ours, and has a value as such, his argument maintains. According to his opinion in 1942, the incitement should be the love of one's country, and some kind of duty to engage with national culture, even though Walín doesn't make the latter explicit.

Starting from these observations, I would like to discuss some documentary projects and publications relating to Swedish national music, including musical editions, phonograms and a historical handbook. I will discuss six cases in chronological order:

<i>Svenska låtar</i>	An anthology of Swedish folk tunes, in 24 vols. (1922–1940)
<i>Monumenta Musicae Svecicae</i>	Critical editions of Swedish music, 22 vols. (1954–2008)
<i>MMS: Berwald edition</i>	Collected works of Franz Berwald, 25 vols. (1976–2012)
<i>Musica Svecicae</i>	A phonogram anthology of Swedish music (1984–1992)
<i>Musiken i Sverige</i>	A historical handbook of music in Sweden, 4 vols. (1992–1994)
<i>Levande musikarv</i>	Online publications of editions and short biographies (2012–)

Svenska låtar: Swedish music's first monumental project

The first example predates both Walin's 1942 article and the post-World War II period that is primarily the focus here. It is nevertheless of importance as a background, and highly relevant in relation to Walin's arguments. *Svenska låtar* was an anthology of Swedish folk tunes in 24 volumes, published between 1922 and 1940, and organised according to the 24 historical Swedish provinces (landskap).

The organization behind the anthology was Folkmusikkommissionen («The Folk Music Commission»). Founded in 1908 by a group of folk music collectors and scholars, it was a private initiative, despite its official-sounding name, and not connected to any governmental agency.⁶ Still, it had strong support from members of the royal family, as well as from the museums and some of the public music institutions, something that granted it a pseudo-official status. The initiator and driving force was Nils Andersson, who was one of the leading collectors of folk tunes at that time. The main objective of the association was to collect and publish folk music.

In 1910, this project was part of a larger application for state funding led by the musicologist Tobias Norlind and the folklorist Carl Wilhelm von Sydow, an application supported by Lund University.⁷ Thanks to this grant, in combination with private sponsors and some private foundations, the project began publishing in 1922 and was completed in 1940. A few years later, a volume of choral melodies from Estonia and from Gammelsvenskby in present-day Ukraine was added to the series.

If we recall Walin's article, it is symptomatic that the first large anthology of musical editions in Sweden was not the collected works of a major composer in the art music tradition but this large collection of folk tunes. It was the culmination of a sustained practice of folk music collecting that had already begun in the early nineteenth century with Erik Gustav Geijer's and Arvid August Afzelius' anthology *Svenska folksvisor från forntiden* («Swedish Folk Songs from pre-historic times»), published in 1814.

The anthology *Svenska låtar* would set the standard and the canonized repertoire of what was at this time constructed as «Swedish folk music», especially concerning the instrumental repertoire for violin and for the Swedish key-fiddle, the nyckelharpa. This is largely an invented tradition that is still today preserved and guarded by institutions such as the Zorn badge.⁸ Interestingly, recent studies into the work of Folkmusikkommissionen suggests that the criteria that directed the construction of this «tradition» was highly selective. Swedish folk music was narrowly limited to the music played and danced to in the countryside between circa 1840 and 1880. Music before that was considered to be baroque music, and later music was too modern, typically the more Pan-European repertoire of polkas, mazurkas, and waltzes.⁹

When Walin referred to the quality of Swedish folk music as an object of national pride, even worthy of studies into «formal history», he undoubtedly had the repertoire documented and canonized by *Svenska låtar* in mind. The standpoint that Swedish traditional music is an important part of Swedish

⁶ Mathias Boström, »100 år med Folkmusikkommissionen: översikt och vägledning« in: *Det stora uppdraget: perspektiv på Folkmusikkommissionen i Sverige 1908–2008*, ed. Mathias Boström at al. (= *Skrifter utgivna av Svenskt visarkiv*, 27), Stockholm 2010, pp. 13–38.

⁷ Boström, »100 år med Folkmusikkommissionen«, pp. 16–17.

⁸ Karin Eriksson, *Sensing Traditional Music Through Sweden's Zorn Badge: Precarious Musical Value and Ritual Orientation* (= *Studia musicologica Upsaliensta, Nova series*, 28), diss., Uppsala 2017.

⁹ Mattias Boström, »Låtar av större arkivaliskt än musikaliskt intresse? Spelmansböckerna och *Svenska låtar*«, in: *Lekstugan: festskrift till Magnus Gustafsson*, ed. Mattias Boström, Växjö 2015, pp. 47–65.

musical-cultural heritage, on par with or even outshining the national art music, has been strong ever since in public musical life in Sweden.

Monumenta musicae sveciae: a Swedish national anthology of art music

Monumenta musicae sveciae, shortened to MMS, was a publication project initiated by the Swedish Society for Musicology in the mid-1950s.¹⁰ The first volume in the series, the *Assaggi* for solo violin composed by Johann Helmich Roman, was published in 1958. The editor of that first volume was Ingmar Bengtsson, who in 1955 had defended his doctoral dissertation on Roman's instrumental music. Three years later he succeeded Carl Allan Moberg as Professor of Musicology at Uppsala University.

In two articles in *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* from 1959 and 1969, Bengtsson touches on the hardships of realizing the publication project.¹¹ The society had applied to the government for stable funding, in an application supported by the Royal Academy of Music, but this was rejected. Instead, the first two volumes were paid for by a temporary grant from Lotterimedelsfonden (a government fund for supporting local cultural projects, using a small part of the surplus from the state-run lotteries), and from Humanistiska fonden, a fund established by the Royal Academy of Letters.

The MMS series was unofficially a continuation of an older series, *Äldre svensk music* (Early Swedish Music), which the Gunnar Wennerberg society had initiated in the 1930s. The Swedish Society for Musicology assumed responsibility in 1937. Eight volumes were published in this series, including music by Roman, as well as string quartets by Martin de Ron and Anders Wesström. These editions were modern performance adaptations, rather than scholarly critical editions. The series was closed in 1944.

The new, much more ambitious MMS series was founded in 1953, when the Society for Musicology decided to invest in the venture. The society elected an editorial committee, consisting of Moberg, Bengtsson, Walin, and the music librarians Gösta Morin and Åke Davidsson. Compared to the older series, this one had much higher ambitions regarding the standards for scholarly critical editions. One of the obstacles that Bengtsson mentions apart from the economic ones was the limited number of competent editors available in the country at this point.¹² »With the first volume of MMS«, Bengtsson wrote, »the foundation stone is laid for a Swedish equivalent to the Denkmäler and monumenta series of the great, cultural nations« (Bengtsson uses the Swedish/German term »kulturland«).¹³

According to Bengtsson, the committee at this early stage considered establishing a collaboration with Bärenreiter, but according to Bengtsson decided on a Swedish publisher instead because »the majority of the committee wanted to regard MMS as a Swedish project«. This kind of national protectionism was typical of the time.¹⁴

Moberg created an ambitious plan for MMS, with the idea of publishing two volumes a year, comprising 21 volumes in total over the next ten years. In the end, the publishing activities turned out to be much less ambitious. All-in-all, 22 volumes were published during the 50 years from 1958 to 2008 – i. e., less than one volume every second year. The first volumes were paid for by small, private foundations, and

¹⁰ »Monumenta musicae sveciae«, in: *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* 36 (1954), pp. 148–49; unsigned editorial note.

¹¹ Ingmar Bengtsson, »Den svenska musikforskningens aktuella läge och uppgifter«, in: *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* 41 (1959), pp. 58–146, and »Svenska samfundet för musikforskning 50 år«, in: *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning* 50 (1969), pp. 7–48.

¹² Bengtsson, »Den svenska musikforskningens aktuella läge och uppgifter«, p. 121.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

¹⁴ Anders Edling, »The use of the Düben collection as seen in the correspondence of the Uppsala University Library«, in: *The dissemination of music in seventeenth-century Europe: celebrating the Düben collection*, ed. Erik Kjellberg, Bern 2010, pp. 335–43.

to some extent by grants from the Royal Academy of Music. It was not until 1966 that the MMS series received indirect governmental support through the Humanistic Research Council (Statens humanistiska forskningsråd), and these grants had to be secured for each new volume.¹⁵

The Berwald edition 1974–2008: an odd exception

The situation brightened somewhat in the mid-1960s, when plans for a complete edition of the collected works of Franz Berwald emerged, as a sub-series of the MMS project. Two things would distinguish the Berwald edition from the general MMS series. To begin with, a collaboration with Bärenreiter was established, something that arguably gave the project more of a professional backbone, and also secured a genuine Gesamtausgabe. The Swedish scholars had imagined a selection of works, but the German publisher insisted on publishing the full catalogue of works.¹⁶ Secondly, this time it turned out to be easier to get financial support, mainly through public, governmental funds, but also thanks to a grant from Sveriges Radio, the national public radio broadcaster. It seems that not even Bengtsson, who was one of the driving forces behind the project in 1969, could explain the main reasons for this success – whether it was »[t]he greatness and importance of Berwald, the mere size of the project, or the generally improved climate for granting cultural projects«. ¹⁷ He also remarks that the Berwald edition was an important reason for the slow rate of the general MMS series, because it meant the reallocation of focus and resources. The first volume of the Berwald edition was published in 1974, and the series was completed in 2012.

The edition of Berwald's collected works seems to contradict Walin's 1942 manifesto, and the main observations of this study, since it places a single composer on a pedestal with a Gesamtausgabe – a project motivated both by the importance of Berwald's work from a national and an international perspective and by the innovative force and quality of his music. Still, he was one of three examples that Walin had marked out as possibly worthy of such treatment. Moreover, remarkably, this is the only complete edition dedicated to a Swedish composer so far, and the only one that has received state funding. There is nothing today to suggest that this situation will change in the near future.

The Berwald edition was a subseries of the MMS series, and as we have seen, it was for several reasons an exception. Within the main series, 22 volumes were produced from 1958–2008. They comprise four volumes with music by Johan Helmich Roman edited by Ingmar Bengtsson. Moreover, there is music by for example Johann Wikmansson, Joseph Martin Kraus, Johann Gottlieb Naumann, August Söderman and Adolf Lindblad. There were also four volumes of seventeenth century music.¹⁸ An ambition to cover different eras and genres motivated the selection, as well as notions of historical importance and relevance. In some cases, the editions are by-products of PhD dissertations undertaken by the editors. It cannot be helped that the selection gives a somewhat scattered impression. The MMS project to this day remains a torso.

¹⁵ Bengtsson, »Svenska samfundet för musikforskning 50 år«, pp. 40–41.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ The full list is found on the website of the Royal Academy of Music: <http://www.musikaliskaakademien.se/verksamhet/aldresvenskatonsattaresverk/monumentamusicavesvecicae.294.html>, accessed February 2017.

Musica sveciae: a national phonogram series

In 1978, the Ministry of Education commissioned the Royal Academy of Music to investigate the conditions for producing a national anthology of musical recordings. The original initiative came from record companies, institutions and some private enthusiasts.¹⁹ These plans resulted in an anthology of 95 records, released between 1982 and 1994: the *Musica sveciae* anthology.²⁰ During the first five years, several different labels released the records. From 1987 an own label was established, run by the Royal Academy of Music. A combination of government grants, commercial revenues, and Academy funds financed the entire project.

The music selected for this anthology is somewhat broader than the music chosen for the general MMS series. It covers a similar seventeenth- and eighteenth-century repertoire, but also incorporated much more music by nineteenth and even early twentieth century composers. In addition to the main series there were two subseries: *Modern Classics*, comprising 29 discs with early modernists from Hilding Rosenberg to Dag Wirén (in collaboration with the Swedish Radio and the Swedish Performing Rights Society, STIM), and *Folk Music in Sweden*, with 28 records (in collaboration with the national archive for traditional music, Svenskt Visarkiv).

It is quite clear, even though not yet thoroughly documented, that it was easier to generate enthusiasm to finance a recorded anthology of Swedish music than for a series of critical editions. One reason is most likely the commercial interests of the recording industry, but also, and more important for securing state funding, the greater accessibility and more direct utility of recordings for a larger audience. It is also symptomatic that even though many of the historical musicologists in Sweden were engaged in selecting relevant music and producing liner notes for the albums, this project (in contrast to the MMS) was initiated and driven by record companies and by the Royal Academy of Music, the majority of whose members consist of musical performers.

Musiken i Sverige: a handbook in the history of music in Sweden

The plans for writing a history of Swedish music date from a long way back and were abolished and revitalized several times. In 1969, Ingmar Bengtsson reported that they had been actualized again in 1962. This led to the foundation of Svenskt Musikarkiv (the National musical archive) in 1965, with the task of collecting source material and making it accessible for scholars.²¹

Still, it was once again not the scholarly community but the Royal Academy of Music that would finally launch such a project in 1988, in collaboration with the publishing house Tomas Fischer. A private foundation granted 50% of the costs of the project, and the rest was covered by Academy funds. Four volumes appeared between 1992 and 1994 and were a multiple author project.²² Many of the leading Swedish musicologists participated, numbering 34 authors in total. In several cases they contributed with original research. Even though scholars active at universities and libraries produced the content, the Royal Academy of Music managed the project and published it in the Academy book series.

Published 50 years after Walin's 1942 manifesto in *Svensk tidskrift för musikeforskning*, and more than a decade after his death, these volumes in several respects realized and fulfilled his visions for a national

¹⁹ <http://www.musikaliskaakademien.se/verksamhet/musicasveciae/historik.245.html>, accessed February 2017.

²⁰ The full catalogue is available online: http://www.musikaliskaakademien.se/download/18.367bd2de11f1bd-7fa1b800015661/1377188549812/MusicaSveciae_katalog.pdf, accessed February 2017.

²¹ Bengtsson, »Svenska samfundet för musikeforskning 50 år«, p. 41.

²² *Musiken i Sverige*, vol. 1–4, ed. Leif Jonsson, Stockholm 1992–94.

music history. Those ambitions are explicitly stated in the prefaces to each volume, and also appear on the volumes' dust covers. These are quoted on the homepage of the Royal Academy of Music, where they are today published online in open access.

»This is not a traditional history of music, focussed only on art music. It presents a broad and rich image of the music in Sweden during different periods and in different parts of the country – among high and low, in cities as well as the countryside, among nobility and the middle class as well as peasantry and workers.«

The title chosen for the books also reflects that broad approach: »music in Sweden«, rather than »Swedish music« or »a history of Swedish music«. Moreover, when the books received the prestigious August prize in the non-fiction category in 1994, the award citation stressed the project's accessibility, breadth of outlook, and inclusiveness, entirely in line with the volumes' marketing.

In fact, this appears to be a rhetorical selling point rather than an accurate description of the work. It is true that *Musiken i Sverige* has a broad outlook of musical culture, incorporating music's social aspects, functions, and institutional history as well as music-making in different social strata. At the same time, a relatively large part of the book is dedicated to art music and to the compositional output of the more central figures in Swedish music history, including many portraits of individual composers.

In the preface to the third volume, the chief editor, Leif Johnsson, describes the methodological basis as a »pragmatic variant of a musical *Strukturgeschichte* according to Carl Dahlhaus«. Such an approach is obviously something quite different from a straightforward social or cultural history of music.

Levande musikarv: a more pragmatic approach to musical editions of national music

In 2002, the Royal Musical Academy took over the responsibility for the MMS series from the Swedish Society for Musicology. In the following years, the two last volumes of MMS and the remaining volumes of the Berwald edition were published. After this, the Academy put the series on ice, at least in the form in which it had hitherto existed: namely, as a series of scholarly critical editions. The series was replaced by a new, alternative project run by the Academy, *Levande musikarv* (Swedish Musical Heritage), supported by the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences in 2012.²³ The keywords in the project are digitization and accessibility, and to some extent also de-professionalisation. It includes an inventory and database of historical Swedish art music, with short biographies and lists of works, and editions published online in open access. These editions are not critical editions in the strict sense of the word. The editorial principles and critical apparatus do with some exceptions not answer to international standards for a scholarly critical edition. Many »editions« are simply facsimile of old prints with emendations. The editorial staff is a mix of scholars, musicians, composers and enthusiastic amateurs. The focus has been on accessibility, especially for performers, and on fast production rather than scrupulous accuracy and scholarly text criticism. There is thus very little in the project that is reminiscent of the claim for methodological rigour and academic professionalism advocated by scholars such as Moberg, Walin and Bengtsson when the MMS series commenced.

Conclusion: national profiling without a nationalist bias

The program for historical musicology in Sweden outlined by Stig Walin in his 1942 article was clearly a compromise. It was motivated by what he and his contemporaries saw as a weak national cultivation of art music historically, not least in relation to the more acknowledged continental

²³ <http://www.levandemusikarv.se>, accessed February 2017.

traditions, but also in comparison with the other Nordic countries, with their internationally acclaimed figures – Grieg, Nielsen and Sibelius. After the Second World War, especially during the 1960s and 70s, that appeal for broad social and cultural approaches found support both in Swedish musical life and in academia, not least due to the political climate. This is revealed in an increasing interest in the social conditions and functions of music, in an outspoken anti-elitism and cultural relativism as well as in an early acknowledgement of the cultural values of jazz and popular music. On the positive side, within the field of academic music research this has encouraged an open-minded attitude to international currents and a readiness to re-negotiate the scholarly enterprise according to new perspectives. On the more negative side, it has perhaps led to a tendency to try to cover vast areas with relatively small resources, painting a big wall with little paint, so to speak. It has also resulted in a current lack of rigorous scholarly critical editions and composer monographs. Another typical example of these tendencies is the series of small composer monographs published recently by the Royal Academy of Music, which are not meant to include musical examples or more elaborate technical discussions of music, in order to appeal to a broader audience.²⁴

During the most recent decades, national pride in music in Swedish public debate has not placed art music in the first place. It has rather revolved around the achievements of Swedish artists and songwriters in the Eurovision Song Contest, and not least in the phenomena called »the Swedish music wonder« (»det svenska musikundret«). This is a well-established account of the alleged success of Swedish music on the commercial popular music scene, especially during the 1990s, which was even claimed to have developed into an important part of the export industry, a claim that has been much disputed.²⁵

I will leave aside the question of what Walin would have thought about or made of these developments. Still, it is clear that the sentiments he expressed in his 1942 text, based on the recognition of a weak historical national cultivation of music, a lack of major national composers, and the resulting focus on broader perspectives of the social and cultural aspects of Swedish musical life and history, have guided both academic and public approaches to historical writing and the production of musical monuments.

At the same time, the search for a historical explanation of this development gives rise to important questions of how national musical monuments and symbols are actually established. The comparison between Sweden and its neighboring countries in the north raises the question of whether large-scale national projects are possibly not necessarily the result of the perceived greatness of national composers or national music, but rather the opposite: the greatness of national composers is precisely the result of national projects.

Even though the Nordic countries today have much in common, not least a shared history, there are also important historical differences. The two countries with the most distinguished national figures, Norway with Grieg and Finland with Sibelius, are also the youngest nations, having gained their independence as late as 1905 (Norway) and 1917 (Finland). This led to a strong urge for nation building, national profiling, and the construction of a national sense of community, processes in which music played a significant role. Sweden's history is that of a sovereign kingdom that loses itself in a mythical past. It managed to stay out of the two major wars of the previous century, and out of armed conflict since 1809. Therefore, it did not have the same nationalist drive to construct a musical canon and a national musical history during the formative years of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. If we

²⁴ <http://www.musikaliskaakademien.se/verksamhet/publikationer/publikationer/svenskatonsattare.49.html>, accessed February 2017.

²⁵ Rasmus Fleischer, *Musikens politiska ekonomi: lagstiftningen, ljudmedierna och försvaret av den levande musiken, 1925–2000*, diss., Lund 2012, pp. 409–34.

leave aside the precarious issue of »objective« musical quality, there were arguably three candidates who could have been launched as a national composer: Franz Berwald, Wilhelm Stenhammar, and possibly also Hugo Alfvén. What was missing was rather the ideological need for such a monumental figure and for the myth-making around him. Instead, national profiling was built around the notion of broader and more inclusive cultural perspectives on the cultivation of music in Swedish society, perspectives that have informed both academic approaches and public policies in relation to music in Sweden ever since.